



Students and Volunteer Policy

Person responsible for policy:	Katy Wadsworth
Date reviewed:	September 2025
Review date:	September 2026

Contextual Information

Park Lane School caters for pupils aged 2-19 who have severe, profound and/or complex learning difficulties. Some of the pupils have additional difficulties including visual and hearing impairment, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, physical, behavioural and medical needs. The school forms part of the special education provision for Cheshire East and takes pupils from Wilmslow, Knutsford, Poynton, Congleton and Macclesfield.

Rationale

Park Lane School is committed to providing quality placements for students at school or college. We take students from local high schools, further education colleges and colleges of higher education on short or block placements, providing work experience and work placements relevant to the qualifications or aspirations of the students involved.

We value the support of volunteers to aid pupils in a variety of class activities. We usually link volunteers with a specific class where their interests and skills can be used to support the education of the pupils. This enables the volunteers to build up relationships with the pupils and staff in one class over time. If volunteers request a broader experience across different classes, we will endeavour to provide this depending on regular class timetables and routines. It is recognised that the placement needs to be beneficial to both the volunteer and the pupils.

Both students and volunteers work under the direction of the class teacher, alongside the class team, to support the learning and well-being of the pupils.

Aims

- To provide a welcoming and supportive environment in which students and volunteers feel valued for their contribution to the life of Park Lane School.
- To provide students and volunteers with a placement that meets either the requirements of their course or makes the most of their interests and skills.
- To provide clear guidance for the placement of students and volunteers ensuring the safety and protection of pupils, staff, students and volunteers.
- To provide a member of the Senior Management Team, as an available point of contact should there be concerns or issues relating to the placement.

Student Placements

Students usually approach the school directly to request a placement. They liaise with the Deputy Head to confirm dates of the placement and the class in which they will be working in. The Deputy Head will also complete the necessary paperwork and provide students with appropriate information as regards health and safety, appropriate dress and behaviour, confidentiality and general school information. This will be done through a pre-placement induction between the student and Deputy Head prior to the start of the placement.

If possible, the Deputy Head will give the student a tour of the school and will introduce them to the class teacher and team with whom they will be working.

The class teacher will brief the student about the pupils in the class including appropriate information about the nature of their disabilities, any specific communication and behaviour support strategies and any particular interests they may have.

They will also discuss the class timetable informing the student of the activities they will be involved in during their placement.

For reasons of health and safety students should not be involved in the moving and handling of pupils or pushing pupils in wheelchairs and buggies. Students cannot be included in staff: pupil ratios on educational visits. In line with child protection procedures students should not be left alone with a pupil at any time and should not be requested to carry out any personal care activities with a pupil.

Volunteer Placements

Prospective volunteers can approach the school directly for information and to arrange a visit to the school to meet with the Deputy Head. At an initial meeting the interests and skills of the volunteer would be discussed so that these could be matched to a class or to activities where they could be used to best advantage.

Following the initial meeting and tour of the school, if the volunteer has confirmed their interest in working at the school the Deputy Head would liaise with teaching staff to organise the placement of the volunteer in a class or classes, depending on their interests and skills. Upon agreement the Deputy Head will contact the volunteer to agree a start date.

All volunteer work will be on a trial basis so that either the volunteer or the school can withdraw from the arrangement should it prove to be unsatisfactory.

Upon arrival the volunteer will be introduced to the class team/s they will be working with. At all times the Deputy Head will be responsible for overseeing the placement and will be the point of contact.

For reasons of health and safety volunteers should not be involved in the lifting or hoisting of pupils or the pushing of pupils in wheelchairs and buggies. Volunteers cannot be included in staff: pupil ratios on educational visits. In line with child protection procedures volunteers should not be let alone with a pupil at any time and should not be requested to carry out any personal care activities with a pupil.

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually.