08.3 Deployment of volunteers and parent/carer helpers

Volunteers and parent/carer helpers are always under the supervision of a permanent member of staff at Rainbow Pre-school. They are not included in staff ratios, or as the two members of staff needed on the premises before children are admitted in the morning or at the end of the day. (*This can be removed for sessional settings, who operate with 2 or 3 members of staff where the volunteer helper enables the session to run, while the play leader in charge finds cover staff*.)

- The pre-school lead ensures that volunteers and parent/carer helpers are deployed to assist permanent staff.
- Volunteers and parent helpers assist staff in ensuring that the equipment in their designated area is used appropriately and that it is left tidy at the end of the session.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers give additional support for busy areas or to track or observe children.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers inform colleagues where they are going if they leave the room at any time.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers do not have unsupervised access to children; they do not take them into a separate room for an activity or toileting and do not take them off premises.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers are deployed in addition to two members of staff in the garden/outdoor area when in use.
- The pre-school lead can direct volunteers and parent/carer helpers to join those outside if the numbers of children warrant additional numbers of staff available.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers always focus their attention to children.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers do not spend time in social conversation with colleagues while they are with children.

- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers allow time for colleagues to engage in ‘sustained shared interaction’ with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.
- Sufficient volunteers and parent/carer helpers are available to support staff at story and other circle times.