

people and places:responsible volunteering

SUPPORT PLAN FOR WORK OF VOLUNTEERS AT GEDE SCPEICAL SCHOOL, KENYA 2020-2021

This plan describes ways in which volunteers can help this project to develop their aims and goals.

Comments are based on the work of volunteers in the period up to December 2019, and are derived from questionnaires completed by the projects and reports written by the volunteers. New aims and actions, if any, are shown in green and these have either been identified from requests made by the projects or have arisen from the work done by volunteers.

AIMS	ACTIONS
1. To help with the day-to-day running of the special school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteers could work with individual children, providing one-to-one support as required.• Volunteers could work as teaching aides within the classes, providing support to the children in whatever ways are required.• Volunteers may help to teach subjects on the school curriculum such as English, Maths, Science, Social Studies, Creative Arts and basic life skills. One volunteer taught Science and English to both the physically handicapped and deaf children, making good use of her ability to dramatise to aid understanding with the deaf children. Another volunteer helped to teach all subjects on the curriculum to Class 2 (including Kiswahili!).• Volunteers with appropriate skills could help with physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy and other treatments as required, at the school and possibly with the local community.• Volunteers could help to organise games and activities for the children. All volunteers so far have done this, but new ideas are always welcome.• Some volunteers could help with various forms of maintenance work around the site.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteers will provide support to the people who manage and work at the home, working alongside them and showing an interest in what they are doing.
2. To help to develop a wider range of methods of teaching, therapy and activities at the home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• During lessons, volunteers could demonstrate a variety of methods of teaching, as appropriate for the children's needs and abilities, using strategies such as games, songs, craft activities, flashcards etc. One volunteer planted seeds in Science lessons – the school has a garden so there is scope to develop the use of this as a teaching and learning aid. Art and craft activities have been introduced by volunteers, based on stories or to illustrate English and RE lessons. The school is keen that all teaching should be based on their curriculum but volunteers have found that as long as activities can be shown to be relevant to the syllabus teachers are very open to any new teaching methods. One volunteer used her project donation to pay for a visit to a local conservation project to demonstrate that teaching does not have to be confined to the classroom. Another volunteer was able to include creative work during the course of her placement.• Some volunteers have prepared simple resources to aid learning and future volunteers should continue to develop this, if possible ensuring that any resources produced are relevant to the Kenyan curriculum.• A teacher at the school has set up a small library for children to visit at lunchtimes. She is keen to encourage reading for pleasure and volunteers could help her in this aim, for example by taking small groups for reading in the library or by setting up a story-telling circle.• Some volunteers could help the staff to develop ideas for differentiated learning to enable some children to access the work more successfully. This could be developed eventually into individual education plans for each of the children. Volunteers could introduce new sports, games and activities for the children. One volunteer encouraged the children to develop a sense of working independently. Another volunteer encouraged the teacher to give extension activities to more able children rather than making them wait for slower learners to catch up.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If appropriate some volunteers could demonstrate different treatments and therapies, sharing methodology with the therapists from Kenya.• Volunteers with the appropriate knowledge could help the staff at the special school to establish a system for assessing progress (possibly using the 'P' level system used in the UK to assess children with severe disabilities). One volunteer has made a start on this by helping the teacher to identify the individual skills of each child in her class.
3. To share skills and knowledge with the staff at the home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whatever their background and skills, volunteers should take every opportunity to share their skills and knowledge with the staff at the home, helping them to develop their methodology and systems if and when appropriate. Volunteers have found the teachers to be interested and keen to share ideas.• If possible, the volunteer could work on twinning of the school with schools in England and elsewhere. This could help in sharing methodology and possibly in enlightening students through exchange programmes. One volunteer has committed to try to set this up.• The school would welcome training in the use of ICT as a tool for research and teaching. The school has a designated computer room with some computers and a printer but not all staff are computer literate.