



GSK GREEN DRAGON PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME



Working in partnership



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"GSK [is] committed to supporting the communities in which we work. ...[we] encourage and empower all employees to play their part in local volunteering efforts .

"Our support for the London Borough of Hounslow remains undiminished. Through our partnership with Spark! (co-founders of the Green Dragon School volunteer programme) we are working to create opportunities for young people in Hounslow."

Andrew Witty

Background

GSK is committed to supporting the communities where we live and work. At GSK House in Brentford the company supports a number of initiatives that contribute to the well-being of people living locally in the Borough of Hounslow, for example through our Orange Day volunteer partnerships, whereby employees give up one day of their time to volunteer in the locally community.



GSK has a long-standing relationship with Spark! whose role is to facilitate effective relationships between employers and schools to raise the achievement of young people and help prepare them for adult life.

GSK's relationship with Green Dragon Primary School began in late summer in 2003, when Spark! recommended the school to GSK as a partner for their primary school business volunteering scheme. The school is located in a local pocket of deprivation and is just a 5 minute cycle or drive from GSK House – and a 15 minute walk.

Employees from a wide range of professional backgrounds at GSK House offer their time and services to help small groups of pupils and individuals with their classwork during school time. The employee volunteers visit on a regular weekly basis leading to strong relationships being formed with pupils and teachers.

GSK volunteers receive comprehensive training and support from the school's community liaison teacher before they begin their visits and CRB checks are facilitated by Spark! or the school.

"We hope that our partner business organisations, such as GSK, continue becoming better informed of their potential role in positively affecting a single child's learning and schooling experience."

Jane Buck, Deputy Head teacher, Green Dragon Primary School

A win-win programme

From teachers' comments it is clear that the pupils have benefited from having a regular mentor. For some children it's about enhanced self-esteem, having the confidence to tackle more challenging questions back in class, or having a professional role model to look up to, for example.

However, the benefits are not one-sided by any means. Volunteering has a significantly positive impact on GSK volunteers. It can contribute enormously to personal development, provides personal satisfaction as well as opportunities to give back to the community and experience a different working environment.

Asked what one employee felt he had gained from being a volunteer, his response was, "a sense of well-being, confidence with children and increased skills in communication (yes, I think trying to explain to children helps communication in business a great deal)." Undeniably, the partnership between Green Dragon School and GSK benefits both organisations in a variety of ways above and beyond the volunteering partnership first conceived.

Local recognition



Simrit Mann (left), Community Liaison Teacher, Green Dragon Primary School and Sue Ricketts (right). GSK received the Malcolm Gibbins Cup in 2004 for excellence in education/business partnerships for their business volunteering programme at Green Dragon School.

GSK and Green Dragon School were jointly awarded the Malcolm Gibbins Cup at Spark's Partnership Awards 2004 for their business volunteers programme.

The award recognises excellence in education and business partnerships, in association with the Hounslow Chamber of Commerce and Hounslow Education Business Partnerships.

The Malcolm Gibbins Cup is a commemorative award dedicated to the life of Malcolm Gibbins, an active member of the Hounslow Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club. He had many links to local primary schools and businesses.

"GSK's partnership with Green Dragon School aligns perfectly with our broader commitment to social investment in science education. Making sure young people are equipped and motivated to learn about science is a crucial part of GSK's mission."

Sue Ricketts, GSK

A broad programme

Green Dragon Primary School has worked closely with GlaxoSmithKline on a highly successful Business Volunteers Project. The project has allowed strong relationships to be forged with GSK employee mentors.

As volunteers' experience and confidence grows they are able and willing to input into the curriculum itself. They then work with a larger group of children than just the targeted "mentored" children.

This enables the programme to broaden out as capacity allows and to identify ways in which GSK can actively enhance the teaching and learning of the school's science curriculum.

"She has big earrings and she has her hair up everyday. She makes me laugh. She helps my teacher and she helps me to spell long words. I wish she would come every day."

7 year old student Megan speaking about her GSK volunteer

Mentoring Partners

This introductory programme engages business volunteers in helping individual and small groups of primary children develop their reading and/or numeracy skills.

With just a small amount of time, a volunteer can make a big difference to a child's life by helping them improve not only their skills but also their self-confidence and motivation.

Research shows that such programmes substantially increase children's achievement levels and raise their self-esteem and aspirations. All volunteers receive initial professional training to prepare them for the role and will typically visit a school for one hour per week during term time to work with one or several children. A volunteer can choose to work with reading or number programmes or can opt to support both skill areas.

Following training, volunteers visit the school once a week and give guidance and support to schoolchildren, either individually or in groups, providing opportunities to enhance their learning experience and add relevance to any science-based curriculum activities. Volunteers follow their mentees up through the school whenever possible through the years, ensuring that the effects of the positive long-lasting relationships that were forged in the beginning are maintained and built upon.

Routine screening checks will be carried out on all volunteers before they join our pool of trained volunteers.

"It's fantastic! I thoroughly enjoy it and get a lot of satisfaction from it. When work permits, I come for two hours instead of one as I like it so much. The children are lovely. I like the interaction with all of them".

GSK Reading Volunteer

Deepening the primary science curriculum

Green Dragon Primary School has benefited from a longstanding commitment to the teaching of science across both its Key Stages. Programmes of study are well established and the school's focus is to encourage our children to have a genuine love and interest of science – and to interpret how it relates to the real world in which they live.

"Pupils are more willing to answer questions in lessons. They show increased confidence in knowledge of basic number facts".

School Maths Co-ordinator

Programme partners have actively worked together to seek opportunities where GSK can support the delivery of the school's science curriculum – directly and indirectly. Initiatives over the years:

- Year 4 welcomed a GSK ambassador who used her marketing experience to lead a design and technology lesson on packaging.
- Year 6 learned about the importance of hand washing and the implications of poor hygiene through study of GSK's international PHASE project. This sets out to educate children in developing countries on reducing diarrhoea-related diseases and to improved children's overall health and well-being.
- GSK sponsored the school's high profile ScienceWeek event in June 2004. This event was featured in the local press and attended by many representatives of the Hounslow Borough's educational and professional institutions.
- Classes have been offered the chance to participate in GSK-sponsored educational projects, such as the Young Environmentalist of the Year Awards 2004 and the Golden Tapestry, which was featured on CBBC's Blue Peter in November 2004, helping to forge more international links.
- Science Works, an organisation that specialises in hands-on science exhibits, visited the school in June 2004. The exhibits focus on everyday themes: life, materials and sound. Children listen to radio music through a plastic bowl, identify countryside noises, rearrange

human body organs, as well as meeting the famous scientific celebrities.

- When the challenge of understanding changes to the Key Stage II Maths curriculum appeared to be posing a problem to several of the volunteers at the same time, one of the teachers offered to come GSK House to give a presentation on the subject.
- GSK funded workshops for all Key Stage (KS) 2 classes on the curriculum topics of structures and electricity:
 - Younger children were offered a “The Science Behind Magic” performance.
 - An eight week after school science club was also offered for eighteen KS2 children identified as being “keen and able” scientists.
- GSK also funded a Year 3 & Year 6 visit to watch a “light” show at Kew Gardens in order to support this aspect of their science curriculum.
- “MadScience” and Healthy Lifestyles events introduced students to the subject of science in a fun and informative way.

“Being a Number Partner has helped me to be more patient, write more clearly and take less for granted”.
GSK Number Partners Volunteer

Getting started: Mentoring in literacy and numeracy

What’s in it for the children?

- The opportunity for additional support in reading or a maths related activity
- Enjoyment of reading
- Increased motivation and interest in maths
- Improvement in mental calculations and strategies
- Greater confidence in the classroom
- An extra adult to give them attention
- Exposure to a new positive role model

What’s in it for you?

- The satisfaction of watching a child grow in confidence and gain improved skills
- The opportunity to make a contribution to individual children’s progress
- A greater understanding of how children learn
- Development of your personal and business skills through fun and rewarding sessions with children
- Enjoyment from collaborating with colleagues on a worthwhile project

- The opportunity to experience a different working environment
- An addition to your CV

What would I actually do?

- Liaise with the class teacher about the activity for the day and what is required.
- Listen to an individual child read or work with a small group or pairing on a reading or maths-related activity or game.
- Keep a simple record of how the child or children are progressing.
- Return the following week to work with the same child or children and see them progress gradually.

What would I be asked to commit to?

- Regular weekly attendance
- Punctuality
- Work with a child or small group of children within a class
- Undergo a CRB check
- Sign an agreement with the school to respect their procedures and confidentiality
- Keep a log of the time you contribute

"I always knew I would enjoy it, but I hadn't anticipated just how much."

GSK Reading Volunteer

To find out more and sign up as a volunteer at Green Dragon Primary School, contact...

Ruby Mir, Spark! x3350

Deborah Guinea, GSK on x3081



ORANGEDAY by GSK