



Volunteer Working in School Policy

Policy written – January 2021

To be reviewed – January 2024

Volunteer Working in School Policy

The school's volunteer policy is part of the school's safeguarding systems.

Introduction

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. The Board of Governors therefore, welcomes and encourages volunteers from the local community.

Our volunteers can include:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- University students referred to us by Student Volunteer Services
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the school

The types of activities that volunteers engage in, on behalf of the school, include:

- Hearing pupils read
- Working with small groups of pupils to assist them in their learning
- Working alongside individual pupils, as an additional tutor
- Accompanying school visits

Safeguarding

At The Acorn Federation we are committed to safeguarding pupils, young people and vulnerable adults and expect our volunteers to share that commitment.

Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one off event such as a school visit or on a more regular basis, e.g. hearing pupils read, usually approaches the Class Teacher, Lead Teacher or Headteacher.

Volunteers will meet with the headteacher or a class teacher to discuss the types of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help. They will also share their contact details.

Definition

Activity which is described as 'frequent' or 'intensive' covers the meaning given in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

'Frequent' – once a week or more often on an ongoing basis; and

'Intensive' – three or more occasions in a 30 day period, or overnight (between 2am – 6am).

Process for recruiting Volunteer who will be working frequently or intensively

1. The volunteer attends the school for an informal discussion to ensure the applicant is suitable for the role.
2. Enhanced DBS check undertaken.
3. The volunteer will be made aware of the role and responsibilities they will be undertaking.

4. If appropriate 2 References should be sought where the volunteer arrangement will continue on a regular basis.
5. Induction - school and corporate policies and documentation explained and issued. These to include Health and Safety, Behaviour Management Policies, Code of Conduct and Confidential Reporting Code.
6. Volunteer records to be kept in a central place within the school

Before starting to help in a school, a volunteer should complete the *Volunteer Agreement* (Appendix 2), which sets out the school's expectations of its volunteer and to confirm they have received a copy of this Agreement. The school will seek DBS clearance for a volunteer **before** they come into school, to make an informed decision when accepting volunteers to work with children. This is not required where a volunteer is engaged in a 'one-off' or supervised activity.

Our School Aims

All adults / Young People who work in our school, whether a paid member of staff, or a volunteer are expected to work and behave in such a way as to actively promote our school aims.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the pupils they work with / come into contact with should be voiced with the designated supervisor and NOT with the parents of the child/persons.

Volunteers who are concerned about anything in the school, which may affect their work should raise the matter with the Headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff. Any information gained at the school about a child or adult should remain confidential.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of a teacher or a permanent member of staff. Teachers retain ultimate responsibility for pupils at all times, including the pupils' behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the designated supervisor as to how an activity is carried out/what the expected outcome of an activity is. In the event of any query/problem regarding the pupil's understanding of a task, behaviour or their welfare, volunteers must seek further advice/guidance from the class teacher.

Health & Safety

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available to volunteers working in the school. An appropriate member of staff will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. Fire Alarm Evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks (e.g. using D T equipment/accompanying pupils on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher / Headteacher.

Child Protection

The welfare of our pupils is paramount. To ensure the safety of our pupils, we adopt the following procedures:

- All volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy and asked to sign a *Volunteer Agreement* (Appendix 1)
- A DBS Disclosure will be issued to the individual to present to the designated member of staff in school.
- All volunteers take part in the school's 'Induction' programme.

- Where a volunteer is engaged in a 'one-off' activity e.g. helping supervise a group of pupils as part of a class visit, no formal checks are required. However, such volunteers, who will be under the constant supervision of school staff, must read and sign our Generic Risk Assessment for Trips.
- Any concerns a volunteer has, about child protection issues, should be referred to the class teacher or Head Teacher.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff, for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be dealt with in the same way.

The Headteacher or designated member of staff reserves the right to take the following action-

- To speak with a volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again
- Offer an alternative placement for a volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another class
- Based upon the facts identified in the investigation it may be necessary for the School to inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them
- Provide the volunteer with a copy of the school's full Complaints Procedure

COVID-19 Pandemic

At the time of writing this policy school procedures are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to protect our whole school community, any volunteers during this time will be asked the following additional questions, -

- Are you following the current national guidelines?
- Do you have any of the symptoms of coronavirus (continuous cough, high temperature, loss of taste and smell)?
- Have you been contacted by NHS Track and Trace?

Volunteers are likely to be asked to wear a mask or visor when in school.

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been approved by the Governing Body and will be regularly reviewed and updated.

APPENDIX 1

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at school.

Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope that you will gain much from your experience.

Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement Sheet and hand it in at school.

You will receive a copy of it for your records.

- I have received a copy of the School's Volunteer Policy
- I have read and agree to support the School's Aims
- I have received the school's induction programme
- I agree to treat information obtained from being a Volunteer in School as **Strictly Confidential**
- I understand that a DBS check will be undertaken
- If you already have a DBS Certificate, please hand it to the school, the number will be recorded and checks made with the issuing body. A new enhanced DBS check must be undertaken.
- I have been made aware of who is my designated supervisor e.g. Class Teacher, Year Teacher, Head of Department

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, -

- I can confirm I am following current national guidelines.
- I do not have any of the symptoms of coronavirus (continuous cough, high temperature, loss of taste and smell). If I develop symptoms I will not attend school and will inform the Headteacher immediately.
- I have not been contacted by NHS Track and Trace. If I am contacted by NHS Test and Trace I will not attend school and will inform the Headteacher immediately.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____