

Volunteering Policy

This policy sets out the school's approach to recruiting, managing and supporting volunteers within school and is part of the school's safeguarding systems.

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1 Why do we need volunteers?

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of children at our school. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community.

Our volunteers include:

- Governors
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents

The types of activities that volunteers are engaged in include:

- Listening to children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working with individual children
- Accompanying school visits
- Sharing their skills/knowledge by talking to the class

2 Becoming a volunteer

The school is committed to delivering a good volunteering experience and aims to ensure that volunteering is open to everyone, whatever age, skill level or background.

2.1 Regular volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer on a regular basis will be asked to complete the Volunteer Application Form with their contact details, type of activities they would like to help with and the times they are available to help.

The school will also require the contact details of 2 referees. A referee should not be a family member and will preferably be a previous employer or representative of an organisation where the applicant has previously volunteered but can also be a character reference.

Regular volunteers will also be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) application form or provide details of an existing DBS certificate registered with the DBS update service. It is the headteacher's responsibility to co-ordinate this and the school will pay for any associated costs.

Before starting to help in school, volunteers must complete the Regular Volunteer Agreement, which sets out the school's expectation of volunteers and asks volunteers to confirm they have received a copy of this policy. The volunteer agreement can be ended at any time.

2.2 Volunteer for particular activity

Those wishing to volunteer on a one-off basis e.g. for a school outing, should speak to the relevant class teacher. Where a volunteer is engaged in a one-off activity, they will usually be under the constant supervision of school employees, therefore no formal checks will be carried out. If this is not the case, a DBS check will be required.

Volunteers without a DBS check cannot be left unsupervised or alone with children and will not be allowed to carry out duties such as escorting children to the toilet or leading a small group of children. They must also read and sign our Offsite Visit Volunteer Agreement.

For more information about DBS checks, please see the Vetting Policy on the Schools Portal.

3 Managing volunteers

The volunteer must be provided with advice, support and appropriate training to assist them to undertake their activities.

Training activities should be identified and made accessible for volunteers in relation to their volunteering roles. Volunteers are to be encouraged and supported to undertake appropriate training which may enhance their skills and experience and contributions they can make to the school.

All volunteering activities that form part of the volunteering agreement are intended to bring value to the school therefore it is important to refresh, review and change/move the role if it helps the volunteer or the school. Similarly, any review that identifies that the volunteering agreement is not adding value to the school either due to the performance or conduct of the volunteer the agreement can be immediately ended.

3.1 Supervision

Volunteers should have appropriate support from within the school and should feel valued for the contributions they make.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the teacher as to how an activity is carried out and what the expected outcome is. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further guidance from the teacher where there is any issue regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

All volunteers in a class will work under the supervision of the class teacher. Teachers retain responsibility for children at all times, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.

3.2 Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns volunteers have about a child they are working with should be raised with the class teacher, the designated Safeguarding and Child Protection lead or the headteacher.

Volunteers should not speak with parents of the child or other people outside of school about concerns.

3.3 Health and safety

The school has a health and safety policy and this is made available to volunteers working in the school. Class teachers ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures e.g. fire alarm evacuation and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task e.g. using equipment or accompanying children on visits.

Volunteers should exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher or headteacher.

3.4 Child protection

All regular volunteers or volunteers who will be left unsupervised with children will be subject to clearance checks and will be:

- Given a copy of this policy and asked to sign a volunteer agreement;
- Made aware of our child protection and safeguarding policies;
- Told who our designated safeguarding members of staff are.

3.5 Insurance

The school maintains insurance against risks including loss and damage to or destruction of its property, the injury or death of members of the public affected by its activities and its employees and volunteers undertaking authorised work.

For the cover to apply the volunteer must be:

- formally acknowledged by the school;
- deemed to be qualified/competent to carry out the voluntary duties;
- under the control and direction of the school.

It is important that volunteers comply with the conditions of the school's insurance and do not do anything, which might result in the council or the volunteer not being covered.

If a volunteer role involves driving, schools must have procedures in place to ensure they have a valid driving licence and a photocopy of this should be taken. Volunteers using their own vehicle must also ensure they have business insurance or a letter from their insurance provider stating they are aware they use their vehicle for voluntary work with the council.

3.6 Complaints procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the headteacher for investigation. The headteacher may then take the following action:

- Speak with the volunteer about a breach of the volunteer agreement and seek reassurance that it will not happen again;
- Offer an alternative placement for the volunteer e.g. helping with a different activity or in a different class;
- Inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.

Any concerns by a volunteer should be referred to the headteacher or Chair of Governors in the first instance. A formal complaint can be raised under the schools Complaints Procedure.



This policy has been developed by the HR Advice and Support team, based on current legislation and best practice. If you would like any advice on the application of this policy, please do not hesitate to contact the team:

Telephone	03000 266688
Email	hradvice@durham.gov.uk

Further support can be accessed by contacting (subject to SLA buy in):

Payroll and Employee Services	pesschools@durham.gov.uk
Occupational Health	occhealthadmin@durham.gov.uk
Health and Safety	hsteam@durham.gov.uk
Employee Assistance Programme	https://wisdom.healthassured.org/login DCC Employer Code: MHA042951 0800 028 0199

Author	Version	Last review	Next review
LK	v 1.1	September 2022	January 2025

The school complies with all relevant statutory obligations. The school privacy notice provides more specific information on data collected and how it is handled, a copy of which can be accessed from the school. For more information please contact the school directly.

If you have any concerns about how your data is handled, please contact either the school Data Protection Officer (details available from the school office), or the Information Commissioner's Office.