

Volunteers Policy

Wateringbury CE Primary School

Policy reviewed: March 2018

Next review date: March 2019

Committee responsible: Pay & Personnel Committee

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chair of Governors)

WATERINGBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

VOLUNTEERS POLICY

At Wateringbury Church of England Primary School, we believe in the value of a happy, Christian community in which all of us recognise the part each plays for the greater good of the school. We encourage others by praise and acknowledgement of effort and create an environment in which everyone can develop talents and expertise. We believe in a community built upon our Christian values of love, compassion, forgiveness, peace, justice and wisdom. Through daily observance of these, we create an atmosphere of care and respect for every individual and a tolerance of opinions and differences.

Introduction

1.1. The value of well-deployed volunteers in schools is now widely recognised. At Wateringbury Church of England Primary School volunteers are a welcome resource for helping to raise children's achievement, complementing the work of teachers and support staff. The Headteacher and Governing Body have no doubt that the School will benefit greatly from developing well-planned, active parental and community links through participation by adults in the activities of the school on a voluntary basis. It should be emphasised that the role of volunteers in schools provides for the enrichment of the pupil's learning experiences, but must not encroach on or restrict professional teaching duties.

1.2. The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or for a number of sessions over a longer period, must be managed with care; in particular taking account of the needs of the pupils and the staff to whom they are assigned.

1.3. Headteachers and Governors are mindful of deploying volunteers appropriately.

Volunteers should not be asked to replace paid staff or be given responsibility within the School that would normally be associated with paid employees.

2. School Policy

2.1. The Governing Body intends that this policy give a clear statement on the engagement and deployment of volunteers and that this document be included in the staff handbook for the information of everyone.

2.2. This policy document has been written and agreed in consultation with school staff.

2.3. The policy will be reviewed regularly by the Governing Body and be revised in response to changing legislation, guidance or practice as necessary.

3. Deployment

3.1. Volunteers should not be asked to carry out duties which:

- a) fall normally within a teacher's responsibility under *loco parentis*;
- b) fall normally within the job description of a teacher or member of support staff, e.g. they must not be asked to cover the absence of staff from school;
- c) would normally be performed by a contractor engaged by the LA or by the school;
- d) require them to have unsupervised access to children;
- e) expose them to dangerous or hazardous substances or situations.

It should be noted that the Class Teacher remains responsible for the organisation of the class and methods of work.

3.2. During a visit to the school each volunteer should be designated to a specific member of staff to whom he or she will be directly responsible. Whilst there should be no significant addition to the workload of the staff member taking responsibility for the volunteer, it would be expected that time is taken to ensure the volunteer is adequately inducted into the role and that there is mutual agreement and understanding. This additional responsibility is not compulsory for staff and should only be delegated with the agreement of the staff member concerned. It is however essential that the volunteer is clear as to which member of staff has this responsibility.

3.3. All volunteers need to be made to feel welcome. It is important that the parameters of their role within the school are clearly defined from the outset in order to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding.

3.4. The Governing Body does not require the use of volunteer application forms.

However, all successful applicants will be required to sign that they have read, understood and will observe this policy, and will complete a DBS disclosure form (see Section 5). Volunteer records are maintained on the Single Central Record (SCR).

3.5. It is important to match the talents and skills of volunteers to the needs of the school. Volunteers who do not feel valued will not stay.

3.6. Where a volunteer's particular skills or knowledge do not match the current needs of the school, the offer of help should be declined.

4. School Regulations and Other Information

4.1. In fairness to all concerned, volunteers must be made aware of the rules governing behaviour at the School; the key 'dos' and 'don'ts' for children and adults. This should include procedures designed to avoid hazards or risks associated with the tasks that they are being asked to carry out and, importantly, details of first aid and emergency arrangements such as procedures to follow in case of fire.

4.2. As part of their induction to life at the school, volunteers should also be provided with basic information such as a tour of the school and details of those facilities available to them e.g. staff room, toilets etc. Volunteers should not use the children's toilets.

4.3. All volunteers must read the school's *Safeguarding Policy* and are given the relevant sections in hard copy. It is important that volunteers are made aware of the following policies and procedures (and given hard copies by request):

- expectations with regard to confidentiality;
- the School's *ICT Acceptable Use and e-Safety Policies*;
- expected level of behaviour and an awareness of Professional Codes of Practice;
- the School's *SEND and Disability Access Policies*;
- the School's Complaints procedure;
- the School's disciplinary procedures and behaviour expectations
- the School's *Safeguarding Policy*
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2016)

4.4 All volunteers sign in and out of the Visitors' Book where a copy of our Safeguarding guidelines are kept.

4.5 Volunteers are given a copy of this policy to read and keep. All volunteers are expected to sign the declaration and return it to the office.

5. Child Protection

5.1. The law requires a background check to be made on anyone with responsibility in a school which *can* give them regular unsupervised access to pupils.

In 2002, the Bichard Inquiry was commissioned and its recommendations led to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which recognised the need for a single agency to vet all individuals who want to work or volunteer with vulnerable people.

This now includes volunteers who regularly help (defined by more than 3x/month):

- In the classroom
- In extra curricular activities
- Supervise pupils on school organised holidays or residential visits

Volunteers who also have access which is on-going, substantial and unsupervised also fall under this category. Schools planning to work with volunteers falling into any of the above groups should complete an Online DBS Checks alongside the School Secretary to enable a check to be made against the ISA barred list. SPS will undertake an immediate check against the barred list upon receipt of the completed Disclosure application.

5.2. These regulations do not apply to volunteers such as those who help organise or run fetes or may assist the school activities on an irregular basis or ad hoc basis but should apply to volunteers that drive children in cars or minibuses.

However, if the Headteacher is unclear about the position in respect of a volunteer, further advice is available from the School's Link Personnel Officer.

5.3. Volunteers are also seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults, and if a school is actively seeking volunteers and is considering candidates about whom it has little or no recent knowledge, it should adopt the same recruitment measures as it would for paid staff. In other circumstances, for example where a school approaches a parent who is well known to the school to take a particular role, a streamlined procedure can be adopted: seeking references, checking to ensure others in the school community know of no concerns and can make a positive recommendation, conducting an informal interview to gauge the person's aptitude and suitability, and Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check. In other circumstances, e.g. where a volunteer's roles will be one-off, such as accompanying teachers and pupils on a day outing or helping at a concert or school fete, those kinds of measures would be unnecessary provided that the person is not to be left alone and unsupervised in charge of children. Where volunteers recruited by another organisation work in a school, e.g. sports coaches from a local club, the school should obtain assurance from that organisation that the person has been properly vetted.

5.4. All Governor appointments comply with current Governing Body practice to ensure governors are not disqualified from serving as a school Governor.

5.5. It is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that volunteers do not have unsupervised access to children.

5.6. Headteachers should take all reasonable steps to confirm the identity of the person volunteering. It is recommended that the Headteacher view, and take a copy of, at least two original documents. At least one document must show a current address and at least one document must show the volunteers date of birth.

- Birth Certificate – plus Marriage Certificate or Copy of Deed Poll or Licence if name change;
- Passport;
- Driving Licence.

A full list of acceptable Valid Identity Documents can be found on the leaflet, '*An Applicants Guide to Completing the CRB Application Form*' or alternatively visit the website, www.crb.gov.uk (Disclosure and Barring Service).

5.7. Safer Recruitment training provides valuable information on a safer school culture and advice and guidance to strengthen safeguards against employing unsuitable people in schools. The training helps schools demonstrate that they have effective recruitment and selection processes in place that ensure learners are both well taught and protected. Further information on this can be found in the DfE's *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2016)

5.8. The Independent Safeguarding Authority vetting service is a tool to help recruitment take place safely but it does not replace correct recruitment processes.

6. Insurance

6.1. Volunteers should be informed about the extent of the insurance cover available. Whilst volunteering for the school they are covered by the LA for third party liability only and the

limitations of this insurance should be explained carefully to volunteers. They may wish to make their own arrangements for insuring against theft, personal injury or damage to their own property.

6.2. Volunteers using their own car to transport children other than their own children to school events, (sport, music etc) should be made aware of the school policy and advised to check with their car insurance company to ensure that they do not contravene their insurance policy conditions.

6.3. The school should carefully consider all aspects of insurance and safety before deploying volunteers to drive a minibus. All parties should be made fully aware of the regulations and drivers should be offered appropriate training and instruction before taking children on journeys in such vehicles.

7. Allowances

7.1. Although there is no obligation to make financial reimbursement to volunteers, it would be appropriate to consider paying out-of-pocket expenses connected with the tasks they undertake for the school. If school funds will not allow a policy of general reimbursement, consideration could be given to such payments in exceptional circumstances.

Volunteer Declaration

I have received, read, and will observe the requirements of this policy.

I agree to complete a DBS disclosure form and understand that my role as a school volunteer is conditional upon background-checks being successful.

I have been informed about the school's Acceptable Use policy and understand that the use of mobile phones in school (for photographs or storing pupil information) is strictly forbidden.

Signed.....

Name (in capitals).....

Date.....