



**Bishop  
Hogarth**

Catholic Education Trust

# **VOLUNTEER POLICY & AGREEMENT**

**THIS POLICY APPLIES ACROSS ALL TRUST SCHOOLS AND SERVICES**

**Document Management:**

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**Introduction**

As a Trust, it is our aim to involve parents in their children's education and to develop and maintain links with the local community. In order to enrich the lives of the children in school, and to enable us to deliver the curriculum more effectively, we actively encourage the involvement of parents and volunteers from the community in the work of the school, both during school hours and in extra-curricular activities.

## Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- The Childcare Act 2006
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

## Definitions

For the purposes of this policy volunteers are defined as:

“individuals who engage in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party, i.e. the school, and not a close relative.

“**Occasional volunteers**” are individuals who only accompany staff and pupils on one-off trips that do not involve overnight stays, or who volunteer at specific one-off events, such as sports days.

A volunteer will be engaging in “**regulated activity**” if they:

- Will be responsible, on a regular basis in school, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children.
- Will be working on a regular basis in a specified establishment, such as a school, or in connection with the purposes of the establishment, where the work gives opportunity for contact with children.
- Engage in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this only happens once.

## Status of volunteers

A volunteer will not be an employee of the Trust. He or she will not be engaged on a contract of employment nor on any type of contract for services. The engagement will be binding in honour only, there being no legal agreement between the organisation and the volunteer.

Volunteers are unpaid. The Trust is under no obligation to offer or to continue to offer any volunteering opportunity to any person, irrespective of their carrying out volunteering work currently or in the past. Similarly, the volunteer is under no obligation to accept any opportunity offered, and may withdraw from the agreement at any time.

Before accepting the role of volunteer, the individual concerned will agree with the school that they can fulfil the volunteer role expectations. The school may withdraw the offer at any time, including after the volunteer has started their engagement. The volunteer may also withdraw from the agreement at any time. Both parties are encouraged to give the other as much notice as possible, should the agreement be brought to an end.

## Recruitment & Selection

All approaches to the school for voluntary positions should be discussed with the Headteacher/Principal, unless otherwise delegated to a designated Senior Leader. There should be no agreement to or the promise of a volunteering position within the school prior to the recruitment and selection process being followed.

The volunteer applicant must complete simple application form which gives permission to obtain a character reference - see **Appendix 1**. A Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) check must also be completed where the applicant is working in a regulated activity.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The school will conduct a risk assessment and use its professional judgement to decide what checks are required. The risk assessment will consider:

- The nature of the work with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision.
- What the school knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers.
- Whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability.
- Whether the role is eligible for a DBS check, and if it is, the level of check required.

The experience, qualities, skills and needs of any volunteer will be taken into account when deciding about the recruitment of a volunteer in school. Please note, there is no guarantee that a volunteer will be found an immediate placement or any placement at all within the school or elsewhere.

The placement should be mutually beneficial to the school and volunteer.

An interview will take place with a view to agreeing a placement in order that the school and volunteer will have the opportunity to find out about each other and to agree a role, timetable, support, dress code etc. The school will outline relevant policies school at the interview (i.e. those applicable to staff induction).

Occasional volunteers will be appointed at the headteacher's discretion and will not be required to go through the recruitment process. A written risk assessment will be conducted to determine what

checks, if any, are required. An occasional volunteer will always be supervised by a member of staff, unless the appropriate DBS checks have been obtained.

Any placement of a volunteer shall be of a fixed term of 1 term / 2 terms /1 year and shall at the expiry of the period terminate unless expressly renewed in writing. Any placement may, however, be terminated by the school at any time without notice if the Headteacher deems this to be in the best interest of the school, pupils or staff. Such termination need not involve any fault, shortcoming or wrong-doing attributable to the volunteer.

The school has a duty to promote disability and as a part of our actions to do this we will invite local disabled people to volunteer to help within school. In order to do this we will contact local community groups to forge links and partnerships.

## **Safeguarding**

Volunteers will be provided with safeguarding information as determined by the governing board, using a proportionate, risk-based approach.

The school will ensure that activities are planned properly and safely, and that volunteers are informed of these plans. The school will ensure that volunteers have access to a member of school staff, should they wish to discuss difficulties or report on issues that may arise.

All volunteers are required to be identified and located at all times. For this reason, the following process will be adhered to:

- Volunteers will sign in and out
- Volunteers will wear a visitor's badge at all times
- The headteacher will be made aware of where the volunteer is working

Volunteers will be made aware that they must report any safeguarding concerns in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The identity of the school's DSL and any deputies will be made known to all volunteers.

Any safeguarding concerns or allegations raised regarding a volunteer will be dealt with in line with the Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy and/or the Safeguarding Policy.

## **Management & Supervision of Volunteers**

The school will ensure that volunteers are given suitable induction training at the beginning of their placement

The volunteer will be given a named contact person who will review the work undertaken by the volunteer and will assist the volunteer generally and, particularly, in the event of any problems occurring.

Regular supervision of the volunteer will be provided as appropriate to the task undertaken and the needs of the volunteer.

The volunteer's role, including status with pupils, will be made clear.

Volunteers will be given opportunities to contribute their ideas and opinions about the work that they are engaged in.

Volunteers will be given guidelines/training regarding child protection issues/procedures, especially pupils disclosing possible abuse.

Volunteers are required to inform their named contact if they are unable to attend at the agreed time.

Repeated failure to inform the school of absences may result in the withdrawal of the volunteering opportunity

### **Support to Volunteers**

As a Trust, we value the work of volunteers in school and in order to demonstrate this we aim to:

- Show appreciation for the volunteer's work.
- Ensure volunteers have the appropriate and up-to-date information they need to do their work.
- Ensure that they are introduced to staff and other volunteers and have access to a support network.
- Ensure that they are issued with a staff file/guidelines

### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers will be told that information relating to pupils, parents and staff is confidential and volunteers will maintain confidentiality at all times. Information will be shared with volunteers on a need-to-know basis, and they will not have access to the school's records unless access is required to fulfil their role.

Information about volunteers is also a matter of confidentiality and application forms and personal details must be kept securely as is the case with staff personnel files by the <<Headteacher / Principal>> and not divulged to others except on a need-to-know basis.

### **Health & Safety Policies**

The School's policies, including the Health and Safety Policy and Safeguarding, will be explained to volunteers at the outset.

### **Insurance**

All volunteers should be made aware of the cover provided.

### **Expenses**

Out-of-pocket expenses will be paid to volunteers and the procedure for claiming these will be explained at the outset.

### **Volunteer Agreement**

The Volunteer agrees to carry out all reasonable tasks assigned to him/her to the best of their ability and to generally promote the interests of the School and to abide by the terms and conditions set out in this policy and agreement (see **Appendix 2**).

### **Complaints**

Any complaints made in relation to a volunteer will be managed in line with the Trust's Complaints Policy.

### **Monitoring and review**

All volunteers will be required to read this policy prior to their attendance at the school. The next review date for this policy is November 2025.

**APPENDIX 1**

### **VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM – FOR NEW VOLUNTEER**

Name of Volunteer: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms.....

Address:

.....  
.....

Home phone: ..... Mobile: .....

Email Address: .....

Emergency contact Name and contact number: .....

What activities/areas of the school's work would you like to help with?

Are there any particular age groups/classes you would like to work with?

Please tick below to indicate days when you would be available:

**Monday** am ( ) pm ( ) **Tuesday** am ( ) pm ( ) **Wednesday** am ( ) pm ( ) **Thursday** am ( ) pm ( )  
**Friday** am ( ) pm ( )

Do you have any disabilities/other needs we need to take into account or adjustments we need to make to allow you to work as a Volunteer in School? (Please give details)

**Please provide details of two people who can provide references for you:** (If this is a work experience placement from a secondary school you only need to provide one reference from the school that you attend)

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Name	Name
Address	Address
Telephone	Telephone
Email	Email

**I understand that I may be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check**

Signed
Date

**Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Application Form. Please hand it to the School Office, marked for the attention of the Head teacher or return it by post / email to the following address:**

*Insert address*

**Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we will be in touch as soon as possible.**

## Introduction

Thank you for offering your time and services to the school. Your help and support is appreciated and valued by staff and pupils.

## Security

When you arrive at school, please sign in at the office / reception where you will be issued with a visitor's badge. Please return your badge and sign out when you leave school.

## Health and Safety

The school has a Health and Safety policy and a copy of this will be made available to all volunteers. In the event of fire, evacuation procedures are displayed in the classrooms and in prominent positions around the school. Please make yourself familiar with these including the location of fire assembly points.

## First Aid

In the event of an emergency please alert the nearest member of staff who will find an appropriately trained first aider.

## When you are in school

Children are expected to treat all adults in school with respect. Please expect and accept only the highest standards of behaviour from pupils.

## Working in school

You will work under the direction of the class teacher or other designated staff member. If you are working on a one to one basis with a child you will always be based in the area outside of the classroom. You will never be required to accompany a child to the toilet or to assist with their personal care.

## Trips

There will always be at least one member of school staff on any visit. You may need to familiarise yourself with any relevant risk assessments for the activity.

## Child Protection

If you see, are told, or overhear something that causes you concern please speak to the class teacher in the first instance. The Safeguarding policy is available to all volunteers on request. Designated Safeguarding Lead: *Insert name*

## Confidentiality

All adults in school, including volunteers, are bound by a clause of confidentiality. Please treat anything you see or hear in school in total confidence. If asked by parents for information, please ask them to contact the class teacher, or the Head Teacher.

## **Declaration**

I confirm that I have read and understand the Volunteer Agreement.



I agree to treat any information that I am told or observe during my time in school with total confidentiality.

I have been made aware of who is my designated supervisor e.g. Class Teacher, Year Teacher, Head of Department.

I agree to carry out all reasonable tasks assigned to me to the best of my ability and to promote the interests of the School and to abide by the terms and conditions set out in this agreement.

I have received a copy of the latest guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1), the Safeguarding Policy and a copy of the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

<b>Signed</b>
<b>Date</b>