



Volunteering Policy

Contents

Section	Title	Page
1	Introduction and aims	3
2	How we use volunteers	3
3	How to apply to volunteer	4
4	Appointment of volunteers	4
5	Safeguarding	4
6	Induction and training	5
7	Confidentiality	5
8	Conduct of volunteers	6
9	Expenses	6
10	Insurance	6
11	Data protection and record keeping	6
12	Monitoring and review	6
13	Parent and Carer volunteers for school trips	6
-	Appendix 1 – Volunteer application form	7
-	Appendix 2 – Code of conduct for volunteers	10

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1. Introduction and aims

We believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the school's work, and that they enrich the school through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the school's strategic aims and vision, as well as its development plan.

The aim of Dowson's volunteer policy is to:

- Encourage the wider community to engage with the school, thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion
- Ensure that volunteers support the school's vision and values, and adhere to our policies
- Provide staff, volunteers and parents with clear expectations and guidelines
- Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers

This policy has been developed in line with the Department for Education (DfE)'s statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#).

2. How we use volunteers

At Dowson Primary Academy volunteers may:

- Hear children read
- Accompany school visits
- Work with individual children
- Work with small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or art

This isn't an exhaustive list.

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the governing board
- Parents
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local Residents
- Friends of the school/members of the PTA
- Members of volunteering services e.g. Beanstalk Readers

This is not an exhaustive list.

Members of the governing board working at the school in their capacity as governors (for instance, conducting school monitoring visits or attending meetings), are not covered by this policy. They are covered by our governor code of conduct.

3. How to apply to volunteer

The contact details of any prospective volunteer will be emailed to the Students and Volunteers coordinator who will...

- email an application form (see appendix 1) to the prospective volunteer.
- review the application form to ascertain the suitability for school.
- arrange for the volunteer to come into school and fill in DBS paperwork.

4. Appointment of volunteers

Volunteers are appointed by the Student and Volunteer Coordinator following an assessment of suitability.

All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training.

The headteacher reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.

Enhanced DBS checks for volunteers working in the school through other organisations will be conducted by the relevant organisation, if needed. The school will ask for written confirmation that enhanced DBS checks have been carried out before a volunteer is allowed to start work at the school.

Induction will be scheduled at a mutually agreed time and must take place **prior** to them beginning work at the school. In some cases, this is before the start date; in other cases, it will be on the morning of their first day.

5. Safeguarding

Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, and our volunteers must share our commitment to child protection.

To ensure we're upholding our responsibility to keep our pupils safe, we will:

- Conduct enhanced DBS checks with a barred list check on volunteers who:
 - Work 1-on-1 with pupils unsupervised
 - Work with groups of pupils unsupervised
 - Supervise or accompany groups of pupils on overnight residential visits
- Assess whether an external DBS meets the school's requirements e.g. where the volunteers is gaining experience as part of an educational course and has a DBS through this institution.
- Consider the results of any DBS checks that return with unspent and spent listed convictions, and assess these on a case-by-case basis, with regard given to the nature of the conviction and the nature of the work the volunteer will be involved in.
- Provide safeguarding training to all volunteers **prior** to them beginning work at the school, including ensuring that they have read and understood part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Expect volunteers to read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, school's Behaviour
- Require volunteers to agree and adhere to our volunteer's code of conduct (see appendix 2) which is written to reflect the school's policies on:
 - Safeguarding
 - Use of mobile phones
 - ICT and internet acceptable use
 - Online safety
 - Behaviour

- Staff Conduct
- Health and Safety
- Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised and are never left alone with pupils.
- Conduct a risk assessment to determine whether a volunteer who isn't working in regulated activity needs an enhanced DBS check. The risk assessment will consider:
 - The nature of the work they will be doing
 - What we know about them
 - References from employers or other voluntary roles
 - Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check
- Expect all volunteers to provide appropriate identification, complete a contact form for themselves and complete a form for their emergency contact/s. These details are added to the SCR by the admin team. Once a volunteer has ceased their work in school, the admin team will be alerted and their information will be removed from the SCR.

6. Induction and training

Induction will be scheduled at a mutually agreed time and must take place **prior** to the volunteer beginning work at the school. In some cases, this is before the start date; in other cases, it will be on the morning of their first day.

Training requirements will be determined by the headteacher, or the appropriate member of staff.

All volunteers must have safeguarding training. Other training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing.

The induction training covers:

- Routines and expectations
- A tour and introductions
- A discussion around who can support them whilst they are in school
- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Fire and Evacuation
- Confidentiality
- Conduct
- Any questions that the volunteer may have

7. Confidentiality

Information about pupils, parents and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues related to pupils, parents or staff with those outside of the organisation.

If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff. They shouldn't discuss them with pupils or parents.

This doesn't prevent volunteers from adhering to the school's safeguarding policy (with regard to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures).

If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in our Safeguarding Policy and inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

If concerns are related to whistle-blowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our whistle-blowing policy.

8. Conduct of volunteers

Volunteers must comply with the staff code of conduct (see separate Code of Conduct document).

9. Expenses

We do not allow volunteers to claim expenses.

10. Insurance

The school's insurance policy covers volunteers in the event of an accident or emergency.

If a volunteer is working at the school through another organisation, we will also check that organisation's insurance arrangements.

11 Data protection and record keeping

Our privacy notice for volunteers explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it.

We will:

- Remove details of volunteers from the single central record (SCR) once they no longer work at our school

12. Monitoring and review

This policy has been approved by the Principal..

13. Parent/ Carer volunteers for trips, visits and activities

Where parent/carers are required to support in school activities or external trips and visits, the teacher in charge will alert the Senior Leadership Team and EVC coordinator as to how many they will be asking for before asking for parent/carer availability.

The teacher in charge will ensure that parent/carer volunteers are in addition to appropriate school staff. Parent volunteers will support a member of the school team with their group. Where a parent/carer volunteer has oversight of a group, they will accompany a group led by a member of school staff. Parent/carers will not have sole responsibility for a group of pupils or be left unsupervised.

Further guidance around procedures and expectations for school staff and parent/carers can be found in EVC documentation.

Appendix 1: Volunteer Application Form

If you would like a placement or to volunteer, please complete this form in full and either return it to Lower School Reception (for the attention of Clare Lawrence) or email it to c.lawrence@dowsonprimary.com

Please note that the school may not be able to accommodate all preferences.

DATA PROTECTION NOTICE

Throughout this form, we ask for some personal data about you. We'll only use this data in line with data protection legislation and process your data for 1 or more of the following reasons permitted in law:

- You've given us your consent
- We must process it to comply with our legal obligations

You'll find more information on how we use your personal data in our privacy notice for volunteers. This can be found on the Trust website or requested from the school's policy folder.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name:	
Date of birth:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	

YOUR REQUIREMENTS

Why you would like to come to Dowson	
What relevant skills, abilities or experience do you have?	
Dates that you would be like to be here from and to	
The day/s and times that you would like to come	
What you require from the school (e.g. paper work)	

YOUR REQUIREMENTS

Which age range you would like to work with

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) INFORMATION

Dowson Academy is legally obligated to process an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before making appointments to relevant posts.

The enhanced DBS check will reveal both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings, and any other information held by local police that's considered relevant to the role. Any information that is "protected" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 will not appear on a DBS certificate.

Volunteers working in regulated activity will also require a barred list check.

Any data processed as part of the DBS check will be processed in accordance with data protection regulations and the trust's privacy notice.

Do you have an enhanced DBS check? (please circle)

Yes/No

If yes, what type of check do you have? (please circle)

Basic DBS / Standard DBS / Enhanced DBS / Enhanced DBS with barred list information

Date of check:

Certificate number:

OUR REQUIREMENTS

Please initial this box to show you understand our requirements

An understanding that safeguarding is a priority and everyone's responsibility. You must be willing to read any documents we send you in relation to safeguarding.

An enhanced DBS and barring list check – this is usually done through school or by college/university if enrolling on a course.

An understanding that professional conduct is required at all times and a willingness to follow our visitor/volunteer compliance agreement.

DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Dowson Primary Academy is committed to ensuring that applicants with disabilities or impairments receive equal opportunities and treatment.

If you have a disability or impairment, and would like us to make adjustments or arrangements to assist you, please state the arrangements you require:

Appendix 2: Volunteer Compliance Letter

Dear Volunteer or Visitor,

Welcome to Dowson Primary Academy and thank you for volunteering here. As a volunteer, you can expect to be treated with respect and we ask that you ensure respect and safety for all by complying with the following:

On arrival

- Ensure you have parked considerately, preferably using the staff/visitor car parks.
- Sign in using Entry Sign at the building you will be spending most of your time in (remember to wear your visitor badge and/or other ID at all times)
- Inform the office staff if you require any assistance either around school or in the event of an emergency.

Safeguarding

- School policies comply with Working Together 2018, the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education and Guidelines for Safer Working Practice 2013, all of which can be found in the staffrooms.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and you should familiarise yourself with the documentation that you will be given.
- Report any concerns IMMEDIATELY to either Mrs Thornburn, Mrs Lawrence, Miss Morris or Mrs Douse. In the unlikely event that one of them is not available please inform any member of teaching staff. Do not investigate any concerns and do not tell children that you will be able to keep whatever they tell you secret; they need to know that you might need to pass information on to keep them safe.
- Volunteers are not permitted to photograph children unless instructed to do so by their supervisor on a school device.
- Volunteers are not permitted to let anyone into the school.
- If you are working with a child/children in an area outside of their classroom, it is your responsibility to take them back to their room and ensure that they are received by a member of staff.
- Volunteers must not form personal relationships with pupils, either inside or outside of school, with whom they do not already have a personal relationship. This includes:
 - Exchanging contact information
 - Making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media
 - Arranging to meet pupils outside of school
- Volunteers should refrain from physical contact with pupils and should use their judgement to determine when physical contact is appropriate. If physical contact with pupils is required, volunteers should ask for a pupil's consent before touching them.
- Behaviour management is the responsibility of school staff. If volunteers witness behaviour that is in breach of the school's behaviour policy, or are struggling to manage the behaviour of pupils with whom they're working, they should alert the class teacher immediately. Volunteers should not attempt to reprimand pupils or issue sanctions.

Health and Safety

- You have a legal duty to care for the health and safety of yourself and others.
- Report any concerns IMMEDIATELY to a member of staff.
- Volunteers are not to administer first aid, except in an emergency where none of the designated first aiders are available.
- Medicines must only be given by authorised staff.
- If any child reports an asthma attack, remain calm and ask for help immediately. All staff are asthma trained. Staff and children are aware where inhalers are kept. Do not leave the child unattended.
- In the event of an accident or illness, all Teaching Assistants are First Aid trained. You have a duty of care to respond by alerting a member of staff.

- If you become unwell, alert a member of staff who will find and appropriately trained first aider.
- Hot drinks must be in a lidded cup if they are taken from the staffroom.

Fire or Evacuation

- If the alarm sounds, please leave via the nearest fire exit; if you are working with a child or a group, please ensure they remain calm and stay with you.
- Return children you were working with to their class at the assembly point on the playground.
- Meet at the visitor assembly point so that you can be accounted for.

Confidentiality

- As a volunteer, you are not expected to have access to personal data without express permission of the Principal.
- All matters discussed or observed in school must remain confidential.
- If parents approach volunteers for information, they should be directed to speak to a class teacher or the headteacher.
- Confidential material must remain on school premises and in a secure location.
- Miss Lane is the GDPR champion if you have any questions.

Conduct

- All visitors in school must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, setting an example for pupils by acting in a way that reflects the school's ethos and values. This includes:
 - Dressing in a way that is professional and appropriate to the work they are doing.
 - The use appropriate language.
 - Maintaining professional boundaries when working with children
 - Dressing appropriately
 - Ensuring that comments, including those made on social media, do not bring the school into disrepute.
- Volunteers must accept and follow instructions provided by supervisors and ask for guidance or clarification if required. Questions can be directed to the supervising member of staff, or to the school's volunteer co-ordinator, Clare Lawrence.
- Do not enter classrooms without prior arrangement.
- Take care of your belongings; school cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to property.
- Smoking is not permitted on the school premises/within the grounds.
- Use of mobile phones is limited to staff rooms and phones must be switched off or at least to silent whilst in school.
- Volunteers must not accept gifts from, or give gifts to, pupils. The exception is small tokens, such as those exchanged at the end of term or as a way of saying "thank you".
- Parent volunteers with children at the school must not act in a way that favours their own child, and should not approach their child unnecessarily during the school day (for instance, during break times). They may not use their time as a volunteer to discuss their child's education with school staff.
- If a volunteer is unable to come to school when they are expected/scheduled to be in, they must contact their supervisor or the school office as soon as possible.

Copies of school policies can be found online or can be requested at the school office.

Failure to adhere to this code of conduct may result in the termination of the placement. In more serious cases, misconduct will be treated in line with the school's staff disciplinary procedures.

Kind Regards,

Mrs K Thornburn