

St Mary's Catholic High School

Volunteers Policy



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Statement of Intent

At St Mary's Catholic High School, we recognise and value the effort taken by parents and other volunteers who contribute towards our school.

We encourage your assistance and acknowledge that many school activities and processes would be at risk if it were not for your help. As a result, we want to make sure that your time spent in the school is productive and enjoyable.

The development of any volunteer, whether for one day or for a number of sessions over a longer period, must take into account the needs of pupils and the staff to whom they are assigned. We have a duty to ensure that the welfare of pupils is promoted, and that they are safeguarded from harm.

This policy sets out the practices and procedures which will be followed when appointing, managing and supervising volunteers, as well as a code of conduct which all volunteers are required to comply with.

1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory 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
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- **[Updated]** DfE (2020) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'

2. School Regulations

2.1 All volunteers will be required to make themselves familiar with school procedures, including the following:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Data and E-Security Breach Prevention and Management Plan
- Social Media Policy
- Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy

3. Regulated Activity

For the purpose of this policy, a volunteer will be engaging in “regulated activity” if they work unsupervised when teaching or looking after pupils regularly or provide pastoral care on a one-off basis.

4. Safeguarding Pupils and Child Protection

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

Depending on the level of interaction with a pupil, it may be necessary to obtain a DBS certificate.

The school is required to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate if the volunteer intends to carry out an activity for the school that includes unsupervised contact with pupils.

The school is not required to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate if the volunteer intends to carry out an activity for the school that includes supervised contact with pupils.

For volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have the opportunity to come into contact with pupils on a regular basis, it is at the discretion of the school to decide whether or not a DBS check is required.

The school will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information, for any volunteer who is new to working in regulated activity.

The school will not obtain barred list information for any volunteer who does not engage in regulated activity. The DBS cannot provide barred list information on any person, including volunteers, who are not in, or seeking to enter into, regulated activity.

The school may decide to conduct a repeat DBS check on any volunteer it has concerns about, which will include barred list information.

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 of the building at the [school office](#)
- Volunteers will wear a visitor's badge at all times
- The headteacher will be made aware of where the volunteer is working

All volunteers will remain alert to and, when it comes to their attention, report to the LA the potential need for early help for a pupil who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- Has SEND.
- Is a young carer.
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement.
- Is frequently missing or goes missing from care or home.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges, such as drug and alcohol misuse.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is a privately fostered child.

Allegations of abuse made against volunteers will be dealt with in accordance with the [Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy](#).

5. Disqualification under the Childcare Act

Any individual who is classified as being disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and section 25 of the Childcare Act 2006, is unable to provide any means of childcare provision.

Any volunteer who is directly concerned with the management of childcare provision, or who works with children on a regular basis, whether supervised or not, is covered by these regulations and may be disqualified.

An individual will be classed as disqualified if:

- They have been reported on the DBS Children's Barred List.
- They have been noted as committing certain violent and/or sexual offences against children and/or adults.
- They have been refused any provision relating to childcare, or have been prohibited from private fostering.
- They have received certain orders in relation to the care of children.

The school will not employ any volunteer who is classified as being disqualified under the above regulations.

When gathering information to make decisions, the school will ensure that they act proportionately in order to minimise any intrusion into an individual's private life. The GDPR does not prevent an employer from asking questions relating to the suitability of the individual employed on safeguarding grounds.

6. Supervision

If a volunteer is required to be supervised when undertaking an activity, who would otherwise be in regulated activity if not supervised, the school will ensure that:

- There is supervision by an individual who is in regulated activity.
- The supervision is regular and day-to-day.
- The supervision is reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of the pupils.

When determining what supervision is reasonable so that the volunteer would not be in regulated activity, the school will take the following factors into consideration:

- The ages of the pupils, including whether there is a large gap in their ages
- The number of pupils that the volunteer is working with

- Whether or not there are other staff members present during the activity
- The nature of the volunteer's work and the opportunity for contact with pupils
- How vulnerable the pupils are
- How many volunteers would be supervised by each member of supervising staff

7. Health & Safety

Volunteers will be required to read the [Health and Safety Policy](#) prior to undertaking any activity on behalf of the school.

Volunteers will ensure that they are familiar with emergency procedures, e.g. evacuation, and of any health and safety procedures relating to the activity they will be undertaking, e.g. whilst in a cookery class.

If a volunteer notices any potential hazard which may put another individual at risk of harm, they will report this immediately to the [class teacher](#) or [a senior member of staff](#).

8. Absence

Volunteers are required to inform the [school office](#) by [8:00am on the day they were due to attend](#) if they are unable to attend at the agreed time.

Failure to inform the school on more than [three](#) instances may result in the volunteer being unable to attend the school on any further occasions.

If a volunteer is called away in the event of an emergency while volunteering, they will inform the class teacher or senior leader, and will sign out of the building before leaving the premises.

9. Confidentiality

Volunteers will be reminded that all information with regard to individual pupils and members of staff is confidential, and that the sharing of data is protected under the Data Protection Act 2018.

[Updated] Volunteers will not be permitted to discuss any confidential information regarding a pupil or member of staff with any other individual.

Any volunteer who breaches the confidentiality rules will be asked to leave the premises and will not be able to return to undertake any further activity.

There may be instances where a volunteer is required to pass information to a member of staff, such as if they notice a pupil being bullied or subjected to harm.

Volunteers will report any concerns to a member of staff and are instructed not to notify the parents.

10. Internet Use

All volunteers will be required to behave in an ethical and respectful manner with regards to email and internet use, and will be expected to follow the processes outlined in the following school policies:

- **Online Safety Policy**
- **Data and E-Security Breach Prevention and Management Plan**
- **Social Media Policy**
- **Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy**

Volunteers will have restricted access to the school network and will be instructed on ensuring appropriate use.

No volunteers are permitted to make contact with pupils via social media or email, or arrange to meet pupils outside of school.

Volunteer code of conduct

All volunteers are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour and conduct when undertaking any activity at the school.

Volunteers will:

- Observe the high standards of behaviour and ethical conduct mandated by the school.
- Respect other volunteers, members of staff and pupils, and make them feel valued.
- Be approachable, pleasant and positive role models for pupils.
- Adhere to all school policies, including the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Data Protection Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, and Behavioural Policy.
- Maintain confidentiality of personal information at all times, unless there is a need to report an issue to a member of staff.
- Treat all pupils and members of staff equally.
- Report any incident of bad behaviour to the class teacher or a senior member of staff immediately.
- Dress appropriately and behave in a manner which promotes healthy and safe working practices.
- Accept and follow directions from the supervisor and seek guidance through clarification where uncertain of tasks or requirements.
- Observe safe working practices which avoid unnecessary risks, apply reasonable instructions given by supervisors, and report any potential hazards in the workplace to the supervisor.
- Avoid waste or extravagance and make proper use of the resources.
- Conduct work in a cooperative manner.
- Turn off mobile phones while on school premises.

Volunteers will not:

- Discipline pupils; if there are any problems, the class teacher or a senior member of staff will be informed immediately, and they will manage the situation.
- Shout at, hit, threaten or handle a pupil.
- Take photographs in school without the prior permission of the headteacher.
- Give gifts or treats, such as a present or sweets
- Develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with pupils.
- Work with pupils when not in the proper physical or emotional state to do so, e.g. under medication which causes drowsiness, or under extreme stress which may impair judgement.
- Behave in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner, e.g. smoking or drinking alcohol.
- Share personal contact details with pupils or make personal arrangements to meet pupils outside school.
- Express any extremist or discriminatory views, or any views that would offend others.
- Make inappropriate jokes or remarks of a sexual, racial, intimidating, discriminatory or offensive nature.
- Behave in a manner which may bring the school into disrepute when representing the school.
- Give or receive (other than 'token') gifts, unless arranged through the headteacher, e.g. giving an outgrown sports kit, football boots or uniform to a pupil.