



The
MAST
Academy Trust

Policy	Recruitment of Volunteers	
Owner	The Mast Executive Administrator	
Date approved	8 th March 2022	
Approver	The Staffing Committee for the Trust Board	

Current version	V1.0
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Next review due	Spring 2025
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Objective of Policy

To provide guidance to schools on recruitment of volunteers in conjunction with the Safer recruitment policy.

Version Control	
Version Number	Summary of amends from previous version
1.0	Development of guidance

Sign off requirements	
Approvers	Position
Staffing Committee	Trust Board
Reviewers	Position
Natasha Greenough	CEO The MAST
Tim Wade	Trustee

Current advice from the Safer Recruitment Consortium and Volunteer England on the recruitment of school volunteers followed by the Mast Academy Trust and schools.

Templates and forms

The SRC recommends that as volunteers are also seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults that schools should apply a safeguarding process when recruiting volunteers to work with children. To assist schools with this process we have created a volunteer application form and a model volunteer role profile and person specification.

Volunteers fill a very wide variety of roles, the template profile only includes the responsibility the role has for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Schools will need to add specific details to reflect their requirements.

Criteria

The criteria for when a recruitment process for a volunteer is required needs to be applied with common sense and the process may need to be adapted to cater for particular roles and sensitivities. For example, if a parent volunteer is one of a group helping out on a one-off occasion such as a day trip, a fete, a sports day or a school disco, with an appropriate level of supervision there is no need for a formal recruitment and selection process, or for a DBS certificate – furthermore, it would be unlawful in these circumstances to undertake a DBS barred list check. On the other hand, if the volunteer is going to have an ongoing role that involves regular contact with children, or means that the person will be on the premises when children are present regularly or frequently, a similar recruitment process should be adopted as would be used to recruit a paid member of staff filling a similar role.

The process might need to be presented differently, or adapted to be more informal, but the principal safeguards and features of the recruitment and selection process should be the same.

In those cases, the process should include:

- information about the trust and school's commitment to safeguarding children
- completion of an application or 'registration' form
- obtaining references
- a face-to-face interview
- pre-employment checks similar to those which would be applied in the case of paid employment including a DBS certificate and, if the volunteer will be in regulated activity, a check of the DBS barred list.

Where volunteers are recruited from another institution, the school to which they have come to work should obtain assurance from the institution that the person has been subject to a proper recruitment process that includes the necessary safeguards

Safeguarding principles should also apply when interviewing volunteers, but it is important to make interviews more informal than for paid staff. They should be very much a two-way process. However, this does not mean that the interview should not probe into candidates' attitudes and motives and their suitability for work with children. This is even more important for candidates who perhaps have no previous experience of work with children. The Good Practice Bank on the Volunteering England website includes examples of advice about interviewing volunteers <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/>

Role description

When writing a volunteer role description, the school should try to make it detailed but concise. Building the description around different headings is useful. Some suggested headings:

- Title of role be specific, don't just call it a volunteer position
- Purpose of role
- Main activities/tasks
- Qualities/experience/skills sought (where relevant)
- Training provision
- Availability
- Location
- Main point of contact/supervisor
- To be responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people within the school.

Writing a volunteer role description will also help you to focus on your objectives. It is important to make sure that all the necessary resources and procedures are in place before the volunteer arrives; for example, if they need any particular equipment or supervision for their work, make sure you know when these will be available.

Induction

Schools should ensure volunteers are given a clear induction programme which includes their responsibilities for safeguarding, what is and what is not acceptable behaviour towards children, what to do if they believe there is a safeguarding concern and what reasonable steps they can take to avoid creating concerns themselves.