

The Meadows School



Volunteer Policy

Updated: Jan 2026
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Ratified by Governors: Jan 2026

Amendment Register

Amendment Number	Date	Detail	Amended By	Approved By
0	Feb 2019	Initial Issue	R Byatt	Headteacher
2	Feb 2020	No revision required	N Hinton	Headteacher
3	23/11/2020	Ratified	C Swoffer	FGB
4	15/02/2023	Date change and DBS details updated	A.Benjamin	
5	04/03/22	Info added on Post Appointment-safeguarding & Confidentiality Sections/ Appendices	T. Papaspyrou	
6	Jan 2026	Volunteer Co-ordinator name updated	E. Pace	Headteacher

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1. Rationale

This policy has been adopted and written in relation to the Volunteer Policy at the Meadows School and should be read in conjunction with the LA's Policies and Procedures and any DfE Policy, Statements and Guidelines. Advice on all aspects of this policy can be sought from your HR Service.

2. Introduction

Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility; good practice has to be built into routine practice and procedures. Nowhere is this more important than in the recruitment and vetting of people who have contact with children. Volunteers are seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults and therefore it is vital that schools adopt robust recruitment and vetting procedures for volunteers that minimise the risk of using a volunteer who might abuse children or is otherwise unsuited to work with them.

3. Child Protection

- 3.1. This policy document should be read in conjunction with the DfE statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (September 2022), and the school Recruitment and selection policy and procedures.
- 3.2. All aspects of this policy are geared toward recruiting only volunteers that are capable and prepared to uphold the highest standards of safety, protection, and welfare of children.
- 3.3. 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.
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Require volunteers to agree and adhere to our code of conduct and to read, and adhere to, the school's policies on:
 - Safeguarding

- Use of mobile phones
 - Online Safety Policy and ICT and internet acceptable use
 - Behaviour
 - Management of Allegations against Staff
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- ✓ 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

4. Recruiting Volunteers

Volunteers fall into four categories and this document provides guidance on the process which should be followed:

4.1. Individuals not known to the school.

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.

4.2. Individuals known to the school.

If for example a school approaches a parent who is well known to the school to take on 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 persons aptitude, and suitability.
- undertaking a Disclosure & Barring Check (where applicable).
- ensuring that the individual has a legal right to live and work in the UK (Asylum & Immigration check)

4.3. One off Volunteers

In circumstances where a volunteer's role will be 'one off' – e.g. helping at a concert or school fete, accompanying teachers and students on a day outing, the measures shown above will not be necessary provided that the person is not to be left alone/unsupervised in charge of children.

This does not include trips which involve an overnight stay.

4.4. Volunteers recruited by other Organisations .

Where volunteers recruited by another organisation work in schools, e.g. sports coaches from a local club, the school should obtain assurances, in the form of written confirmation from that organisation that the volunteer has undergone the appropriate clearance checks. Checks should be in line with those required for record keeping under the Single Central Record.

5. Vetting

5.1. Application Form

All volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Application Form. A copy of this form should be forwarded to the HR Service Centre in order for the DBS and Asylum & Immigration checks to be processed.

5.2. Verification of Identity

It is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, the school must see proof of identity, which should include photographic proof and proof of address.

6. Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Check

6.1. DBS requirements for volunteers falls into two categories:

(1) Supervised – Where a volunteer is supervised this no longer meets regulated activity. There is no requirement to obtain an Enhanced DBS certificate, however, one may be obtained, but without a check on the 'Children's Barred List.'

and

(2) Unsupervised – An unsupervised volunteer meets regulated activity and an Enhanced DBS Certificate with a check against Children's Barred List must be obtained. Depending on the area the volunteer will be placed in school an Enhanced DBS with Children and Adult Barred List maybe required.

- 6.2. Where required, all checks must be obtained prior to commencement. There is no charge for DBS checks for volunteers, as long as the criteria laid down by the DBS is met.
- 6.3. The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002 defines a Volunteer as:
- ‘A person engaged in an activity, which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party other than or in addition to a close relative.’***
- 6.4. The position or activities of a student or work placement do not therefore meet these criteria and the charge of a DBS Clearance will need to be met by the school.
- 6.5. ***It is important not to rely solely on a DBS check to screen out unsuitable volunteers. This is an essential safeguard but will only pick out those abusers who have been convicted or come to the attention of the Police.***
- 6.6. The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006,**
- 6.7. The act requires organisations to confirm that the volunteer has a legal right to live and work in the UK. This check can be undertaken at the same time as the DBS check prior to commencement.
- 6.8. References**

Two specific references should be sought for a volunteer, by the school. Reference enquiries should include a request for a specific statement about whether the referee knows of any reason why the person might be unsuitable for work relating to children, and if so details of those concerns. The school must not accept a testimonial e.g. to whom it may concern letter, under no circumstances should a reference from a relative be accepted.

[A template Volunteer Reference Request can be found on the HR Virtual Office.](#)

7. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975

All volunteers requiring a DBS Check will be informed that the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provides that when applying for certain jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered ‘protected’. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account.

8. Record Keeping

Schools must include details of checks made on volunteers in their single central record.

9. Post Appointment

9.1. Induction

There should be an induction programme for all volunteers; the purpose of induction is to:

- provide training and information about the schools policies and procedures;
- support individuals in a way that is appropriate for their role in the school;
- confirm the conduct expected within school.
- provide opportunities for the volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role;
- enable the school to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

The content and nature of the induction process will vary according to the role and previous experience of the volunteer, but as far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is concerned the induction programme should include information about, and written statements of:

- policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g. child protection, anti-bullying, anti-racism, physical intervention/restrain, intimate care, internet safety and any local child protection/safeguarding procedures.
- safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff, volunteers and students in the establishment;
- how and with whom concerns about those issues should be raised.

9.2. Health and safety

Schools have a duty of care to avoid exposing volunteers to risks to their health and safety. Schools should ensure that volunteers are made aware of the school's health and safety policy and practical safety issues as part of their induction.

9.3. Grievance and Disciplinary

Schools should have a clear procedure in place to deal with complaints by or about volunteers. These procedures should be separate to the procedures for paid staff to maintain a distinctiveness between staff and volunteers.

9.4. Confidentiality

Volunteers should be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff and schools must ensure that this is explicit when using volunteers.

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 whistleblowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our whistleblowing policy.

9.5. Expenses

The school can choose to pay reasonable expenses to volunteers; **these must only be out of pocket expenses** e.g. travel for which receipts must be provided.

Appendices:

- ✓ School Volunteer Application Form
- ✓ Code of Conduct for Volunteers
- ✓ Volunteers Evaluation Form.



School Volunteer application form

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all volunteers to share this commitment.

Please complete the application form in full. 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.

PERSONAL DETAILS

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

AVAILABILITY

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM					
PM					

How many hours per week/month would you like to volunteer?	
Can you commit to at least 1 term?	

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS
Do you have experience working as a volunteer, especially with children? If yes, please include details in the box below.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Why would you like to volunteer at the Meadows School?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Do you have any particular skills, employment experience or hobbies you would like to share with the school? (For example, languages spoken, sports, scouting, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Do you have any relevant qualifications?

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

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Membership of Relevant Professional Bodies

Name of Professional Body	Type of Membership	Date of Memberships	Membership Number

REFERENCES

Your placement as a volunteer will be subject to satisfactory references. Please provide details of two people (not relatives) who would be able to supply a reference for you.

Name:	Name:
Relationship to you:	Relationship to you:
Address:	Address:
Telephone number:	Telephone number:
Email address:	Email address:

DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

The Meadows School is committed to ensuring that applicants with disabilities or impairments receive equal opportunities and treatment.

- Do you have, or have you had in the past any disability which makes it difficult for you to carry out normal day to day activities?
Yes/ No
- If you would like us to make adjustments or arrangements to assist you, please state below the arrangements you require:

Employment History

Please complete the following, starting with your current employment and include all employment/voluntary work. Please also include any breaks in employment history together with the reason for the break.

From Month/Year	To Month/Year	Employer's Name and Address	Position Held	Responsibilities	Reason for Leaving/Break In Employment

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) INFORMATION

The Meadows School 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 school's privacy notice.

Do you have a 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:	

Declaration

I confirm that the information given on this form is accurate.	Yes / No
I confirm that there is no reason as to why I may be unsuitable to work with children.	Yes / No
If you have indicated yes to any of the above questions, please explain why below.	
•	



Code of conduct and Confidentiality Agreement for Volunteers

By signing this form, volunteers agree to the following:

1. School rules and policies

- 1.1. Volunteers will follow all school rules and policies, including those on:
 - 1.1.1. Child protection
 - 1.1.2. Online Safety and ICT acceptable use
 - 1.1.3. Mobile phones
 - 1.1.4. Data protection
 - 1.1.5. Health and safety
 - 1.1.6. Equality
 - 1.1.7. Whistleblowing
 - 1.1.8. Behaviour
 - 1.1.9. Staff Code of Conduct
- 1.2. Copies of the school policies are available online or from the school office.

2. Professional conduct

- 2.1. 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 coordinator- **Eileen Pace**.
- 2.2. 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 must not attempt to reprimand pupils or issue sanctions. Volunteers will not be involved in physical interventions, manual handling, administration of medication or the personal care of students.**
- 2.3. Volunteers must always conduct themselves in a professional manner. This includes:
 - 2.3.1. Dressing in a way that is professional and appropriate to the work they are doing.
 - 2.3.2. Refraining from using inappropriate language
 - 2.3.3. Setting an example for pupils by acting in a way that reflects the school's ethos and values.
 - 2.3.4. Behaving in a way that is appropriate for the role they are undertaking.
 - 2.3.5. Ensuring that comments, including those made on social media, do not bring the school into disrepute.

- 2.4. 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."
- 2.5. Volunteers must not transport pupils in their own cars.
- 2.6. Parent volunteers with children at the school must not act in a way that favors 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.
- 2.7. 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. Inconsistent attendance may result in the placement being reviewed or terminated.

3. Safeguarding

- 3.1. Volunteers must be familiar with, and adhere to, the school's safeguarding and child protection policy. Safeguarding training will be provided to all volunteers before they begin their placement as appropriate.
- 3.2. If volunteers have concerns about the welfare of a child, or if a child makes a disclosure, they should speak directly to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL.
- 3.3. 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.
- 3.4. Volunteers must alert the DSL if a pupil develops an infatuation with them, and 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:
 - 3.4.1. Exchanging contact information
 - 3.4.2. Contacting pupils outside of school, including on social media
 - 3.4.3. Arranging to meet pupils outside of school.
- 3.5. Volunteers must not take or share photos of pupils using a personal device.

4. Health and safety

- 4.1. Volunteers must abide by the school's health and safety and first aid policies. Volunteers are not to administer first aid.
- 4.2. Volunteers must be familiar with the school's fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures.
- 4.3. Volunteers must sign in and sign out at the beginning and end of every visit and must wear a visitor badge at all times.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1. Information about pupils, parents and staff at the school is confidential, and should not be shared with anyone else. Volunteers shouldn't discuss pupils with parents or other children. If parents approach volunteers for information, they should be directed to speak to a class teacher or the headteacher.

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.

Name of Volunteer:	Signature:



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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
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EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

-

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