

**Three Counties Academy Trust**



# Volunteer Policy

## #SG37

Last amended 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026 (v1.1)

**Subject to periodic review. To be reviewed no later than 8<sup>th</sup> March 2029**

**Version history**

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## Common abbreviations and acronyms

<b>AA</b>	Admissions Authority	<b>GPA</b>	Government Procurement Arrangement
<b>AAI</b>	Adrenaline Auto-Injector (Epi Pen)	<b>HASH</b>	Herefordshire Association of Secondary Heads
<b>ACM</b>	Asbestos Containing Materials	<b>HBV</b>	Honour Based Violence
<b>AFH</b>	Academies Financial Handbook	<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>AHT</b>	Assistant Headteacher	<b>H&amp;S</b>	Health and Safety
<b>AIR</b>	Attendance Intervention Reviews	<b>HoS</b>	Head of School
<b>APIs</b>	Application Programme Interfaces	<b>HSE</b>	Health and Safety Executive
<b>BAME</b>	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds	<b>ICO</b>	Information Commissioners Office
<b>BCP</b>	Business Continuity Plan	<b>IHP</b>	Individual Healthcare Plan
<b>BFR</b>	Budget Forecast Return	<b>IRMS</b>	Information and Records Management Society
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	<b>IWF</b>	Internet Watch Foundation
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer	<b>KCSIE</b>	Keeping Children Safe in Education
<b>CFO</b>	Chief Financial Officer	<b>KS1/2/3/4</b>	Key Stage 1/2/3/4
<b>CIF</b>	Condition Improvement Fund	<b>LAC</b>	Looked After Child
<b>CIN</b>	Child in Need	<b>LADO</b>	Local Authority Designated Officer
<b>CLA</b>	Children Looked After	<b>LGB</b>	Local Governing Body
<b>CMIE</b>	Child Missing in Education	<b>LLC</b>	Low-Level Concerns

<b>COO</b>	Chief Operating Officer	<b>LSA</b>	Learning Support Assistants
<b>COSHH</b>	Control and Substances Hazardous to Health	<b>MASH</b>	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
<b>CP</b>	Child Protection	<b>MAT</b>	Multi-Academy Trust
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development	<b>MFA</b>	Multi-Factor Authentication
<b>CSCS</b>	Children's Social Care Services	<b>MFL</b>	Modern Foreign Language
<b>CSE</b>	Child Sexual Exploitation	<b>NCSC's</b>	National Cyber Security Centres
<b>CTIRU</b>	Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit	<b>NPQEL</b>	National Professional Qualification in Executive Leadership
<b>CWD</b>	Children with Disabilities	<b>PA</b>	Persistent Absence
<b>DBS</b>	Disclosure and Barring Service	<b>PAN</b>	Published Admission Number
<b>DDSL</b>	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	<b>PECR</b>	Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations
<b>DfE</b>	Department for Education	<b>PEP</b>	Personal Education Plan
<b>DHT</b>	Deputy Headteacher	<b>PEEP</b>	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan
<b>DSE</b>	Display Screen Equipment	<b>PEx</b>	Permanent Exclusion
<b>DSL</b>	Designated Safeguarding Lead	<b>PLAC</b>	Previously Looked After Child
<b>DPO</b>	Data Protection Officer	<b>PP</b>	Pupil Premium
<b>EAL</b>	English as an Additional Language	<b>PSHE</b>	Personal, Social and Health Education
<b>ECT</b>	Early Career Teacher	<b>PSED</b>	Public Sector Equality Duty

<b>EHA</b>	Early Help Assessment	<b>PTFA</b>	Parent, Teacher and Friends Association
<b>EHCNA</b>	Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment	<b>RIDDOR</b>	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
<b>EHCP</b>	Education, Health and Care Plan	<b>RHE</b>	Relationships and Health Education
<b>EHE</b>	Elective Home Education	<b>RSHE</b>	Relationships, Sex and Health Education
<b>ELSA</b>	Emotional, Literacy and Support Assistant	<b>SALT</b>	Speech and Language Therapist
<b>ESFA</b>	Education and Skills Funding Agency	<b>SARC</b>	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
<b>EVC</b>	Educational Visit Coordinator	<b>SBM</b>	School Business Manager
<b>EWO</b>	Education Welfare and Safeguarding Support Officer	<b>SCCs</b>	Standard Contractual Clauses
<b>EYFS</b>	Early Years Foundation Stage	<b>SDQ</b>	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
<b>FBV</b>	Fundamental British Values	<b>SEMH</b>	Social, Emotional, and Mental Health
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation	<b>SENCO</b>	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
<b>FOI</b>	Freedom of Information	<b>SEND</b>	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
<b>FSM</b>	Free School Meals	<b>SLA's</b>	Service Level Agreements
<b>FTS</b>	Find a Tender Service	<b>STEM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
<b>GAG</b>	General Annual Grant	<b>TA</b>	Teaching Assistant
<b>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulation	<b>TCAT</b>	Three Counties Academy Trust
<b>GIAS</b>	Get Information about Schools	<b>VSH</b>	Virtual School Headteacher

## **Statement of intent**

At Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT), we recognise and value the effort taken by volunteers who contribute towards TCAT and our schools.

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.

**NB. Where the term “parent” or “parents” is used this includes those who act as carers or have parental responsibility.**

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance and good practice 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 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'

Where legislation has been passed or updated during the shelf life of this policy, we will always apply the latest version available irrespective of the version quoted here.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Privacy Statement for Volunteers and Visitors Data (FI12(D))
- Data Protection Policy (FI20)
- Complaints Policy and Procedure (GN9)
- Staff Code of Conduct (HR26)
- Staff and Volunteer Confidentiality Policy (HR32)
- Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (SG1)
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy (SG5)
- Reporting Low-Level Safeguarding Concerns Policy (SG11)
- Safer Recruitment Policy (SG13)
- Sharing Safeguarding Information Policy (SG50)

Central TCAT policies have the policy number identified, e.g. "SG1". Where no policy number is identified this indicates the policy is a school specific policy available from an individual TCAT school's website.

## 2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

**"Volunteers"** are 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.

**"Regular volunteers"** are individuals who volunteer at any TCAT school:

- Three or more times in a 30-day period
- Once a week or more
- On an overnight stay

A volunteer will be engaging in **regulated activity** in relation to children if they undertake any of the following:

### Personal and Health Care

- Providing personal care, including help with:
  - Washing, dressing, or toileting
  - Eating, where assistance is needed due to illness or disability
- Providing health care, delivered by or under the supervision of a health care professional

### Teaching, Training, or Supervision

- Teaching, training, or instruction of children, unless:

- It is incidental to teaching adults, and
  - It is carried out only on a regular basis under day-to-day supervision of someone already engaging in regulated activity
- Care for or supervision of children, unless:
  - It is incidental to care for adults, and
  - It is carried out only on a regular basis under day-to-day supervision
- Advice or guidance provided wholly or mainly for children, where it relates to their physical, emotional, or educational well-being

### **Frequency and Timing**

Activity is considered regulated if:

- It is carried out frequently by the same person
- Occurs on more than three days in any 30-day period, or
- Takes place between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m., where face-to-face contact with children may occur

### **Other Specific Activities**

- Moderating a public interactive communication service likely to be used mainly by children
- Driving a vehicle used only for transporting children (and their supervisors/carers)

### **Workplaces and Roles**

An activity is also regulated if:

- It is carried out in:
  - A school, academy, pupil referral unit, nursery school, children's home, or childcare premises
- It is performed as:
  - Paid work, except where temporary or occasional and not listed above
  - Voluntary work, except where temporary, occasional, or supervised as described above

- It is undertaken for or in connection with the establishment, and it allows the person to have contact with children

### **3. Application to be a volunteer**

Anyone who wishes to become a volunteer at a TCAT school, either on an occasional or more regular basis, will be required to submit a Volunteer Application Form to the Headteacher/Head of School at that school. A copy of the form must be sent to the CFO by the Headteacher/Head of School.

#### **Occasional volunteers**

Occasional volunteers will be appointed at the Headteacher/Head of Schools discretion and will not be required to go through the application process. A written risk assessment will be conducted to determine what checks, if any, are required and this must be signed off by the CFO or the Executive Headteacher/CEO before commencing volunteering.

An occasional volunteer will always be supervised by a member of staff, unless the appropriate DBS checks and sign off have been obtained.

#### **Regular volunteers**

Regular volunteers will always go through the following application process:

- The individual will be asked to have an informal discussion with the Headteacher/Head of School to ensure they are suitable for the role
- The appropriate safer recruitment checks will be undertaken, and the CFO will be informed
- The individual will be made aware of the roles and responsibilities they will be undertaking
- Two references will be sought

#### **Safeguarding checks**

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

All engagements to participate in an activity will be conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check (if appropriate) and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training. The Headteacher/Head of School reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.

The Headteacher/Head of 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 engagement with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision
- What TCAT and 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.

Details of the risk assessment will be recorded and any DBS checks applied for will be recorded on the TCAT and individual school's Single Central Record.

If a volunteer will be working in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information will be required.

The school will not request barred list information on a volunteer if they are supervised, as they are not considered to be engaged in regulated activity.

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 Headteacher/Head of School after consulting the CFO, to decide whether or not an enhanced DBS check is required.

Volunteers will not be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check; however, TCAT will consider obtaining a new DBS check, at the level appropriate to the role, if there are concerns about a volunteer.

All checks will be conducted in line with the TCAT's Safer Recruitment Policy.

## **4. Supervision**

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

- There is supervision by an individual who is in regulated activity relating to children
- 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, TCAT and our schools 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

## **5. Induction**

Volunteers will be required to read and agree to the Volunteer Code of Conduct and Staff Code of Conduct before starting their role at a TCAT school.

All volunteers will be required to make themselves familiar with TCAT and school procedures as part of their induction, including the following:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Reporting Low-Level Safeguarding Concerns Policy
- Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

- Health and Safety Policy
- MAT Fire Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy
- Staff Confidentiality Policy
- Photography and Images Policy

Volunteers will be provided with access to the above documents upon their induction.

Volunteers will be required to read Part 1 of 'Keeping children safe in education' and will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction.

All volunteers will be provided with a point of contact within the individual TCAT school who they can go to if they have any questions or issues they need to discuss.

## **6. Safeguarding**

Volunteers will be provided with safeguarding information as determined by the Trust Board and Local Governing Body, using a proportionate, risk-based approach.

TCAT and individual TCAT schools will ensure that activities are planned properly and safely, and that volunteers are informed of these plans. The individual TCAT 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 Reception
- Volunteers will wear a visitor's badge at all times
- The Headteacher/Head of School will be made aware of where the volunteer is volunteering

Volunteers will be made aware that they must report any safeguarding concerns in line with TCAT's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. 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 Reporting Low-Level Safeguarding Concerns Policy and/or the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

## **7. Health and safety**

Volunteers will be required to read TCAT's Health and Safety Policy prior to undertaking any activity on behalf of TCAT or a TCAT 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**

All volunteers will be required to act in line with TCAT's Staff and Volunteer Confidentiality Policy.

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

Information will be shared with volunteers on a need-to-know basis, and they will not have access to TCAT's or the school's records unless access is required to fulfil their role.

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. If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in the Sharing Safeguarding Information Policy and inform the DSL.

If concerns are related to whistleblowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in TCAT's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **10. Complaints**

Any complaints made in relation to a volunteer will be managed in line with TCAT's Complaints Policy and Procedures. TCAT's Privacy Statement for Volunteers and Visitors Data explains what information will be collected about volunteers and why the school collects this. The school will retain records relating to volunteers in line with the school's records retention schedule.

## Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the published schedule at the front of this document and at any point material changes require it by the Executive Headteacher/CEO in collaboration with the Board appointed Trustee, the Trust Board and Executive and Senior Leadership.

Any changes made to the policy will be amended by the Executive Headteacher/CEO and will be communicated to Executive Leaders, the TCAT Central Team and to Headteachers/Heads of School, who, in turn, will alert school-based staff.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is 8<sup>th</sup> March 2029.

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Executive Headteacher/CEO

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Board appointed Trustee

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Volunteer code of conduct**

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

Volunteers will:

- Observe the high standards of behaviour and ethical conduct mandated by TCAT
- Be approachable, pleasant, and positive role models for pupils
- Adhere to all TCAT and school policies, including the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Health and Safety Policy, Data Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, and Behaviour 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 and with respect
- Report any incident of challenging 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

- Make proper use of the resources
- Conduct work in a cooperative manner

Volunteers will not:

- Discipline pupils; if there are any problems, the class teacher or a senior member of staff will be informed immediately
- Shout at, hit, threaten, or handle a pupil
- Take photographs in a TCAT school without the prior permission of the Headteacher/Head of School
- 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 TCAT or our schools into disrepute
- Give or receive (other than 'token') gifts, unless agreed by the Headteacher/Head of School

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the code of conduct and agree to abide by the rules outlined in this policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Volunteer agreement form

This agreement form must be completed before you undertake any volunteer work at a Three Counties Academy Trust school. In the first section, please write each piece of information in the relevant box on the right. In the second section, please tick each box on the right once you have read the corresponding policy – these policies can be accessed via the Trust and school websites, hard copies can be obtained on request. Please sign and date the first row of the third section.

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Name of staff member to whom you will report:</b>	
<b>Number of times that you will volunteer in the school:</b>	
<b>Dates that you will volunteer between (to be reviewed after one month):</b>	

Please tick the appropriate box once you have read and understood the following documents:

Behaviour Policy	
Anti-Bullying Policy	
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures	
Health and Safety Policy	
Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy	
Data Protection Policy	
Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy	
Online Safety Policy	
Social Media Policy	
MAT Fire Safety Policy	
Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy	
Reporting Low-Level Safeguarding Concerns Policy	
Whistleblowing Policy	

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure	
Complaints Policy and procedure	
Staff and Volunteer Confidentiality Policy	
Photography and Images Policy	

<b>I understand that I am a volunteer and will therefore not receive payment for my duties, other than agreed travel and other out-of-pocket expenses:</b>			
<b>Signature of volunteer:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Signature of supervisor:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	



## Volunteer application form

This application form must be completed before you undertake any volunteer work at a Three Counties Academy Trust school. In the first section, please write each piece of information in the relevant box. In the second section, please circle whether your application is in connection to an educational course and, if so, fill out the table that follows. In the third section, please fill out your availability. Please sign and date the fourth section in the boxes on the right.

**Please give details of why you wish to volunteer and the activities you want to undertake:**

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**Name:**

--

**Date of birth:**

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<b>Postcode:</b>		<b>Telephone:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>			

<b>Is your application in connection to an educational course? (please circle)</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
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<b>If you answered 'yes' to the above, please fill out the table below:</b>			
<b>Name of educational school/college/university:</b>		<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>			
<b>Course details:</b>			
<b>Qualification:</b>		<b>Length of course:</b>	
<b>Link tutor:</b>		<b>Telephone:</b>	

**Please fill out the sections below, providing accurate details of when and how long you are available for:**

**I wish to work on the following school days (please tick):**

- Monday**
- Tuesday**
- Wednesday**
- Thursday**
- Friday**

**I wish to work (please tick):**

- A full day (8:30am – 3:15pm)**
- Mornings**
- Afternoons**

**Please list any other requirements in terms of availability (e.g., specific times):**

**Please provide details of two references whom we may contact to include contact details & your relationship to them**

**1.**

2.

If accepted, I understand that I will need to attend an induction meeting and will need to be aware of, and follow, all school policies:

Signature of volunteer:

Date:



## Volunteer reference form

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Name of applicant:</b>	
<b>Relationship to applicant:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

Will the volunteer be engaging in Regulated activity, as defined in the DfE's document 'Keeping children safe in education'? (school use only)  
Circle one:

Yes No

How long have you known the applicant?

How would you describe the general attitude of the applicant?

Does the applicant have any experience working with children? Circle one.

Yes No

If yes, how well does the applicant work with children? Circle one.

Very well Well Satisfactorily Poorly Very poorly

How effectively can the applicant lead a task?

Do you think the applicant would be willing to undertake an induction or further training? Circle one.

Yes No

Does the applicant have the right to work in the UK? Circle one.

Yes No

Did the applicant undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check, if so, what was the outcome?

Is there any additional information the school should know about the volunteer?

I understand my responsibility to disclose honest and correct information, and the applicant's responsibility to safeguard children. I am aware that I must notify the school of anything that may affect the applicant's suitability to work with children.

I hereby declare that the information I have provided in relation to the volunteer applicant, is accurate.

Date:	Date:
Signed:	Signed: Headteacher/Head of School: