



Volunteers Policy

This policy is part of the school's safeguarding systems

Volunteers Policy

Introduction:

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. The Governing Body therefore welcomes and encourages volunteers from the local community.

Our volunteers include:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- University students
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the school

The types of activities that volunteers may participate in, on behalf of the school, include:

- Hearing pupils read
- Working with small groups of pupils to assist them in their learning
- Working alongside individual pupils, as an additional tutor
- Accompanying school visits

Safeguarding:

Wisbech St Mary C of E Academy is committed to safeguarding pupils, young people and vulnerable adults and expects its volunteers to share that commitment. Please refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Becoming a Volunteer:

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one-off event such as a school visit or on a more regular basis e.g. hearing pupils read, usually approaches the Class Teacher or senior members of staff directly.

An appointment will then be arranged with the Office Manager or Time-credits Coordinator to discuss the school's policies and expectations for volunteers.

Definition:

An activity described as 'frequent' or 'intensive' covers the meaning given in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006):

- 'frequent' – once a week or more often on an on-going basis; and
- 'intensive' – three or more occasions in a 30 day period, or overnight (between 2am – 6am).

Process for recruiting a Volunteer who will be working 'frequently' or 'intensively':

Volunteers Policy

- A. Identify the need and role
- B. Attract candidates by means of a local advert/school communication system(s) e.g. School website, Facebook, etc.
- C. The candidate(s) attend the school for an informal discussion with the Deputy Headteacher or Time-credits Coordinator to ensure the applicant is suitable for the role
- D. Enhanced CRB check undertaken where deemed appropriate and necessary
- E. The volunteer will be made aware of the role and responsibilities they will be undertaking
- F. If appropriate, two references should be sought where the volunteer arrangement will continue on a regular basis
- G. Induction: Meeting with Deputy Headteacher to explain and discuss school policies and documentation. These will include: Health and Safety, Behaviour Management, Safeguarding, Code of Conduct and Whistle-blowing policies.
- H. Volunteer records to be kept in a central place within the school

Before starting to help in school, a volunteer will complete the **Volunteer Agreement** (Appendix 2), which sets out the school's expectations of volunteers and to confirm they have received a copy of this agreement. If the school seeks DBS clearance for volunteers this will be undertaken **before** they come into school, to make an informed decision when accepting volunteers to work with children. This is not required where a volunteer is participating in a 'one-off' activity or if they are being supervised by a member of staff with Enhanced DBS clearance. All 'intensive' volunteers will be subject to DBS clearance for volunteers **before** they come into school.

Confidentiality:

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the pupils they work with or come into contact with should be voiced with their designated supervisor and **NOT** with the parent(s)/carer(s) of the pupil(s).

Volunteers who are concerned about anything in school, which may affect their work, should raise the matter with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff. Any information gained at the school about a child or adult must remain confidential.

Any breach in confidentiality will result in immediate action which may include dismissal.

Supervision:

All volunteers work under the supervision of a teacher or permanent member of staff. Teachers must retain ultimate responsibility for pupils at all times, including pupils' behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the designated supervisor as to how and activity is carried out and/or what the expected outcome of an activity is. In the event of any query or problem regarding the pupils' understanding of a task, behaviour or their welfare, volunteers must seek further advice and/or guidance from their designated supervisor.

Health and Safety:

The school has a Health and Safety Policy and this is made available to volunteers working in the school. An appropriate member of staff will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire alarm evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks (e.g. using DT equipment or accompanying pupils on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to their designated supervisor or to the Headteacher. Volunteers are covered by the school's liability insurance.

Safeguarding and Child Protection:

At WSM, the welfare of our pupils is paramount. To ensure the safety of our pupils, we adopt the following procedures:

- All volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy and asked to sign a **Volunteer Agreement** (Appendix 2)
- All of our volunteers must be cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service, unless they are always with a supervised member of staff who holds a completed DBS.
- Where a volunteer participates in 'one-off' activity e.g. helping to supervise a group of pupils as part of a class trip, no formal checks are required. However, such volunteers will be under constant supervision of school staff and will be required to read and sign our **Off-Site Visit Agreement** (Appendix 3).
- Any concerns a volunteer has, about child protection issues, should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Leads: Jaynie Lynch, Vicki Bradshaw, Beth Freeburn, Sarah Hunt, Sarah Leuty or Audrey Embling.

Complaints Procedure:

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be dealt with in the same way as outlines in the school's Complaints Policy.

The Headteacher or designated member of staff reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak with a volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again
- Offer an alternative placement for a volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another class
- Based upon the facts identified in the investigation it may be necessary for the school to inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them
- Provide the volunteer with a copy of the school's full Complaints Policy

Monitoring and Review:

This policy has been approved by the Governing Body and will be regularly reviewed at least every two years (next review November 2025).

Appendix 1

NEW VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM

Name of Volunteer:

First Name:

Surname:

Date of Birth://

Day

Month

Year

Address:

.....

.....

Telephone: Home..... Mobile.....

What activities / areas of the school's work would you like to help with?

Are there any particular age groups / classes you would like to work with?

Do you have any disabilities / other needs we need to take into account or adjustments we need to make to allow you to work as a volunteer in school? (please give details)

Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Application Form. Please hand in completed forms into the school office, marked with the attention of the Deputy Headteacher or Time-credits Coordinator. Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we will be in touch as soon as possible.

Appendix 2

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at school. Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope that you will gain much from your experience.

Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement form and return it to the school office, marked with the attention of the Deputy Headteacher or Time-credits Coordinator. You will receive a copy of this form for your records.

(Please tick)

- ☐ I have received a copy of the school's Volunteer Policy
- ☐ I agree to support the Aims, Values and Ethos of the school
- ☐ I agree to treat information obtained from being a volunteer in school as **Strictly Confidential**
- ☐ I understand that an enhanced DBS check may need to be undertaken **before** I am able to begin volunteering in school
- ☐ I already have a DBS certificate, and will hand a copy into the school; the number will be recorded and check made with the issuing body. A new enhanced DBS check may still need to be undertaken **before** I am able to begin volunteering in school
- ☐ I have been made aware of who is my designated supervisor e.g. Class Teacher.

Signed:

Name:

Date:/...../.....
Day Month Year

Appendix 2

OFF-SITE VISITS – VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

School trips are an integral part of learning at our school and afford many pupils opportunities which are outside their usual experiences. We are pleased that you have come forward as a volunteer helper; you will have an important role to play in the success and safety of this school trip.

Please read, sign and return this appendix to the Leader of the school trip. This is part of our school's risk assessment planning and safeguarding arrangements.

Role of the volunteer:

- To be responsible and look after, in equal measure, all of the pupils in your group under the instruction of the Leader of the school trip
- To stay with your allocated group of pupils, ensuring their wellbeing and safety is maintained for the total duration of the school trip
- To promote polite, respectful and courteous behaviour towards each other and members of the general public. We all go as ambassadors of our school!
- To ensure that your group keep up with the body of the school visit party, be it walking, entering or exiting from transportation or following speakers for the trip
- To contact your group's class teacher / member of staff if there are issues with First Aid, safety and / or behaviour
- Read and adhere to the risk assessment for the trip

Working alongside school staff:

School staff expect volunteers to:

- Comply with all of the above whilst being under the direct supervision of school staff
- Show a commitment to their group, an interest in the focus of the visit and assist pupils in their learning by helping them to read signs / labels / information, asking questions that encourage pupils to think about the task and help to explain the areas of interest.
- Follow guidance from the school staff

What is not permitted:

- Volunteers are not allowed to bring additional children on the school trip e.g. siblings or children in the care of the volunteer
- Volunteers are not allowed to smoke, drink alcohol or engage in any illegal practices whilst undertaking volunteer duties
- Volunteers are not permitted to take photographs of pupils
- Volunteers are not allowed to give / buy their group treats e.g. ice creams, biscuits, sweets – before, during or after the school trip

First Aid:

You will be informed if any child in your group has medical need. If medicine needs to be administered, this will be done by a member of staff unless you are the parent / carer of the child who requires medicine, in which case you will be asked to administer this and be responsible for carrying the medicine.

All other medicines and first aid kits will be carried by staff.

Emergencies:

You are expected to inform a member of staff as soon as possible if you have an emergency e.g. first aid emergency or missing child. If you have become separated from the rest of the school party, please telephone one of the members of staff on your contact list (refer to the risk assessment for contact numbers) or telephone the school (**01945 410 312**).

(Please tick)

- ☐ I have read the Volunteer Policy
- ☐ I agree to the terms and conditions as stated in the Volunteer Policy
- ☐ I will support the pupils in enjoying the trip and actively contribute to the smooth running of the event
- ☐ I will treat any information I may hear about pupils or staff as confidential and will not discuss or disclose it out of school

Signed:

Date:/...../.....
Day Month Year

Name: