

# WHITEHILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

"...putting children first..."



## VOLUNTARY WORKERS POLICY

Date reviewed: November 2020

Reviewed by: Natalie James

Ratified by *Governors*: November 2020

# Voluntary Workers - Schools Policy

## 1. Introduction

This policy will apply where overall responsibility for volunteering activity is held by the school. A volunteer is a person who gives freely of their time, skills and experience to the school without expectation of financial reward. Volunteering can take many forms; some tasks can require particular skills whereas others require no specific skills. Volunteering may be a one-off activity; for a limited time to complete a particular activity or project or carried out on a frequent basis.

## 2. Policy Statement

The Governing Body encourages the appropriate use of voluntary workers and recognises the immense benefits that volunteers can bring and the bridges that they build between the school and the local community. In return the school hopes to give its volunteers an opportunity to exercise their skills in a different environment and to undertake new experiences.

It is the policy of the Governing Body that voluntary activities will not be a substitution for paid employment.

## 3. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- Voluntary workers; and
- Community Service Volunteers.

It does not apply to:

- Placements for children of school age. Such placements should only be part of a structured work experience programme arranged by the school or college.
- Work placements

## 4. Legal Background

This policy complies with the provisions of:

- The Employment Rights Act 1996  
*(Volunteers are not employees of the school and therefore do not have a contract of employment or benefit from the terms of the Act)*
- The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006  
*(It is a criminal offence to employ someone who has no right to work in the United Kingdom, or no right to undertake the work being offered. This also applies to voluntary work.)*
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974  
*(Spent convictions will be disclosed and taken into account when considering suitability to work as a volunteer with children, vulnerable adults or in certain other positions of trust.)*

- The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006  
*(All individuals seeking to volunteer in regulated activities must undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check prior to commencement of duties.)*
- The Occupier's Liability Act 1957  
*(The school has a duty of care to all individuals, including volunteers, who visit its premises.)*
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974  
*(Under section 3 of the Act the school has a duty to ensure that individuals who are not employees are not exposed to health and safety risks. This includes volunteers.)*

## **5. Status**

A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with the school or benefit from any of the school's terms and conditions of employment, such as payment for work, holidays or sickness. The school will agree a role with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the requirements of the role and that the school will provide an opportunity for the volunteer. However, the volunteer is free to refuse to fulfil the role and the school is not bound to provide the opportunity. It is also expected that both the school and the volunteer will give as much notice as possible if unable to meet these expectations.

Volunteers are not, and must never be, a substitute for employees.

## **6. Recruitment**

The recruitment process for volunteers should be carried out by the Head teacher (or nominated member of the leadership team).

Unless the volunteering opportunity is a one-off short-term nature (see section 8) a person wishing to become a volunteer should complete a volunteer application form. The applicant should be asked to identify areas in which they would like to volunteer.

The Volunteer Application form can be found at Appendix 1

If the Head teacher is able to match the volunteer to a suitable volunteering opportunity an interview should be conducted to gauge the person's aptitude and suitability.

Depending upon the nature of the opportunity, the prospective volunteer may be subject to the following checks:

- **References** ~ Two references are mandatory.
- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** ~ This is mandatory where the volunteer will have substantial access to children or other vulnerable groups and must be carried out in accordance with the school's Disclosure and Barring Service Policy. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure

that the statutory DBS requirements are met and reference has been made to the DBS Policy.

Where DBS clearance is required the individual must not commence any voluntary activities prior to receipt of satisfactory clearance.

The DBS details of Volunteers must be recorded on the School's Single Central Record.

- **Medical clearance** ~ This is recommended where the volunteer has declared a medical condition which should be taken into consideration by the Head teacher or where the volunteer will be required to undertake a role that involves a significant level of physical activity.

## **7. Volunteering Agreement**

Where it has been agreed that a role may be undertaken by a volunteer the volunteer will be invited to enter into a volunteering agreement with the school. This agreement will identify:

- the volunteer's role;
- where appropriate, the skills or experience that the volunteer may need;
- any training that the volunteer is expected to undertake;
- health and safety requirements;
- the mileage expenses that the school will reimburse if the volunteer role involves driving;
- the insurance cover that will be provided for the volunteer;
- who will supervise the volunteer; and
- how the volunteer will be notified if their role is to come to an end.

The Volunteering Agreement Template can be found at Appendix 2

## **8. One-off volunteering opportunities.**

Some activities may involve volunteers on a one-off, short-term basis. If the volunteering opportunity is of one day's duration or less and not likely to recur, e.g. assistance at a fête, the recruitment process outlined in sections 6 and 7 above will not apply.

In such cases the Headteacher must ensure that all volunteers involved in the event complete the Volunteers Registration form to record their attendance.

The Volunteers Registration form can be found at Appendix 3.

## **9. Training**

The school will provide any reasonable training required for the role, including health and safety training.

## **10. Health and Safety**

The school has a responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers should at all times follow the school's health and safety policies and procedures. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers must be advised that they are not permitted to act outside their authorised area of work. Volunteers must report all accidents and 'near miss' incidents to their supervisor.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that an appropriate risk assessment is undertaken for each volunteering opportunity identified.

The supervisor will ensure that volunteers are provided with appropriate guidance on any health and safety issues that arise.

The Risk Assessment Checklist can be found at Appendix 4.

## **11. Reimburse**

Volunteers are unpaid and will not be eligible to receive expenses. However, the school will reimburse volunteer drivers for any mileage incurred using their own vehicle as detailed below.

Where the volunteer is using their own vehicle, they must provide a copy of their driving licence (ensuring the paper licence is produced where a photo licence is held), the vehicle's insurance policy (showing appropriate level of cover, i.e. business use) and, if appropriate, the valid MOT certificate.

All volunteer drivers will be required to comply with the Driving on County Council Business Procedure, which can be found on the Council's website.

The volunteer must report any accidents or police cautions to the Head teacher. Neither the school nor the Council will pay any fines relating to motoring offences (including parking fines) incurred by the volunteer.

The school will reimburse the volunteers for any mileage incurred using their own vehicle to transport equipment as part of their role (this does not include travel to and from their volunteering role). Such journeys must be agreed in advance with the supervisor and the appropriate claim form completed and submitted for payment. Claims will be reimbursed at the HMCR mileage rate.

## **12. Policies and Procedures**

Volunteers are expected to comply with all statutory regulations whilst they are on the premises or undertaking any of their volunteering duties, including health and safety, anti-discrimination and data protection, which are outlined in the school's policies. The Head teacher will ensure that the induction includes an explanation of these policies and procedures and any other policies that are relevant to the volunteering work, e.g. safeguarding policies.

## **13. Insurance**

The school will ensure that volunteers are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury. The school also holds public liability insurance. The school's insurance will not cover unauthorised actions outside the volunteering agreement.

#### **14. Confidentiality**

Volunteers may become aware of confidential information about the school, its employees, pupils, customers and suppliers. Volunteers must not disclose this information or use it for their own or another benefit without the consent of the party concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain (unless it has been made public as a result of the volunteer's breach of confidentiality), or where the law permits or requires disclosure.

#### **15. Supervision**

A supervisor will be designated to support and manage the volunteer. The supervisor will review the arrangements on a regular basis. If the volunteer has any queries or would like to change their role, this should be discussed with the supervisor.

#### **16. Dealing with problems**

The supervisor will normally try to solve any problems informally.

If the volunteer wishes to make a formal complaint this should be put in writing to their supervisor. If it is not possible to reach a solution the volunteer may raise the matter with the Head teacher. It is expected that the person receiving the formal complaint will meet the volunteer to discuss the issue raised and seek a solution.

If a complaint is made about a volunteer, this will be notified to the volunteer in writing and the Head teacher will decide whether any action should be taken.

#### **17. Volunteer's pack**

On commencing the voluntary role, the volunteer will be given an appropriate induction to the service area and (unless the volunteering opportunity is for a one-off event as outlined in section 8), a pack containing:

- General information about the school, as appropriate
- A copy of this volunteering policy
- A standard volunteering agreement
- Details of where the volunteer can access the school's policies and procedures

#### **18. Records**

A record of volunteers in each team and a filed record of volunteer agreements and associated documents, as appropriate (see section 6), must be maintained by the Headteacher in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Volunteer Record can be found at Appendix 5.