



Academies for Character and Excellence



Volunteers Policy

Reference: WP/RR/Safeguarding

Policy date	September 2020	Statutory Policy - Yes
Board Approval	May 2023	
Next Review Date	April 2025	Review cycle every 2 years
Author	RR/WP/Safeguarding	www.acexcellence.co.uk

John 10:10

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Our school's approach to Volunteering follows that of the Church of England Education Office in that it seeks to be faith-sensitive and inclusive. It is underpinned by Our Vision of 'Life in all its fullness' and ensures that all of school life incorporates the values of the Christian Faith. These values are central to all that we do and determine how we will implement all policies and procedures. We want to ensure that through our gateways of citizenship, leadership, expression, exploration and flourishing, all pupils and adults are shown how to be compassionate, passionate, honest, inspiring and responsible individuals. By starting with our vision, we aim to ensure that all members of our school community understand our expectations, our practise and the ways in which we will implement this Policy.

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Safeguarding Statement

The Academies for Character and Excellence (ACE) is committed to ensuring that consistent effective safeguarding procedures are in place promoting the welfare and wellbeing of our children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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1. Introduction and aims

The Academy for Character and Excellence believes that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the school's work, and that they enrich the school through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the school's strategic aims and vision, as well as its development plan.

The aim of The Academy for Character and Excellence volunteer policy is to:

- Encourage the wider community to engage with the school, thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion
- Ensure that volunteers support the school's vision and values, and adhere to our policies
- Provide staff, volunteers and parents with clear expectations and guidelines
- Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers

This policy has been developed in line with the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

2. How we work with volunteers

At the Academy for Character and Excellence volunteers may:

- Hear children read
- Accompany school visits
- Work with individual children
- Work with small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT, music, dance or art
- Running or assisting with after-school clubs
- Supporting children who may have additional needs
- Providing positive role models and one to one support

This isn't an exhaustive list.

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the local committee/governors
- Parents
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Friends of the school/members of the PTA
- Local clergy or members of the congregation

This is not an exhaustive list.

Members of the local committees working at the school in their capacity as governors (for instance, conducting school monitoring visits or attending meetings), are not covered by this policy. They are covered by our governor code of conduct.

3. How to apply to 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 children read, usually approaches the Headteacher or members of the Senior Leadership Team directly.

Volunteers should complete the **Volunteer Application form/Information Sheet (Appendix 1)** with all their relevant details, address, previous employment history, a personal statement supporting the application, the type of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help.

4. Appointment of volunteers

Volunteers are appointed by the Headteacher and staff can request volunteers using the form on Appendix 3.

Intake of new volunteers can take 6 weeks, and is dependent on the candidate and available spaces within the school.

All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check (if appropriate) and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training.

The Headteacher reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.

Volunteers may be interviewed by the Headteacher if this is deemed appropriate.

5. Safeguarding

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 on volunteers who:

- All volunteers

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 (see appendix 2) and to read, and adhere to, the school's policies on:

- Safeguarding
- Use of mobile phones
- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Online safety
- Behaviour
- SEND policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

➤ 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

6. Induction and training

Volunteers must complete appropriate training prior to beginning work at the school.

Training requirements will be determined by the headteacher, or the appropriate member of staff.

All volunteers must have safeguarding training. Other training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing. This must be a safeguarding induction and level 2 safeguarding training.

7. Confidentiality

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.

If concerns are related to whistle-blowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our whistle-blowing policy.

8. Conduct of volunteers

Volunteers must comply with the staff code of conduct set out in the appendix to this policy.

9. Insurance

The school's insurance policy does cover volunteers in the event of an accident or emergency.

If a volunteer is working at the school through another organisation, we will also check that organisation's insurance arrangements.

11. Data protection and record keeping

Our privacy notice for volunteers explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it.

We will retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule.

Policy Change Log

April 2023	ACE logo updated to latest format, equal opportunities monitoring form added, safeguarding statement added
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Appendix 1: volunteer application form

Complete the application form in full.

Please note that the school may not be able to accommodate all preferences.

The Academy for Character and Excellence is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment
 Assessment and testing of applicants' suitability to work in a school environment is an integral part of the selection process. Any discrepancies or anomalies in information provided will be taken up at interview. Current or previous employers will be contacted as part of the verification process.

Volunteer Application Form

Form

Please complete in clearly written or typed black ink, continuing on separate sheets where necessary.

Post applied for:	Date of Application:
School:	

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

First name/s:	Last name:
Address:	Contact telephone numbers
	Daytime:
	Evening:
	Mobile:
Postcode:	Email address:

1a – NEXT OF KIN INFORMATION

First name/s:	Last name:
Address:	Contact telephone numbers

	Daytime:
	Mobile:
Postcode:	Email address:

2. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY - Present or most recent employment

If you have more than one employment please provide the same information for each job, if necessary on a separate sheet.

Name of employer:
Job title:
Dates from / to:
Key responsibilities:

3. PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT - Please start with the most recent including any unpaid or voluntary work. Continue on separate sheet if necessary.

Job title and brief outline of duties	Name and address of employer	Dates From - To (month & year)	Reason for leaving

Please give details and an explanation for any gaps in your employment / Education history:

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4. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT - Secondary School/College/University/ Apprenticeship including current studies, with the most recent first.

Name of institution	Full/part-time	Courses/subjects taken	Qualifications/ grade

NB. We reserve the right to contact employers or educational establishments to verify details given.

Details of any relevant learning and development. Please include dates.

(e.g. short courses, first aid, computer skills, work-based NVQ etc., and any current courses.)

Professional / Technical membership

Name of professional / technical body	Grade of membership

5. VOLUNTEERING SUPPORTING STATEMENT - Please tell us why you would like to volunteer with us. Explain what you are able to offer our school and our pupils - please draw on your relevant experiences; including paid employment, voluntary work, family experiences and leisure activities.

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Are you eligible to work in the UK? Yes No
- Do you, your partner or family have any interests (financial, professional or otherwise) that may conflict with your Academy for Character and Excellence volunteering?

Yes No

(If yes, attach details)

7. REFERENCES

Please give details of a referee, which should be your most recent or current employer. If you are in, or have just completed full-time education, one referee should be from your school, college or university. Referees must not be related to you, or writing solely in the capacity of a friend, and must be able to comment on your skills and abilities in relation to the school volunteering post. References from friends, School or colleges will only be accepted for candidates applying straight from full time education or when candidates provide an acceptable reason why a previous employer cannot be contacted.

The reference will be taken up before you commence volunteering.

Name:
Address:
Tel no:
Email:
Occupation/Relationship:
How long have they known you?

I declare that the information given in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and accurate and that it may be used for purposes by ACE under the Data Protection Act. I understand that if, after commencement of my volunteering, any information is found to be inaccurate may lead to me being asked to stand down from the volunteering position.

Signature:

Date:

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998. INFORMATION FROM THIS APPLICATION MAY BE PROCESSED FOR ANY PURPOSES BY THE ACADEMY FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION. INDIVIDUALS HAVE THE RIGHT OF ACCESS TO PERSONAL DATA HELD ABOUT THEM BY ACE. THIS INFORMATION WILL BE DISCLOSED ONLY TO THOSE PERSONS AUTHORISED TO SEE IT.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exemptions order 1987)

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended)

The volunteer role you are applying for is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore you are required to declare any convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings that are not 'protected' (i.e. filtered out) as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order 1975 (as amended in 2013). The amendments to the Exceptions Order provide that certain 'spent' convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found using the following link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance>

Please ensure that you answer the following questions honestly as false statements or withholding relevant information will result in one of the following actions being taken:

- your application will be taken no further
- an offer of employment will be withdrawn
- disciplinary action leading to dismissal will be taken (if employment has commenced)

Do you have anything to declare in relation to the above? Yes No

Have you ever been disqualified from working with children and /or included on the DfES List 99 or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body e.g. GTC, DfES?

Yes No

If you answered Yes to either of the above questions, please provide details below:

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

In line with the safer recruitment consortium the Trust recommends DBS checks for all volunteers who will be coming into school regularly and having contact with children. Volunteers in regulated activity must have a DBS check and also be checked against the barred list.

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET – FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

Name of Volunteer:	
Date of Birth:	
Other names known by (including maiden names):	
Address:	
Phone:	
What skills / areas would you like to help with in school?	
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 when working as a Volunteer in school? <i>(please give details)</i>	

Availability					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM					
PM					
Before school					
After school					
Lunchtimes					
How many hours per week/month can you volunteer?					
Can you commit to at least 1 term?					

Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Information Sheet.

Please hand it to the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher. Your offer of help is appreciated and we will be in touch shortly.

Appendix 2: code of conduct for volunteers

Code of conduct 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. ICT and internet acceptable use
 - 1.1.3. Online safety
 - 1.1.4. Mobile phones
 - 1.1.5. Data protection
 - 1.1.6. Health and safety
 - 1.1.7. Equality
 - 1.1.8. Whistle-blowing
 - 1.1.9. Behaviour
- 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 a member of staff, and ask for guidance or clarification if required. Questions can be directed to the teacher or Headteacher.
- 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 should not attempt to reprimand pupils or issue sanctions.
- 2.3. Volunteers must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. 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 during the holidays or as a way of saying "thank you".
- 2.5. Volunteers must not transport pupils in their own cars unless specific arrangements have been made with the school, and the pupil's parents have consented.
- 2.6. Parent volunteers with children at the school must not act in a way that favours 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 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.
- 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. The DSL is **Ben Nelson – Smith** and the deputies are **Nic Synott and Aimee Matthews**
- 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 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. Making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media
 - 3.4.3. Arranging to meet pupils outside of school
 - 3.4.4. Alerting the DSL if a pupil develops an infatuation with them
- 3.5. Volunteers should not take or share photos of pupils unless instructed to do so by their teacher or Headteacher.

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, except in an emergency where none of the designated first aiders are available.
- 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.

Please sign and date below:

Print Name..... Signature..... Date.....

Appendix 3: requesting a volunteer (information for staff)

If you'd like assistance from a volunteer in your classroom, or for a specific activity or trip, fill out the form below and submit to the school office.

Volunteer request form

Activity details	
Year group/class	
Activity details	
Date(s) and time(s)	
Is this activity... (circle one)	One-off? Daily? Weekly? Other? If other, please explain:
Will there be any costs for the volunteer (such as entry fees to museums, materials, or travel)?	
Volunteer details	
How many volunteers do you need?	
Do you need your volunteers to have any specific skills or experience?	

Submitted by: