



Policy for Volunteers in School



Date: October 2019
Review: September 2021

The school's Volunteer policy forms part of the school's Safeguarding policy.

At Oak Hill Academy, we value the positive relationships forged with parents and visitors to the school. We encourage close links with parents and the community and believe that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. We recognise that parents have skills and attributes that are valuable for learning and can support the school in raising standards and enhancing the learning experience. We also strive to make our school a place where as adults, we model for children the behaviour we teach and expect.

We aim to make sure that your time spent in school is productive and enjoyable. The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or for a number of sessions over a longer period, must take account of the needs of pupils and the staff to whom they are assigned.

We have a duty to ensure that the welfare of pupils is promoted and they are safeguarded from harm. This policy sets out the practices and procedures, which will be followed by appointing, managing and supervising volunteers.

Introduction

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

Our Volunteers include:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents of pupils (or other family members (e.g. Grandparents?))
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- Ex-members of the school
- Local residents
- Friends of the school
- Visitors for assemblies

Aims and objectives:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that volunteers are seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults and that the requirements for safeguarding and safer recruitment are applied appropriately to them.

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 children read, usually approaches the Class Teacher, Principal, or a Senior member of staff. It is our practice not to place a parent/relative volunteer in the same class as their child. This is so as not to compromise the child's learning. Parents/relatives will however be asked to volunteer in a parallel class in their child's year group.

Before starting in school and to ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all volunteers will be required to complete a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) check. This can be completed online and the school office will provide the necessary information. We are unable to have any volunteer in school work unsupervised with pupils unless they have been cleared by the DBS and show their certificate in school. Details of this certificate will be recorded.

Volunteers should read the policy and complete the *Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 1)* and return it to the school. The Year Team Leader must ensure that all volunteers have completed the Volunteer Agreement. All records are maintained by the school office.

It is the schools decision to take on volunteers and this will depend on the time of year, the number of volunteers we already have in school and the potential impact on the children.

Child Confidentiality and Safeguarding including Child Protection

The welfare of our children is paramount. To ensure the safety of our children, we ask all volunteers to read the policy on Safeguarding (available in the school Office or website). In signing the Volunteer Agreement volunteers are agreeing to abide by this policy.

All volunteers are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any information that is disclosed by or about a pupil must be reported to the class teacher or Designated Safeguarding Person. No information about pupils should be taken outside the school. Volunteers should not speak directly to parents about a pupil's work or welfare.

There are other things as well as children's progress that need to be kept confidential. Some children have medical needs to which we need to attend. Some families have complex circumstances or traumatic experiences which effect school activities or their behaviour. Should you see or hear information regarding the children this should be kept in the strictest confidence.

If volunteers are concerned about anything another adult in school says or does they should raise the matter with the Principal or Vice Principal.

Volunteers' use of social networking sites should be used with due care and attention. In particular, use of such sites should not involve any activities or observations which may bring the school, pupils or staff into disrepute. Should this happen it would bring into question the volunteers suitability to work in the school.

Usually, during morning break, class teachers or teaching assistants will show volunteers to the meeting room where tea/coffee will be available. This arrangement ensures that the staffroom remains an environment where staff can talk freely and frankly about educational practice and challenges and to seek advice from colleagues about individual children.

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 1)
- All volunteers must have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). A DBS Disclosure will be issued to the individual to present to the designated member of staff in school
- Volunteers agree to the visitors code of practice daily when they sign in electronically at reception

On-line Safety

Online Safety relates to the teaching and learning of technology and through technology in a responsible and safe environment, focusing on raising awareness of the core messages of safe content, contact and conduct when using it. This can include accessing websites and online content, email, online chat rooms, mobile phones, gaming and games consoles, social networking sites, instant messaging (IM), viruses and spam. Volunteers, like staff, are expected to follow the Acceptable Use of ICT Policy which is available from the main office or the school website.

Personal devices including mobile phones and wrist watch phones that connect to the internet should not be used in school during class time. Staff, volunteers or visitors may not make or receive calls during teaching time. Use of phones or phone watches must be limited to non-contact time when no children present. Staff, volunteers or visitors should keep devices out of sight in lockers, desks or cupboards when on school property. Only staff are permitted to use school owned devices for capturing, recording and storing data or photos of children.

Volunteers for school visits

School visits are an integral part of learning at our school and afford many pupils opportunities which are outside their usual experiences. The class teacher or staff member leading the visit will brief the volunteer regarding the risk assessment, daily schedule and any other important pieces of information. The visit lead, who will be a staff member, has ultimate responsibility for the pupils. Pupils should never be left with a volunteer unsupervised.

The Role and Responsibilities of Parent/Volunteer Helpers of School Visits and Journeys

The class teachers, in liaison with Educational Visits Coordinator, make most of the arrangements for trips and visits, class teachers are responsible for the selection of parent volunteers.

Parents are selected from a list of volunteers. The school retains the right not to invite a parent again.

The main duties of parent/volunteer helpers on school trips and visits are:-

- To ensure the safety and security of the children
- To engage with the children in order to enhance their learning experience
- To help ensure that all children participate fully and independently in all activities

Further guidelines

- Parents/volunteers are asked to read any briefing information which relates to the trip
- Parents/volunteers should not leave their group/class at any time without notifying the teacher
- Parents should not interfere with their own child's social interaction with their group and friends or their child's independence
- Parents/volunteers who experience any difficulties with a child/children in their group should inform the class teacher as soon as possible.
- Parent/volunteers who are not CRB/DBS checked cannot take children to the toilets or take charge of a group.
- Parents who have not been invited as designated helpers on a trip cannot join the group without the prior agreement of the group leader. This would contravene the risk assessment which has been agreed for the visit.
- When walking in public places parents should encourage children to walk in twos rather than a group.

Work Experience/ Placement Students

Oak Hill Academy has a long standing relationship with various local secondary schools, colleges and universities. We are happy to take students on placement if we have suitable experiences available based on the smooth running of Oak Hill Academy. Secondary schools, colleges and universities wanting students to be placed with us need to formally make contact with the Principal, Vice Principal or Assistant Principal outlining the aims of the placement and duration.

If the placement is as part of a teaching course (BA/ Bed. or PGCE) the Vice Principal will deal with further correspondents/ details. If the placement is just for work experiences purposes the school/ college is asked to provide the reference for the student and the student is requested to complete the volunteer's paperwork. Oak Hill Academy retains the authority to refuse or terminate a placement to ensure the smooth of Oak Hill Academy.

Supervision

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

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

Health and Safety

The school has a Health & 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 Lock Down procedures) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks (e.g. using D T equipment/accompanying pupils on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the designated Supervisor/School Business Manager. Volunteers are covered by LBN Health & Safety Statement and indemnity and Public Liability Insurance.

If you discover a fire:

- Raise the alarm
- Leave by the nearest door
- Close all doors on route
- Assemble on the school field

If you hear the fire alarm:

- Leave by the nearest exit and take any children you work with with you
- Assemble on the school field
- Do not re-enter the building until given the all-clear by the Principal/Vice Principal or Fire Brigade

If you hear the Lock Down alarm follow the school's procedures which are to

1. Close your classroom door and lock it
2. Close all blinds
3. Make sure children remain quiet and go under their tables
4. If outside: escort children inside the main building or the dining hall as per senior leader instruction.

Behaviour

The children address all adults by their surname. Volunteers are expected to be friendly and approachable but not over-familiar.

The school has a Behaviour Policy which provides guidance about the school expected code of conduct and ways of rewarding and managing behaviour. It is available on the school website or from the school office and volunteers are expected to make themselves familiar with it.

Code of Conduct

All volunteers will be given the Code of Conduct to read and will be expected to comply with it at all times whilst in the school.

Dress Code

Students on work experience and those on training programmes must abide by the Oak Hill staff dress code which does not permit casual clothes such as jeans at school. Volunteers are asked to dress appropriately for their time in school. All of the children wear school uniform. It is important that staff and volunteers provide a role model and come smartly dressed. Neat sports gear is encouraged on days when the class do PE limsolls or trainers are obligatory for teaching or supporting a PE lesson for health and safety reasons. The dress code is more relaxed on MUFTI days.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a Volunteer will be referred to the Principal / Vice Principal for investigation.

Any complaints made by a Volunteer will be referred to the Principal / Vice Principal.

The Principal 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
- Inform the Volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.

The full Complaints Procedure is set out on the website (or available from the School Office).

Monitoring and Review

This Policy has been approved by the LAB and will be reviewed regularly and updated in the light of new guidance from the Department for Education (DfE).



Oak Hill Academy Volunteer Agreement

We hope that you enjoy volunteering with us and feel a full part of our team. This agreement tells you what to expect from us, and what we hope for from you.

We, Oak Hill Academy, aim to:

- explain the tasks carefully so that you are clear about what we would like you to do
- share the relevant school policies with you
- ensure that children learning with you behave well
- treat you with respect and care and expect the children to do so as well
- share relevant information about children with you as necessary
- let you know in advance the overall plan for the day and if we have changed the plan for the day and do not need you
- treat anything you tell us with confidentiality
- not expect you to carry out any task that you feel unprepared to complete

I, the parent/volunteer (name)

Agree to:

- use the school's behaviour guidelines and inform the teacher of any inappropriate behaviour
- treat any information with total confidentiality and inform the Year Team Leader if I observe anything that concerns me in school
- inform the school by 8.30am if I am unable to come in
- respect the guidance of staff at all times.
- understand the need for DBS checks prior to working with children
- complete an Enhanced DBS application and share the certificate with the school
- complete the adult contact form and hand in to the school office
- **Agree not to:**
- look at or compare any child's work, records or teacher's notes
- share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff or governors
- speak negatively of any child from Oak Hill Academy
- discuss information with other parents which I may have access to as a result of being in school

In addition,

- I have read and agree to abide by this policy and the Safeguarding policy
- I have read and understood the Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 document and the Acceptable Use of ICT Policy

Name _____

Assigned Year Group _____

Signature _____

Date _____