

Non-Statutory

Volunteer Policy



Policy Date: January 2025

Agreed by: Headteacher

Signature

**Policy
Review**

Date: January 2027

Previous

Policy Date: January 2022

Changes

Made: No Changes

Westfield - Sec

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Introduction

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of pupils.

Our volunteers may include:

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

The recruitment of new volunteers will be dependent on the candidate and available spaces within school. The smooth running of Westfield Primary School for its pupils will always be a priority. The Headteacher maintains the right to refuse volunteers and also terminate placements.

The types of activities that volunteers engage 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 additional support
- Accompanying school visits

Staff Code of Conduct

All adults/young people who work in our school, whether a paid member of staff, or a volunteer are also expected to maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside the school by:

- Maintaining high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Treating pupils and others with dignity and respect, building relationships in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to the adult's professional position
- Showing tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being in accordance with statutory provisions
- Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Respecting other's age, disability, gender, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, race, nationality, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs
- Expressing personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Ensuring that comments on social networking sites do not reflect school life in any way, e.g. photographs personal feelings or grievances
- Understanding, and always acting within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities
- Having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school

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, needs to speak to Mrs Shepherd in the school office. It is the school's 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.

Volunteers will need to complete the Volunteer Application Form (Appendix 1) and include their contact details, types of activities they would like to help with and the times they are available to help.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Safeguarding is our priority and we follow the safer recruitment guidelines to ensure that as a school we are committed to safeguarding pupils and we expect our volunteers to share that commitment. The process of recruitment of volunteers mirrors the safer recruitment of paid staff, to ensure the most suitable adults for our school. A list of volunteers will be kept by the School Business Manager.

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 the schools 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 School Business Manager. As part of the volunteer's commitment to the school we ask that they fund their own DBS.
- All volunteers will be directed to attend any relevant safeguarding training as appropriate

On-line Safety

Online Safety relates to the teaching and learning of 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, viruses and spam. Volunteers, like staff, are expected to follow the Online Safety 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 may not make or receive calls during teaching time. Use of phones or phone watches must be limited to non-contact time when no child is present. Staff should keep devices out of sight in lockers, desks or cupboards when on school property. Staff must only 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.

Process for Recruiting Volunteers (frequently or intensively)

1. Volunteers will be directed to the school office and will be given the Volunteer Policy. They will be asked to complete Appendix 1.
2. The Headteacher will identify the need and role for volunteers
3. The candidate will attend the school for an informal discussion to ensure they are suitable for the role
4. Enhanced DBS check undertaken (there is currently no charge for volunteer DBS checks)
5. The volunteer will be made aware of the role and responsibilities they will be undertaking
6. Induction - school policies and documentation explained and issued.
7. Volunteer records to be kept in a central place within the school.

Before starting to help in a school, a volunteer should complete the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2), which sets out the school's expectations of its volunteers and to confirm they have received a copy of this Agreement. The school will seek DBS clearance for a volunteer 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 engaged in a 'one-off' activity.

Work Experience/ Placement Students

Westfield Primary School 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 school. Secondary schools, colleges and universities wanting students to be placed with us need to formally make contact with the Head Teacher outlining the aims of the placement and duration.

If the placement is as part of a teaching course the Headteacher will deal with further details. If the placement is just for work experience purposes the school/college is asked to provide the reference for the student and the student is requested to complete the volunteer's paperwork. Westfield Primary School retains the authority to refuse or terminate a placement to ensure the smooth running of school.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the pupils they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the class teacher or Designated Senior Lead (DSL) for safeguarding and NOT with the parents of the child.

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

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 their 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 about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks. Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the School office. Volunteers are covered by School's Health & Safety Statement and Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance.

Complaints Procedure

In the event of a complaint the school's Complaints Policy will be followed which is found on the school website.

The school's volunteer policy is part of the Safeguarding Suite of Policies, which are available on the school website or from the office, upon request.

Appendix 1 – Volunteer Application Form

*Thank you for your interest in volunteering at **Westfield Primary School** School.*

Volunteers are essential members of our team; they are valued in much the same way as paid staff and are trusted adults to our children and young people.

As such, we have a responsibility to safeguard our pupils and ensure that all adults working in our school, both paid or voluntary, are suitable to work with children. We therefore ask that all prospective volunteers complete this expression of interest form.

*If you have any questions or issues with the completion of this form, please speak with **Mrs N Shepherd**, our volunteer co-ordinator. **(Note to schools - Please ensure this person is trained in Safer Recruitment)***

1.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Last Name (<i>BLOCK CAPITALS</i>)	Any Former Last Name(s) or Any Other Names you have been known by or are “known as” (<i>BLOCK CAPITALS</i>)
First Name(s) (<i>as shown on birth certificate</i>)	Known as (if different)
Preferred Title Mr /Mrs /Miss /Ms /Mx / Other (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)	
Current Address	Home Telephone No
Postcode	Mobile Telephone No
	E-Mail Address

DETAILS OF RELEVANT EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

Please list any qualifications that are relevant to your expression of interest to volunteer at our school. (For example, if you have previously qualified as a teacher / sports coach) If this will form part of your position as a volunteer at our school, we will ask that you provide documentary proof of these qualifications and grades you list on your application form.

Full name and address of Schools, Colleges or Universities attended	Dates Attended		Qualifications gained and name of awarding body	Grade Awarded	Date of Award MM/YYYY
	From MM/YYYY	To MM/YYYY			

RELEVANT TRAINING

Please list any recent course(s) or professional development you have undertaken which you consider to be relevant to your role as a volunteer at our school. (For example, in safeguarding or paediatric first aid)

MM/YYYY	Organising Body	Course Title	Duration

CURRENT OR MOST RECENT EMPLOYMENT

Full name and address of current or most recent employer, including postcode	Job Title
	Date Appointed (DD/MM/YYYY)
Telephone no of current or most recent employer	
Reasons for Leaving (if applicable)	

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION HISTORY (in date order, starting with most recent)

Please state, in chronological order, starting with the most recent, your full employment history, including voluntary work, since leaving secondary education. If there are any periods of time that have not been accounted for, please comment upon them in this section. Any unexplained gaps in the chronological history will need to be discussed and accounted for, before we can progress with you joining our team.

Name and full address of employer	From DD/MM/YYYY	To DD/MM/YYYY	Post Held	Reason for Leaving/ Change/Gap

OUTSIDE INTERESTS OR PREFERENCES

Why do you want to volunteer with us?

Do you have any hobbies or interests which you would be willing to share with our school?

Do you have a preference as to the type of voluntary support you would like to offer our school? Is there a particular age range you would prefer to support?

REFERENCES – If you are unsure who to put down in this section, please speak to us.

Please give the names and contact details of two referees, who can comment on your suitability to volunteer with children. References will **not** be accepted from relatives, in-laws, step-relations, friends or immediate work colleagues. **Ideally, one reference** should be your current or most recent employer.

Please inform your referees that they will be contacted to provide a reference for you in respect of this expression of interest.

The school reserves the right to take up references with any previous employer.

For voluntary positions involving working with children or young people:

If you are not currently working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, but have done so in the past, at least one referee should be the employer who most recently employed you in a role working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

If you currently work with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to children, including any for which the penalty is time expired and whether you have been the subject of any child protection concerns, and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. If you are not currently working with children, but have done so in the past, your previous employer will be asked about these issues.

Current or most recent employer	Second Reference
Name	Name
Occupation	Occupation
Organisation	Organisation
Full address, including postcode	Full address, including postcode
Email Address	Email Address
Tel No	Tel No
In what capacity does the referee know you?	In what capacity does the referee know you?
If this referee knew you by another name, please write name(s) below	If this referee knew you by another name, please write name(s) below

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act

All posts (including voluntary) involving direct contact with children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provides that when applying for certain jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected'. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the [Ministry of Justice](#) website.

Prospective volunteers will be asked to provide details of all unspent convictions and those that would not be filtered, prior to the date of the interview. You may be asked for further information about your criminal history during the volunteer recruitment process. If your expression of interest is successful, this self-disclosure information will be checked against information from the Disclosure & Barring Service before your appointment as a volunteer at our school is confirmed.

I certify that the information detailed on this application form and any supplementary sheets is correct and that all the questions have been accurately and fully answered. I understand that providing false information is an offence and if I am appointed as a volunteer, any proven intentional falsification may result in my dismissal and that the school may also refer me to any professional registration bodies, the DBS or the Police, if appropriate.

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility, to disclose any information to the Interview Panel, which may affect the decision to allow me to work or volunteer with vulnerable groups.

I agree that any information given on this form can be processed for data protection purposes.

I agree to the school making such other enquiries as it judges necessary to come to a view as to my suitability for appointment as a volunteer. I agree to disclosures of personal data to the school by any person whose name I have given as a referee in relation to this application.

I understand the school may search its records, whether computerised or not, in order to ascertain whether there is any information held in those records which is relevant to my application volunteer within a school setting. I understand that the school will take any relevant information into account in deciding whether or not to offer me a position as a volunteer.

I understand that the school has certain duties as a public body so may use the information provided on this expression of interest form, for the prevention or detection of crime, the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This information may be shared, for the same purposes, with other public authorities.

Signature:

Date:

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at _____.

Please return this disclosure to the school prior to your informal discussion with _____ .
 Without this from, we will not be able to progress with your interest in joining our team as a volunteer.

POST APPLIED FOR: Volunteer	Date:
-----------------------------	-------

Surname:		Previous name(s) (if any):	
Forename(s):		Preferred title:	Date of birth
National Insurance No:	Teacher Ref. No (if applicable):	Date of recognition as qualified teacher, QTS (if applicable):	

Westfield Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This voluntary post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; checks will be carried out, references will be sought and successful volunteers will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and other relevant checks with statutory bodies.

We comply with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) code of practice and have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, both of which are available on request. As a prospective volunteer, you are required to declare any relevant convictions, adult cautions or other matters which may affect your suitability to work with children. As a result of amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions order 1975) in 2013 and 2020, some minor offences are now protected (filtered) and should not be disclosed and these cannot be taken into account.

Please read the information [here](#) before answering the following questions. If you are unsure whether you need to disclose criminal information, you should seek legal advice or you may wish to contact Nacro or Unlock for impartial advice. There is more information on filtering and protected offences on the [Ministry of Justice](#) website.

Nacro - <https://www.nacro.org.uk/criminal-record-support-service/helpline@nacro.org.uk> or phone 0300 123 1999 or email

Unlock – <http://hub.unlock.org.uk/contact/> phone 01634 247350 text 07824 113848

2. Do you have any convictions or adult cautions that are unspent? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details here
3. Do you have any other cautions or convictions that would not be filtered? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details here
4. *Only ask if you are recruiting for a voluntary post working in regulated activity with children Are you included on the DBS children’s barred list? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details here

5. (Voluntary Teaching posts only) Are you, or have you ever been, prohibited from teaching by the TRA or sanctioned by the GTCE? Yes / No / Not applicable
If yes, please provide details here
6. Have you lived or worked outside the UK for more than 3 months in the last 5 years? Yes / No *This will need to be amended to reflect your school policy
If yes, please provide details here
7. Are you subject to any sanctions relating to work with children in any country outside the UK? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details here
8. <u>*Applicants for voluntary posts in early years or later years childcare (wrap around care) only</u> The Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 Regulations (2018) state that anyone employed to care for children in early years (children under the age of 5) or later years (wrap-around care for children under the age of 8) is disqualified from that work if they meet certain criteria. These criteria include (this is not an exhaustive list): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain serious criminal offences • Court orders relating to the care of your own child • Being prohibited from private fostering Do you have any reason to believe you are disqualified from working in childcare? Yes / No
If yes, please contact us for more information on the Regulations.
Please complete the declaration below: I declare that all the information I have provided in this disclosure is full and correct at the time of application and that I have not omitted anything that could be relevant to the appointment of someone who will work or volunteer with children. I understand that the volunteer recruitment panel may be made aware of any relevant information that I have disclosed in order to discuss the matter(s) with me as part of the volunteer recruitment process and that, if my application is successful, a risk assessment of the disclosed information will be held securely on my personnel file. I understand that the declaration of a criminal record will not necessarily prevent me from being offered this role as a volunteer.
Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to: Mrs Shepherd, School Business Manager sec.westfield@halton.gov.uk

Please note that, if you are unsuccessful in your expression of interest to join our team as a volunteer, this disclosure form will be securely destroyed within 6 months of your application.

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.

By signing this Volunteer Agreement you are:

- Agreeing to follow Westfield Primary School's Child Protection procedures
- Stating you have read, understood and will follow the School's Volunteer Policy
- Agreeing to pay for your DBS check (n/a for work experience students)
- Understanding that failure to comply with any of the statements above, could lead to the termination of your placement.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

