POLICY

For

Volunteers in School

New policy written Sep 2020	Sep 2022	Sep 2024
Updated May 2021	Sep 2023	Sep 2025
Sep 2021	Apr 2024 (name changes)	

Striving for excellence, caring for all
Within a loving and caring Christian environment.

We are a community in which everyone is offered the opportunity to fulfil their full potential, to understand themselves and be valued for who they are. Through a stimulating and challenging learning environment, we pursue academic excellence and seek the flourishing of all. This is because we know we are all God's children.

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can."
John Wesley

The aim of this policy is to:

- Provide volunteers and staff with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for volunteering in school
- Encourage the wider community to engage with children's learning to raise standards of achievement and promote community cohesion
- Ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for our pupils by a shared knowledge of procedures

Introduction

Volunteers are parents/carers, students on work placement or other adults working alongside the school staff.

At Abbey Academies Trust, we welcome those wishing to help in our schools and value the contribution they make to school life. We believe that the involvement of parents, carers and volunteers in children's education is vital, and we encourage active participation in many ways. Some volunteers come to school to help with a variety of tasks such as ICT, art, cooking, and especially reading, and usually work with individuals or small groups in specific classes. In addition, volunteers often help outside school when the children are taken on educational visits or get involved with the work of our PTFA.

These guidelines have been written to ensure that for all concerned – volunteers, teachers and children - the experience is positive and rewarding.

Becoming a Volunteer in School

As part of our commitment to safeguarding and in line with recommendations from the most up to date *Keeping Children Safe in Education (copy can be found in the staffroom)*, in order to be considered to be a volunteer **in** school you will need to complete an application form (Appendix 1). Please ask at the school office or email the relevant school enquiries address.

As part of our recruitment process, you will be required to provide details of at least one referee and ideally two. These cannot be a family member and should be someone you have worked or volunteered for; someone who knows your work with children or is a person of standing in the community.

Volunteers will be asked to attend an informal interview to ensure that the aims and intentions of the school and the volunteer are compatible.

We carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all volunteers who have regular contact with children. All schools should hold a register of the checks undertaken. In order for you to work in school as a volunteer, you will need to apply online for a DBS check. We will help you get the process started and a member of the office team will support you. Please be assured that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence and that these checks are done only in the best interests and safety of the children.

Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fair, accompanying walks in the local area, visits out of school etc. who do not have unsupervised access to children, do not need a DBS but must not have unsupervised access to children. In these instances, a volunteer risk assessment (Appendix 2) will be completed by the Headteacher/Head of School or Executive Administrator.

The Headteacher/Head of School has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if they believe that it is not in the best interest of the children.

Being a Volunteer in School

When a volunteer arrives in the school, they must sign in at the school office in the visitors' book and take a visitor lanyard, which must be worn at all times whilst in school. Please indicate your arrival time and which class/person you will be supporting. Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when they are leaving the school premises. Signing in and out is important in the event of an emergency so that staff and emergency services know who needs to be accounted for.

A visitor badge must be worn at all times in school. Volunteers with a DBS clearance will have been identified to staff members. The Headteacher/Head of School has the authority to withdraw the help of volunteers if they believe that it is not in the best interest of the children.

As a volunteer you will have an induction meeting with a leader from the school before your first day in school. At this meeting you will discuss key information and procedures and be asked to read, and sign to say you have read, a number of policies relating to safeguarding and your role in school.

- Safeguarding and Child Protection (including the Prevent Duty)
- Confidentiality
- ICT safeguarding (including the use of social media)
- Health & Safety
- Fire

You will also receive training for the role(s) you will be undertaking in school (e.g. hearing readers, supporting artwork etc.)

Confidentiality

It is very important that all staff, volunteers and other adults working in the school, work to a policy of confidentiality. While in school you are likely to become aware of issues relating to individual children. You may see children struggling with work, being upset or misbehaving or hear/see other information concerning a child while you are with us in school. It is vital that you do not share anything about specific children with friends or family or a child's parent/carer if

you know them. The teachers here have the responsibility of informing parents/carers of any concerns about a child. Volunteers working in classrooms do so on the understanding that they support the teaching staff and will not pass opinion on such matters as discipline or teaching styles outside the school.

Safeguarding including the Prevent Duty

Safeguarding concerns about a child, including those regarding the Prevent Duty, must be shared immediately with one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) as soon as possible after the disclosure (this will be explained in more detail at induction and safeguarding training).

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are

Bourne Abbey	Bourne Elsea Park	Colsterworth
Linsey Leafe	Louise Jordan	Sarah Croxall
Rachael Skidmore	Rebecca Bradley	Louise Pape
Janelle Disdale		
Deborah Newnham		

Everyone has a duty to keep children safe. Children may disclose information or worries at any point during the school day. It is not unusual for children to disclose information to people they feel less affiliated to and anything could trigger this.

If a child says something that concerns you:

- DON'T make promises of secrecy
- DON'T ask questions of the child
- DON'T appear shocked or terrified but instead remain calm and reassuring
- DON'T delay in reporting the disclosure
- DO listen closely and carefully to everything the child says
- DO report it to one of the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads immediately
- DO complete a record of concern form as soon as possible noting the date, time and as close to the exact wording as you can of the child's disclosure

The records of concern form can be found in the school office and in each classroom/year group. These will be shown to you as part of your induction.

The Prevent Duty

Schools also have a duty to recognise children at risk of, or who may be vulnerable to, potential radicalisation. While our area remains a low risk area for this type of radicalisation we need to remain mindful of this risk to children and be aware of signs that could warrant early intervention. This very much follows the same procedures as above in school and should be reported in the same manner. Signs could include:

- Expressing extreme views regarding people of other ethnicities, cultures or faiths
- Unusual or unsafe online activity
- Disclosures regarding family members' views or behaviours towards other ethnic groups
- Signs of isolation, fear or rejection of peer groups
- Recent political or religious conversion
- Conflict with family over political or religious views

Mobile Phones
All staff, volunteers and pupils should keep mobile phones switched off during lessons to avoid distraction and disturbance. Calls or messages should not be made or received during lessons. (See ICT Safeguarding Policy (including social media) for full details re: adults in school and pupil mobile phones).

Health & Safety
Health and safety is of the utmost importance. If, while working in school, you see anything that is unsafe, please report the matter to Bourne Abbey – Mrs Debi Yeats (Senior Administrator); Bourne Elsea Park – Mrs Gemma Jones (Senior Administrator); Colsterworth – Miss Nikki Rogers (Senior Administrator)

Fire
There is a fire drill once every two terms. The signal is a continuous ringing of the fire bell. A fire drill routine is based on a critical sequence of events, these being:

Alarm Operation; anyone discovering an outbreak of fire must, without hesitation, sound the alarm by operating the nearest fire alarm call point.

Calling the Fire Service; all outbreaks of fire or any suspected fire, however small, should be reported immediately to the Fire Service by an adult by the quickest means available. This is likely to be by calling a member of the Admin Team who have ready access to outgoing telephone lines.

If the fire alarm sounds, please make your way safely to the nearest exit following the school's fire evacuation procedures (these will be shared with you as part of your induction).

Deployment of Volunteers
Volunteers will be asked to support in classes/areas of the school where there is the most need for support. Parent/carer volunteers should be aware that they will not be able to work in their child's class. If you have children in the school, it is helpful if you can explain to your child that you will be coming into school to help all of the children and that he/she will not be able to work with you. We may from time to time ask you to support another class during a visit if extra adults are required for a specific activity (e.g. supporting practical science work).

Volunteer Roles in School
Many of the activities that we ask you to help with are the sorts of things that parents/carers do with their own children at home. We might ask you to become involved in a variety of activities such as:

- Hearing children read
- Supporting groups in lessons
- Playing games
- Topic related studies
- Admin jobs

A member of staff will give always give you clear guidelines about the activity and all the materials you need.

Photocopier
You may be asked to use the photocopier to support the class teacher in preparing resources. A member of staff you are working with will explain how to use this but please ask in the school office if you are unsure.

First Aid
Please do not administer First Aid to children whilst you are volunteering in school. A number of staff hold certificates for paediatric first aid and first aid at work. Please talk to the class teacher or a member of the office team if you are approached by a child with an ailment or injury.

Attendance
If you find that you are not going to be able to come into school on a particular day, it is really helpful to know in advance, even if that's only a phone message on the morning in question. Please call the front office who will get a message to the teacher you would be working with.

References
Occasionally, volunteers ask the school to provide a written reference when they are seeking employment. We stipulate a minimum qualifying period of three months' attendance of regular volunteering (e.g. once a week) before we feel able to provide a work-based reference. We believe that this is fair to both prospective employers and candidates.

Thank you! We really do appreciate your help.

Striving for Excellence, Caring for All, in a Loving and Caring Christian Environment

Volunteer Application Form

Please note - this is not an application form for employment

1.PERSONAL DETAILS	
First name/s:	Surname and title:
Address:	Daytime Telephone Number:
	Evening Telephone Number:
	Mobile:
Postcode:	Email address:

2.YOUR ROLE AS A VOLUNTEER
Please use this space to talk about how you would like to help at the school (e.g. hearing children read etc.).
Please use this space to talk about any volunteering you have done previously; any relevant skill you have (e.g. languages spoken, sports, scouting etc.) or any relevant qualifications.

3.YOUR AVAILABILITY
Days:
Hours per day:
Times:

4.ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Does your child/ren attend one of the Trust's schools? **YES/NO**
If 'YES' which one:
Please state your child/ren's name and year group/class:
If 'NO', what is your connection with the school?
Do you have a preferred age range you would like to volunteer with? (please circle) Early Years Key Stage One Key Stage Two Don't mind (Please note that regular volunteers will not be placed in a year group where they have a child)

5.CHECKS FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN	
Abbey Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The Trust is legally obligated to process an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before making appointments to relevant posts. The enhanced DBS check will reveal both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings, and any other information held by local police that's considered relevant to the role. Any information that is "protected" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 will not appear on a DBS certificate. Volunteers working in regulated activity will also require a barred list check. Any data processed as part of the DBS check will be processed in accordance with data protection regulations.	
Do you have a DBS check? (please circle)	Yes/ No
If yes, what type of check do you have? (please circle)	Enhanced DBS / Enhanced DBS with barred list information
Are you registered with the DBS Update service? (please circle)	Yes/ No

6.REFERENCE

Your placement as a volunteer may be subject to satisfactory references. Please give the details of two referees who can comment on your suitability (e.g. employers, colleagues, teachers, etc.).

Name (including title):	Email:
Address:	Relationship to you:
Tel No:	How long have they known you?
Name (including title):	Email:
Address:	Relationship to you:
Tel No:	How long have they known you?

7.DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Abbey Academies Trust is committed to ensuring that applicants with disabilities or impairments receive equal opportunities and treatment.

If you have a disability or impairment, and would like us to make adjustments or arrangements to assist you, please state the arrangements you require:

I declare that the information in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and accurate.

I can confirm I have received a copy of the Volunteers in School Policy.

Signature: **Date**:

Thank you for applying, you will hear from us soon. If we need any further details, then we will be in contact with you.

NEXT OF KIN CONTACT DETAILS

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

The below details are for emergency use only and will be kept securely in the school office...

SURNAME:	
FIRST NAME:	

CONTACT 1	
Name:	
Relationship:	
Address:	
Mobile Tel:	
Work Tel:	
Home Tel:	

CONTACT 2	
Name:	
Relationship:	
Address:	
Mobile Tel:	
Work Tel:	
Home Tel:	

Risk Assessment Template for Volunteers working in Schools who are NOT in Regulated Activity

This risk assessment template may be used when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for regular volunteers who are NOT engaged in regulated activity, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024. This would NOT be appropriate for volunteers who simply assist with day-time school visits.

Name of Volunteer		*Start Date*	
Person conducting the risk assessment			

Is the volunteer going to be working in Regulated Activity[1]? [tick one box]

A *Yes* □ *(If "Yes" you **must** obtain an Enhanced DBS certificate with Barred List check and you do **not** need to fill out this risk assessment further)*

B *No* □ *(If "No" you may choose to obtain an Enhanced DBS certificate **without** a Barred List check, based on this risk assessment and your professional judgement)*

Factors to Consider	***Description***	***Guide to Risk Score*** *1=Low risk* *2=Moderate Risk* *3=High risk*	***Risk score***
Will they have direct contact with children?		*1=No Contact* *2=Some Contact* *3=Regular Contact*	
Frequency of working directly with children?		*1=Never/rarely* *2=Occasionally* *3=Frequently*	
Age range of the children?		*n/a*	
Any contact with children particularly vulnerable?		*1=No Contact* *2=Some Contact* *3=Regular Contact*	
Assisting with any personal care?	(If "yes" the v*olunteer is **Regulated Activity**, tick box A above)*	*1=No Personal Care* *2=Some Personal Care=**Regulated Activity***	
What tasks will they be doing?		*1=low risk/simple tasks* *2=moderate risk/more complex tasks* *3=high risk/complex tasks*	
Frequency of working in the school?		*1= Occasionally* *2=2-3 times a term* *3=weekly+*	
Will they be working with children outside of school hours? When?	*(Work between 2am and 6am is **Regulated Activity**, tick box A above)*	*1=None* *2=Occasionally* *3=Frequently* *2-6am=Regulated Activity*	
Will they be working with children off school premises? Where? When?		*1=Never/rarely* *2=Occasionally* *3=Frequently*	
Is the school a residential setting?		*1=No* *3= Yes*	
What is the association of the Volunteer with the school?		*1=strong links eg ex staff* *2=some eg parent/ex pupil* *3=none or weak link*	

[1] Refer to Annex F in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (update Jan 2021) for the Statutory Definition of Regulated Activity

How well does the school know the history of the Volunteer?		*1=Well Known 2=Some knowledge 3=Little or none*	
What do you believe is their reason for volunteering?		*1=positive/sound reasons 2=acceptable /neither good nor bad 3=not known/personal gratification*	
Can the volunteer provide a relevant reference from someone they have worked or volunteered for?		*1=Yes 3= No*	
Can the volunteer provide a reference from someone who knows their work with children?		*1=Yes 3= No*	
Does the volunteer have a history of paid or voluntary work with children?		*1=Currently working 2=Worked within 5 years 3=Over 5 years ago 4=Never worked with chilren*	
Does the Volunteer have a recent DBS certificate from another role?		*1=Yes within 12 months 2=Yes over 12 months 3=No*	
Is the Volunteer currently signed up to the DBS update service?		*1=Yes for a similar role 2=Yes for different role 3=No*	
Are there any known or suspected concerns around working children?		*1=No concerns 2=Don't Know 3=Some concerns*	
Any other factors to be taken into account.			
Total Risk Rating *[total up the risk scores for each factor]*			

Overall Risk level *[tick one box – refer to guide below]*	*High* □	*Medium* □	*Low* □

Guide to assessing risk level

(remember this is only a rough guide and individual schools should determine their own risk levels)

>30	***Low Risk.*** *A score of less than 30 points suggests the volunteer is well known to the school, has probably got some experience of previous work with children and can provide a reference and is generally working on school premises and within normal school hours with children who are not deemed particularly vulnerable. They may be a previous employee, governor or volunteer and/or well known to staff or colleagues. They may hold a recent DBS certificate which has been seen or a portable DBS* *Action: there is no legal requirement to carry out a further DBS check but if the person doesn't hold a portable DBS they may wish to consider carrying out an enhanced DBS check with NO Barred List check*
30-40	***Moderate Risk****. A score between 30-40 points suggests the volunteer has some connection with the school, perhaps as a parent and may have done some similar voluntary work in the past. No particular issues have come to light and there are no concerns over their suitability. The person has provided suitable references. They may work regularly with children where occasionally some of these children are deemed vulnerable. They do not have recent or portable DBS check.* *Action: there is no legal requirement to carry out a further DBS check however the school may wish to consider carrying out an enhanced DBS check with NO Barred List check*
41+	***High Risk****. A score of above 40 points suggests that the volunteer has no previous connection with the school and is not known to staff at the school and cannot provide relevant references as to their suitability to work with children. They do not hold a current DBS or portable DBS check or they may be expected to work directly with children who may be particularly vulnerable or off school premises and out of hours.* *Action: there is no legal requirement to carry out an enhanced DBS check, however it is recommended that the school consider carrying out an enhanced DBS check with NO Barred List check.*

Agreed Action: *[tick box]*
*Enhanced DBS Check **NOT** required? □ Enhanced DBS Check **IS** needed? □*
Comment on reason:

Signed Off:
Name of person signing off risk assessment: ……

Role: ……..

Signature: ……....

Date: ……