



Title of Policy/Procedure	Trust Volunteers Policy
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Reviewer(s):	Head of HR
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To be read in conjunction with the following policies:	Safer Recruitment Policy
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Consultation Process	N/A
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Policy Date:	1 September 2024
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Review Date:	1 September 2026
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This policy is to be ratified by:	People and Culture Committee
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines the process to be followed when engaging volunteers including work experience students.
- 1.2 BKAT recognises that volunteers bring a valuable contribution to school's work and that they enrich the school through their breadth of knowledge and experience.
- 1.3 A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with the Trust or benefit from the Trust's terms and conditions of employment, such as payment for work, holidays and sickness.
- 1.4 Volunteers are not, and never should be a substitute for employees.
- 1.5 The aims of the BKAT Volunteers policy is to:
- Encourage the wider community to engage with the school, thereby enriching the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion
 - Ensure that volunteers support the school's vision and values and adhere to our policies
 - Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers
 - To comply with safeguarding requirements and the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- 1.6 Activities that volunteers are engaged in might include:
- School visits / trips
 - Activities during lessons
 - Working with individual children
 - Reading clubs for children
 - Supporting staff to run breakfast and after school clubs
 - Providing practical assistance during events in the school eg. assemblies/school play.

2.0 Recruitment of Volunteers

- 2.1 Common sense will apply when deciding whether a recruitment process for a volunteer is required. Schools should carry out a DBS risk assessment to determine if a DBS/Barred list check is required. This will include an assessment of whether the volunteer will be working in regulated activity.
- 2.2 The process may need to be adapted to cater for particular roles and sensitivities. For example, if a known parent volunteer is one of a group helping out on a one-off occasion such as a day trip, fete, sports day or school disco with a reasonable level of supervision there is no need for a formal recruitment and selection process, or for a DBS certificate – it would be unlawful in these circumstances to undertake a DBS barred list check.

- However, the volunteer must never be left alone in charge of children and must be supervised at all times.
- 2.3 If however, the volunteer is going to have an ongoing role that involves regular contact with children, or means that the person will be on the premises when children are present regularly or frequently the normal stages of the recruitment and selection process for volunteers should apply. The process might need to be presented differently, or adapted to be more informal, but the principal safeguards and features of the recruitment and selection process should be the same. In those cases, the process should include:
- Information about the school's commitment to safeguarding children
 - A Volunteers agreement and Code of Conduct (see Appendix A)
 - Completion of an application form (See attached template at Appendix B).
- 2.4 The individual should:
- declare all convictions/cautions unless they are "protected" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020)
 - Provide details of any previous employment working with children
 - Provide details of 2 referees and where relevant, at least one reference to be taken from their work with children regardless of whether this is the current or most recent employer
 - Detail any gaps in employment/training with an explanation provided in the relevant section
 - Be prepared to apply for an enhanced DBS check if required
 - Be prepared to provide photographic ID on request
 - Read, sign and return the Volunteers agreement and Code of Conduct
 - Complete any necessary training as required.
- 2.5 For posts in regulated activity, the School will carry out a DBS check which will include a Children's barred list check.
- 3.0 **Obtaining references**
- 3.1 It is important for the referee to comment on the prospective volunteer's suitability to work with children. The reference should specifically request any information on concerns or allegations as well as criminal convictions or disciplinary offences.
- 3.2 Requests should include the referee's relationship with the volunteer and any verifiable comments on their conduct and performance.
- 4.0 **A face-to-face interview**
- 4.1 Safeguarding principles should also apply when interviewing volunteers, but it is important to make interviews more informal than for paid staff. Interviews should be very much a two-way process about selling the volunteer role to them. However, this does not mean that the interview should not probe into

candidates' attitudes and motives and their suitability for work with children. This is even more important for candidates who perhaps have no previous experience of work with children.

4.2 Areas of concern with regard to safeguarding could be:

- No understanding or appreciation of children's needs
- Inappropriate language when talking about children
- Unclear boundaries with children
- Vagueness about experiences and gaps or inability to provide any examples to support what they tell you.

5.0 **DBS checks**

5.1 Under no circumstances should a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

5.2 A written risk assessment should be undertaken in respect of each new volunteer to determine what, if any, checks will be required. This will include the nature of the work with the children, any supervision arrangements, knowledge of the volunteer, any information received through references and whether the role requires an enhanced DBS check and/or barred list check (See Appendix C).

5.3 Volunteers who work in regulated activity require an enhanced check with barred list check.

5.4 Volunteers who work in a school but do not meet the criteria for regulated activity can be asked to complete an enhanced DBS check without a barred list check.

5.5 Volunteers that only assist occasionally eg. on a school trip once a year do not require a DBS check but the school should carry out a risk assessment to ensure that they are supervised at all times.

5.6 Overseas Checks - A disclosure for overseas staff will not generally detail offences committed whilst abroad however a DBS certificate should still be sought where appropriate. The school will consider carrying out further checks for individuals who have spent over 6 months in the last 5 years overseas should include:

6.0 **ID check**

6.1 It is important that the school checks the volunteers ID – this is normally carried out when undertaking a DBS check.

7.0 **Induction**

7.1 Schools should ensure volunteers are given a clear induction programme

defining the role and includes:

- their responsibilities for safeguarding
- acceptable and unacceptable behaviour towards children
- what to do if they believe there is a safeguarding concern
- reasonable steps they can take to avoid creating concerns themselves.

8.0 Single Central record

8.1 Schools are required to record details of any volunteers in school on the SCR.

8.2 There is a separate tab on the SCR template to capture this information.

8.3 Where volunteers are recruited from another organisation, the school should obtain assurance that the person has been subject to a proper recruitment process that includes the necessary safeguards.

Appendix A

Volunteer Agreement and Code of Conduct

I confirm that I will comply with the requirements of **Named** School:

Be visible and located at all times:

Make sure you sign in and out of the building at the office / reception

Wear a visitor's badge at all times

Let the contact person be aware of where you are working.

Read and understand the following policies and procedures:

All aspects of the Schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Equal Opportunities Policy

Behaviour Policy

Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Health and Safety Policy.

Absence

You are required to inform the school, before 8.00 am if you are unable to attend when you are expected. If you are called away in the event of an emergency while volunteering, please let the class teacher / office know before you leave the premises. You will only attend sessions agreed with the school. You cannot just 'drop in' if not expected.

Confidentiality

You are reminded that all information on individual pupils and members of staff is confidential and that the sharing of data is protected under the Data Protection Act 1998. There may be instances where you **MUST** pass information to the headteacher or class teacher. These include incidents where the child is bullied or when a child discloses he or she is being harmed in any way. You must not discuss any concerns with parents/carers.

Internet use and social networking

You are expected to behave in an ethical and lawful manner with regard to the use of the internet and emails. Care and attention should be taken while using social networking sites. Use of these sites should not involve communication regarding your employment at this school or any activities which may bring the school into disrepute and / or may cause us to question your suitability to work with children. Volunteers must not attempt to contact pupils via social media or email, or plan to meet outside of school.

Equal Opportunities

The School does not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, race, ethnic background, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation or marital, social or financial status. All volunteers are required to make a commitment to this policy and treat everyone with respect at all times.

Code of Conduct for volunteers

Volunteers are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour and conduct while involved in all activities at school. The following is a guide to appropriate conduct while working in or on behalf of a school (including school trips, residential visits and out of school activities).

You should:

- Observe the high standards of behaviour and ethical conduct mandated by the school
- Respect other volunteers, members of staff and pupils, and make them feel valued
- Be approachable, pleasant and a positive role model for pupils
- Adhere to all school policies. For example: Child Protection, Health and Safety, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour Policy etc.
- Maintain confidentiality of personal information at all times, unless there is a need to report something
- Treat all children and members of staff equally
- Report any incident of poor behaviour to the class teacher immediately
- Dress and behave in a manner which promotes healthy and safe working practices
- Accept and follow directions from your supervising staff member and seek guidance through clarification where you may be uncertain of tasks or requirements
- Observe safe working practices which avoid unnecessary risks, apply reasonable instructions given by supervisors, and report to the supervising staff member any potential hazard in the workplace
- Make proper use of the resources of the school
- Conduct your work in a co-operative manner
- Adhere to the mobile phone policy whilst on school premises
- Sign an E Safety Agreement form.

You should never

- Tell a child off. As a volunteer, you are not expected to discipline children. If there are any problems, tell the class teacher straight away
- Shout, hit, threaten or manhandle a child
- Take photographs in school without the prior permission of the headteacher
- Develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with pupils
- Work with children when you are not in the proper physical or emotional state to do so. For example: under medication which makes you drowsy, or under extreme stress which may impair your judgement
- Behave in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner
- Share your personal contact details with pupils or make personal arrangements to meet children outside school. This includes all social media, e.g. Facebook and Instagram
- Discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards a child
- Make inappropriate jokes or remarks of a sexual, racial, intimidating, discriminatory or offensive nature

- Behave in a manner which may bring the school into disrepute when representing the school
- Give or receive (other than 'token') gifts, unless arranged through your Headteacher.

I, _____ have read the School's Code of Conduct and Volunteer Agreement and agree to abide by the safe code of conduct.

Signed _____ Date _____

(Copy to be retained on file)

Volunteer Application Form

Named School

1. Personal details

Name

Date of birth:

Gender:

Contact Number:

Email address:

Home address:

2. Your role as a volunteer

**Do you have any experience working as a volunteer, especially with children?
If yes please include details below:**

Why would you like to volunteer at (named school)?

Do you have any particular skills/employment history or hobbies that you would like to share with us? eg. languages, sports, crafts etc

3. DBS checks

Named school is legally obligated to process an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before appointing volunteers to relevant posts.

The 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 volunteering role. Any information that is "protected" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) do not have to be disclosed and if they are disclosed will not be considered. If you're not sure whether one of your convictions is 'protected', you can [check here](#). For posts in regulated activity, the DBS check will include a Children's barred list check.

Any data processed as part of the DBS check will be processed in accordance with data protection regulations and the school's privacy notice.

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:

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 Barred list check or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body

Yes ☐ No ☐

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

4. References

Please give details of two referees the first of which must be your current or most recent employer or organisation you volunteered for. References from friends, schools 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.

If the role you are volunteering for involves working directly with children we would welcome a reference from the most recent employer with whom you were employed to work with children. (this may include voluntary/unpaid work). **Please let your referees know that we will contact them.**

1.	Name:	2.	Name:
	Job title:		Job title:
	Address:		Address:
	Postcode:		Postcode:
	Email:		Email:
	Tel no:		Tel no:

Any issues raised in the references may be discussed at a later point.

6. Safeguarding Children

Named school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. 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.

7. Declaration

- All the information I have given on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge.
- I understand that if accepted as a volunteer I may be aware of confidential information and understand that I must not disclose or discuss such information except with my named contact in **Named School**.
- I understand that prior to commencing work; a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service may have to be made, with my permission.

Signed _____

Dated _____



Using your personal information. Named school for the purpose of the administration and evaluation of volunteers will hold the information you have supplied. The School will retain your personal contact details for the duration of interest in volunteering. Information regarding your volunteer participation will be held on record for insurance purposes. For further information, contact **Named person in school responsible for data protection**.

I agree to the use of this data for the above purposes

Signed _____

Dated _____

Appendix C

Volunteers DBS Risk Assessment - Section 1 or 2 must be completed

Section 1: Regular unsupervised contact with children	
Nature of work with children	
Information known about the individual and suitability to work with children (from application form and interview)	
Satisfactory references received (including where previously worked with children)	
Yes/No	
ID checked	
Yes/No	
Is the role eligible for an Enhanced DBS check (with barred list)	
Yes	
Date DBS clearance received	
Signed	Date
Section 2: No regular unsupervised contact with children	
Nature of work with children	
Information known about the individual and suitability to work with children (from application form and interview)	
Satisfactory references received (including where previously worked with children)	
Yes/No	
ID checked	
Yes/No	
Is the role eligible for an Enhanced DBS check? No	
Detail supervision arrangements in place (Must be continued and day to day)	
Signed	Date