



**VOLUNTEER POLICY  
2016-2017**

Date Completed: December 2016  
Review Date: December 2017

Buxton School's Volunteer Policy is part of the school's safeguarding systems.

## Definition

Volunteers may be described as individuals who put their experience, knowledge and skills to help an organisation, free of charge, with the primary aim of bringing some benefit to the local community. Individuals may also volunteer to develop their own skills and experience to enhance their employment opportunity.

Volunteers are required to sign the Volunteer Agreement sheet before starting work at Buxton School. This agreement is for the academic year. This policy sets out the arrangements for volunteer helpers only.

## Introduction

We want our school to be open and welcoming to all who would like to support the children. We also want to encourage parents and other adults to help teachers in a variety of ways. However, our overriding concern is for the safety of the children in our care. This document sets out our school's policy, which is to ensure that the children benefit from as much help and support as possible, and are provided at the same time with the best possible security.

The school has a variety of adults working on the premises at any one time. They can be categorised as follows:

- Teachers
- Teaching assistants
- Admin staff
- Caretaker and cleaning staff
- Lunchtime supervisors and kitchen staff
- Counsellors
- Child Care Specialists
- Community Project Workers
- Holiday Club Workers/Supervisors
- Technical Support Staff

Adult workers employed by another organisation

- Trainee teachers
- LEA advisers and inspectors
- Health workers (for example school nurse, speech and language therapist etc)
- Contract workers (for example an electrician or heating engineer)

Volunteer helpers:

- Parents or other adult helpers working alongside teachers
- Students on work experience
- Governors

## Volunteer helpers

Volunteer helpers support the school in a number of ways, including:

- supporting individual pupils
- hearing pupils read
- helping with classroom organisation
- helping with the supervision of children on school trips
- helping with group work
- helping with art or subjects involving other practical activities
- Helping activity leaders during Holiday Clubs
- After school and evening activities

Volunteer helpers are **not** allowed to do the following activities:

- take responsibility for all or some of the whole class
- change young children, or supervise them changing
- supervise children engaged in PE or other specialist activities
- take children off the school site without a teacher in charge
- be on their own with child/children (unless enhanced DBS approved by HT)
- roam the premises unescorted (unless enhanced DBS approved by HT)

The responsibility for the health and welfare of the child remains with the class teacher at all times.

## 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, usually approaches the Class Teacher, Headteacher or Senior member of staff directly.

The volunteers details will be forwarded to the Headteacher and a meeting with the Headteacher will be arranged.

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

## Induction

After the meeting with the Headteacher and when the completed Volunteer Application Form has been assessed, volunteers will be invited in for a meeting with relevant the senior departmental team leader. Here the following will take place:

- The volunteer will sit a numeracy and literacy test
- The volunteer's documents will be checked
- The volunteer will read the Volunteer Policy and the DfE's 'Keeping children safe in education' statutory guidance
- Other relevant policy's will be discuss with the volunteer and they will be told how to access them
- There will be a Child Protection conversation including relevant procedures
- Teaching Assistant paperwork will be discussed **for teaching assistant roles**
- An email to all staff from HR introducing and welcoming volunteer to school community
- There will be an orientation tour
- Identification lanyards will be organised with volunteers photographic ID

## Confidentiality

During your time as a volunteer you will become involved in conversations with individual children. You will also become aware of different abilities and levels of behaviour in different children. The teacher may well discuss the varying needs and requirements of individuals when discussing your programme. Similarly when you

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join the Staff in the staff room at break times you may well hear comments and opinions that you would not otherwise have expected to hear in a formal teacher/parent relationship. It is important to remember that anything you might learn as the direct result of acting as a volunteer, whether it refers to a child or a member of staff, must remain in absolute confidence.

During your time at Buxton School any documentation that you may have access to is strictly confidential and should be treated as such. **All staff at the school are expected to observe the same rule.**

### **Break and lunchtimes**

You are welcome to join teachers in the staff room for a drink. However, please be aware that any discussions heard in the staffroom must remain confidential.

### **Child Protection**

It is our constant responsibility to monitor any unusual changes in mood or behaviour of the Children. We have strict guidelines within which we work should we suspect that there is a Child Protection issue. Please follow the procedures below in the event of a child talking to you about anything you find disturbing:

- If a child wishes to make a disclosure to you, never promise that you will not tell anyone else.
- Do not artificially prolong a discussion with the child in the hope of getting a disclosure.
- Do not ask leading questions – this could make it impossible to properly pursue the case later.

At Buxton School the Child Protection Officers are Sarah Edwards (Primary) and Antonia Shearman (Secondary). All staff have had the relevant training to deal with Child protection. **If you are worried or concerned then please speak to the designated member of staff or the class teacher.** There is probably a perfectly reasonable explanation but not speaking out could have serious consequences for the child if there is a genuine risk to their welfare.

To ensure the safety of both the children and yourself you should **never work:**

- with an individual child behind a closed door
- On your own with children without supervision (unless enhanced DBS has been approved by HR)
- in a room or isolated area that is unsighted by other adults

All volunteers and staff are required to read the DfE's 'Keeping children safe in education' statutory guidance.

### **Emergencies/First Aid**

Any child requiring First Aid should be taken to a teacher, teaching assistant or to the welfare officer. Please do not treat children yourself as staff have had appropriate training and know the school procedures. Please read the notice in the class where you are working which outlines the evacuation procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

Fire Practices are held termly. If you hear the alarm, please take the children you are working with and leave through the nearest exit. Assemble on the school playground with the class teacher so the register can be checked.

### **DBS checks**

For the children's safety, all volunteer helpers are required to have DBS clearance before they work in the school.

The Headteacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if she believes it will not be in the best interests of the children.

## Insurance

Whilst volunteering for the school they are covered by the LEA for third party liability. Loss or damage to their own personal belongings is not covered by the LEA policy or by the school. They may wish to make their own arrangements for insuring against theft, personal injury or damage to their own property.

## Inclusion

Buxton School recognises that there will be times when the School requests the support of a volunteer for whom particular arrangements are necessary. The School operates an inclusive policy and all offers of help from volunteers will be considered on an equal basis.

## Deployment of classroom volunteers

It is the policy of this school that adult volunteers who are parents do not support in their own child's classroom, as this can be distracting for the child, and perhaps place the class teacher in an uncomfortable situation. Volunteers will be asked to support in classes where there is the most need for individual support. The Headteacher and Head of Department will decide where volunteers are deployed.

## Complaints

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff, for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be dealt with in the same way.

The Headteacher or designated member of staff 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
- Based upon the facts identified in the investigation it may be necessary for the School to inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them
- Provide the volunteer with a copy of the school's full Complaints Procedure

## Health and Safety

Safe practice must be promoted at all times. The school has a Health and Safety policy and maintains records of Risk Assessment. Volunteers **MUST** report immediately anything to a member of staff employed by the school, which might endanger the well-being or affect the safety of anybody and or the school.

## References

References for volunteers will only be given if a volunteer has worked at the school for a minimum of six months.

## Cancellation

The Headteacher is able to stop any volunteer from either starting to work in school or continuing their work in school if:

- They feel it is not in the best interest of the school or a group of children or an individual child
- The volunteer does not follow the school's policy on Volunteer agreement
- The volunteer does not successfully obtain a DBS clearance

The policy was agreed/approved by the governors on .....

**Appendix I**

**VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM – FOR NEW VOLUNTEER**

Name of Volunteer:

First Name.....Surname.....

Date of Birth:.....

Address: .....  
.....

Postcode.....

Phone: Home.....

Mobile .....

**Describe your work experience and qualifications (with dates)**

Name of referee

Tel

**What activities/ areas of the school's work would you like to help with? (If you are a student please include details of your course/placement requirements)**

**Are there any particular age groups/classes you would like to work with? (If you have relatives in school please give details of their year groups/classes).**

**What days of the week and times are you available to work over this year?**

**Do you have any disabilities/other needs we need to take into account or adjustments we need to make to allow you to work as a Volunteer in School(please give details – continue overleaf if necessary)?**

**Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Application Form**

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## Appendix 2 VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at Buxton School.  
Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope that you will gain much from your experience.  
Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement Sheet at your interview with the Senior Teaching Assistant.  
You will receive a copy of it for your records.

- I have received a copy of the School's Volunteer Policy
- I agree to support the School's Aims
- I agree to treat information obtained from being a volunteer in school as strictly confidential
- I understand that an enhanced DBS check will be undertaken
- I have been made aware of who is my designated supervisor e.g. Class Teacher, Head of Department

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### A Few Hints to Guide You

- Make sure you understand clearly what you are expected to do.
- Have high expectations of behaviour and follow the school's behaviour systems. We have high expectations of the children in all that they do.
- At Buxton School we believe in emphasizing, praising and reinforcing good behaviour.
- By good behaviour we mean: Being on task, turn taking and sharing equipment, consideration of others, caring for and looking after our school environment, acting sensibly when moving around school
- Praises and rewards can include something as simple as a smile, a merit or a sticker. You may want to mention particular children to the teacher for recognition at some time.
- If a particular child causes you a problem, please let the teacher know.
- Encourage independence – help children to choose their own materials. Support, guide, make suggestions, but don't do it for them. Encourage children to have a go.
- Encourage children to talk about what they are doing as this makes them think.
- Ask questions where a child cannot answer with a yes or no. Here are some examples:
  - How did you do that?
  - What do you think would happen if...?
  - What do you think will happen next?
  - What did you notice?
- Feedback to the teacher anything they might need to know. Eg. Did the child settle well to the task? Did they find it easy or difficult?