

Volunteer Policy

Local Conditions of Service for School Based Employees

ConnectEd Partnership highly recommend the use of this policy. The policy is considered best HR practice, it has been developed in accordance with current employment law and has been negotiated with all recognised professional associations and HR providers across the City of Wolverhampton.

Updated October 2024

Adopted by: Merridale Primary School

On: 27th March 2025

Signed (Chair of Governors/Trust): Mr M Rizwan

Key amendments made to this document in October 2024

Page 13 - Volunteer Equality Monitoring Form – “other” box added for the question “what is your sex”.

Equality monitoring form – terminology changed to match ACAS guidelines.

Volunteer Policy Index

1. Policy Statement
2. Safeguarding Children and Young People
3. Our School Aims
4. Applying to Become a Volunteer
5. Supervision
6. Volunteer Vetting Process
7. Volunteer Induction
8. Health and Safety
9. Data Protection and Confidentiality
10. Use of mobile phones and other electronic devices whilst volunteering
11. Contact and Sharing of personal information
12. Code of Conduct and Dress Code
13. Right to Dignity and Respect
14. Complaints Procedure
15. Insurance
16. Expenses
Appendix A Risk Assessment Criteria for someone with previous convictions to work with vulnerable adults and/or children

1. Policy Statement

The Governing/Trust Board welcomes volunteers from the local community who are able to make a positive contribution to the school, by giving freely of their time and talents to enhance learning experiences and outcomes for pupils.

Opportunities to volunteer may arise in respect of a one-off activity, for example accompanying school visits, or may take the form of a more regular activity, for

example listening to children read. School will also welcome volunteers to become members of their Governing/Trust Board, for which there is a separate process.

The school is committed to equality of opportunity and values diversity. As such the accessibility of opportunities to volunteer will be managed, monitored and reviewed with due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Duty.

The school will only engage volunteers whom it is satisfied are willing and able to safeguard pupils, and to fulfil the requirements of the volunteer role that has arisen.

The school's engagement of volunteers will be reviewed on an annual basis, and people wishing to volunteer may be required to re-apply, enter into a new Volunteer Agreement or be subject to repeat vetting checks where the school determines that this is required (page 6 refers).

This Policy meets statutory requirements and is in accordance with the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.'

This Policy and the Volunteer Agreement herein set out reasonable expectations; they are not intended to be legally binding, and those fulfilling volunteer opportunities will not be a worker for, or employee of, the school in their capacity as a volunteer.

If you require assistance to access this Policy, please contact the school office who will be able to discuss arrangements for you to access the Policy in an alternative format to meet your needs.

2. Safeguarding Children and Young People

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all volunteers to share this commitment.

If you wish to become a volunteer, you will be subject to the vetting process and checks specified in section 6 below.

You will also be asked to enter into the Volunteer Agreement in Appendix B, and to adhere to safeguarding requirements at all times.

In accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy, a copy of which you will receive, if whilst volunteering you have any concerns in relation to the safeguarding of children or young people you should immediately notify the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Towle who can be contacted on 01902 558760 or office@merridaleprimary.co.uk

In the absence of Mrs Towle you should inform Mrs Byrne, Mrs Corbett or Mrs Hitch.

3. Our school aims

All staff and volunteers who carry out work or activities for the school are expected to uphold our school aims:

At Merridale Primary School we aim:

- To ensure everyone in the school has the opportunity to maximise their full potential.
- To provide every child with the highest quality teaching and learning opportunities.
- To provide a welcoming, safe and happy school environment.
- To provide role models who promote positive values to prepare children for life in modern Britain.
- To provide an exciting, engaging and effective curriculum.
- To celebrate the cultural diversity of the school and local community
- For parents, carers and families to be partners in learning.

4. Applying to become a volunteer

Any person wishing to become a volunteer should complete the volunteer request form online, which can be found here:

[Work Experience and Volunteering | Merridale Primary](#)

Applications can be submitted on a speculative basis or in respect of specific opportunities which have arisen.

The information on the equality monitoring form is for equality monitoring purposes only. The form will be detached from your application and the information stored to enable the school to monitor and review its practices in relation to equality.

Any person wishing to become a volunteer will be required to adhere to the Volunteer Agreement included in the online form.

This Policy forms a part of the Volunteer Agreement.

5. Supervision

In this school we will not under any circumstances leave a volunteer unsupervised, unless they have been subject to the additional vetting checks required for a person to undertake regulated activity (see below)

- supervision will be carried out by a person who is in regulated activity, and has undergone an enhanced DBS check and barred list check by virtue of this
- the supervision will be regular and day to day; and
- the supervision will be reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children

6. Volunteer vetting process

The school has adopted a robust recruitment and vetting procedure in respect of volunteers.

The following checks must be carried out and satisfactory results **before** any person will be permitted to engage in volunteer activity at the school.

The checks to be undertaken / obtained are as follows:

- Receipt of a completed online application form and volunteer agreement
- Receipt of two satisfactory references
- An informal interview to gauge the applicant's aptitude and suitability
- Verification of legal right to live and work in the UK
- Verification of Identity

The school may also determine that due to the frequency or nature of the supervised volunteer activities that are to be undertaken, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check without a barred list check is required.

Under no circumstances will a person be allowed to volunteer and undertake regulated activity on any occasion, without all of the above checks having been undertaken and satisfactory responses received, along with an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service criminal record check which contains a barred list check.

Supervised volunteers (only one occasion in a term)

For supervised volunteers who are to volunteer with the school on only one occasion in a term, the school, having conducted an appropriate risk assessment, may allow a person to volunteer on the basis of the following checks being undertaken / obtained:

- Receipt of a completed online application form and volunteer agreement
- Receipt of two satisfactory references
- An informal interview to gauge the applicant's aptitude and suitability
- Verification of legal right to live and work in the UK
- Verification of Identity

The checks and the results of the checks undertaken must be recorded on the school's Single Central Record.

If you volunteer to undertake regulated activity, or where the school considers that a Disclosure and Barring Service check is required, you will be asked to complete a Disclosure of Criminal Record Declaration Form.

Any information obtained by the school for the purpose of vetting volunteers will be confidential, and relevant information relating to the checks stored and processed for that purpose and relevant safeguarding purposes only.

The information will be stored and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be GDPR compliant. The school undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed and will complete a DBS Risk Assessment see Appendix E.

7. Induction

Volunteers can expect to be provided with the following as part of their induction to the school and the activity/ activities that they will be carrying out:

- a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education: Safeguarding information for all staff
- a copy of this Policy including all appendices
- copies of the school's Safeguarding and Health and Safety Policies, and Code of Conduct
- relevant training and instruction in line with their role
- the opportunity to ask any questions or to express any concerns that they may have
- the name of the person/s to inform should any concerns arise

8. Health and Safety

The school has a Health and Safety Policy a copy of which will be provided to you at your induction. When volunteering it is the school's expectation that you will take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of any person that may be affected by your acts and omissions (failure to act)

The school will ensure that volunteers are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury, and the school also holds public liability insurance. The school's insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the Volunteer Agreement.

9. Data Protection and Confidentiality

When volunteering for the school you may become aware of information relating to matters which are confidential, such as the attainment of pupils, their attitudes, behaviour and special needs, or information relating to other school staff. You must not relay anything confidential that you have seen or heard when volunteering. This includes relaying information to parents/carers, other members of the school community, the press or to the public, for example using social media. The school has well defined procedures for informing parents/carers of any concerns and will be the first to discuss any concerns with them.

If you have any concerns in relation to the safeguarding of children or young people you should immediately notify the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with section 2 of this Policy above.

10. Use of mobile phones and other electronic devices whilst volunteering

In accordance with the School's policy on the use of mobiles phone and other electronic devices you will be restricted in the use of your electronic devices whilst volunteering. You must never seek to photograph or record images of pupils or staff on a mobile phone or any other device.

11. Contact and sharing of personal information

You should not create relationships with pupils outside of that necessary for the purpose that you are volunteering. This includes no personal or unauthorised meetings outside of school. You must never give any of your personal contact details to pupils and must never obtain or accept contact details from pupils.

12. Code of Conduct and Dress Code

When volunteering you will be representing the school and will be a role model for our pupils. You must adhere to the standards set by the school and must dress in a manner which is appropriate for the volunteer activity you are carrying out, which is safe and appropriate dress for working with pupils.

13. Right to dignity and respect

All staff and volunteers are required to treat all adults and children that they come into contact with during the course of their role with dignity and respect and are entitled to expect this in return.

The school's procedure which can be used in circumstances where a volunteer wishes to make a complaint is set out below.

14. Complaints Procedure

If a volunteer or volunteer applicant wishes to make a complaint in respect of any aspect of their treatment by staff carrying out work for the school, their treatment by pupils or the application of this Policy, they should detail their concerns in writing and address them to the Headteacher.

Where the concerns relate to the Headteacher, they should be addressed to the Chair of the Governing Board.

In order to seek to resolve any concerns they must be raised in a timely manner and no later than 3 months from the time of the incident or concern arising.

Complaints will be managed in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedure, a copy of which can be obtained from the school website.

15. Insurance

The school has insurance cover in place for volunteers. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside of the Volunteer Agreement.

Volunteers will never be authorised to drive pupils in any vehicle and are not authorised to transport any pupils unless accompanied by a member of staff.

16. Expenses

Volunteers are not expected to incur cost and as such they are not eligible to incur expenses.

Risk Assessment Criteria for someone with previous convictions to work with vulnerable adults and/or children.

This form is to be used for all DBS Risk Assessments including at recruitment stage.

Part A – to be completed at initial meeting with employee or potential employee. **Date of Meeting:** _____

Name: _____ **DOB:** ____/____/____

Intended / Actual Start Date: _____

Job Title:

Place of work:

Name of Manager / Head Teacher:

Name of HR Officer:

Q1. Did you declare this/these convictions at interview or on your application form?

Yes / No

If no, why were they not declared?

Part B – to be completed by the Manager / Head Teacher undertaking the risk assessment:

1. What is the nature of the post?
2. *Is the offence(s) directly relevant to the work undertaken? If more than 1 different offence, list and assess individually.

Yes No Possibly *(please circle as appropriate)
3. Which site(s) is the employee likely to work at?
(Please list all possible sites)
4. Are vulnerable adults/children likely to be at the site whilst they are working there? ***Yes No**
5. Are they supervised at these sites? ***Yes No**

*If yes, please give details of the level of supervision.
6. What relationships has the employee established at these sites? (Only applicable to a current employee).
7. What opportunities may exist for the employee to re-offend?
8. Is there a pattern of offending behaviours?
9. What are the alternative work options?

In order to assist employers, understand difficult conviction information, a helpline is available to give advice for queries about conviction matters: Nacro on 03001231999

Nature of Offence:	Date occurred	Age when occurred:	Tariff:	Frequency:	Time between offences:	Circumstances of offence: Employees Response

Part C: - to be completed by the Manager / Head Teacher considering information on Parts A and B.

Assessment of Risk:

High

Medium

Low

(circle as appropriate)

Basis of Assessment.	Recommended Safeguards.

Part D: Only to be completed if a further meeting takes place- This is the opportunity to discuss the content of the Risk Assessment.

Any further issues identified:

Part E: Manager's / Head Teacher's Recommendations:

Recommendations

Manager / Head Teacher Signature: _____

Date: _____

Chair of Governors Signature: _____

Date: _____

Approved by CEO (if applicable): Yes ☐ No ☐

CEO Signature _____

Date: _____

PART F: HR Actions

Date Form Returned: _____

New Starter

Outcome of Risk Assessment: Continue with Offer of Employment: ☐

Withdraw Offer of Employment: ☐

Current Employer

Outcome of Risk Assessment: Further Investigation Required ☐

Restrictions Required: ☐