



# Volunteer Policy

## Hopewell School

<b>Policy Date:</b>	September 2023
<b>Date Ratified by Governors:</b>	September 2023
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2024



## Introduction

At Hopewell we recognise that there can be situations in which volunteers can make an appropriate and significant contribution to the work and services of the School.

The policy defines the term and sets out the principles, practices and procedures which will be followed in the appointment, management and supervision of volunteers.

The contribution of volunteers to the work of the School is especially valued and respected.

Hopewell believe that by providing opportunities for volunteers to work alongside children with SEMH and complex needs, the volunteer will gain a range of skills and work experience. They will develop confidence and motivation to try different things and benefit the community they serve.

This policy sets out how Hopewell intend to support its volunteers.

Volunteers may include include:

- Members of the governing body
- University and college students
- Ex members of staff
- Members of the local community
- Types of activities that volunteers are engaged in might include:
  - Hearing children read
  - Working with small groups of children
  - Working with individual children
  - Undertaking specific activities with children
  - Working with children on the computer
  - Accompanying school visits
  - Shadowing members of staff to gain an understanding of a specific role within the school

## BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one-off event or on a more regular basis should read the information on the school website and complete the online volunteering application form.

If successful, applicants will be invited in to school for an interview. Before starting in school and to ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all volunteers will be required to complete a DBS (Criminal Records Bureau) check. This will be arranged with the Office Manager.

The check takes approximately two weeks to process. We are unable to have any volunteer in school unless they have been cleared by the Criminal Records Bureau and shown their certificate in school. Induction packs



will be issued to all volunteers and confirmation of a starting date will be confirmed in advance of the placement.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Hopewell has a confidentiality policy. All volunteers will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement and follow its principles. Volunteers may have access to personal information about some individuals, or other information which may be confidential. Hopewell needs to be able to trust its volunteers with such information. Volunteers who break this confidentiality will be asked to leave.

Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with/ come into contact with should be shared with the Head or Deputy Head teacher and not with any persons outside school.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

All volunteers have the responsibility to report any concern that they may have regarding Child Protection to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). It is not the role for the volunteer to investigate concerns.

Hopewell's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy explains the guidelines and procedures to follow regarding any suspicions. A copy of this policy will be provided to you on your first visit to the school.

All volunteers must attend the school 'raising awareness' level 1 safeguarding training, to ensure they are aware of the school's safeguarding duties, how to spots signs and symptoms of abuse, how to report it, and safer working practices. All volunteers must read the school's Safeguarding Policy and part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2022. Volunteers must also sign the code of conduct for adults. Volunteers are given clear guidance on safeguarding children, child protection, and their conduct whilst in school. No voluntary helper should ever be left in a vulnerable position, i.e. never with a child in a place/situation where they cannot be observed.

## **ISSUES AFFECTING ADULTS:**

All adults in our school can expect their personal and health issues to remain confidential unless:

- it impinges on their terms of contract;
- it endangers pupils or other members of staff;
- there is a legal obligation to disclose such information;
- it is necessary for legal proceedings;
- despite the duty of confidence, the staff member's interest or the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the DSL or Deputy Head teacher.



## **SUPERVISION:**

All volunteers work under the supervision of a designated staff member to which they are assigned. Although teachers and school staff retain responsibility for children at all times, this does not require volunteers to be in their direct supervision at all times. Volunteers should feel confident to carry out the task they have been assigned and should seek further advice/ guidance from the teacher in the event of a query or problem regarding a child's behaviour or understanding of a task.

## **HEALTH and SAFETY**

The school has a health and safety policy which is available on request. The designated staff member should ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (e.g. using PE equipment). If a volunteer attends a school trip, their emergency contact details will be requested. Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher, TA, Deputy Head teacher or Head Teacher.

## **SCHOOL PROTOCOLS**

Volunteers must be made aware of the ethos, values as well as the daily protocols and procedures of the school. This should include procedures designed to avoid hazards or risks associated with the tasks that they are being asked to carry out and, importantly, details of first aid and emergency arrangements such as procedures to follow in case of fire. As part of their induction to life at the School, volunteers should also be provided with basic information such as a details of staff roles, the layout of the school, fire walk and emergency procedures as well those facilities available to them eg car parking, toilets etc.

It is essential that volunteers are made aware of the following procedures: - · expectations with regard to confidentiality; · access to information related to pupils and/or staff; · expected level of behaviour; · School's Equal Opportunities policy – especially focussing on issues relating to discrimination and the use of appropriate language; · the School's Complaints procedure; · the School's Code of Conduct.

## **VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT:**

Examples of acceptable behaviour. People behave acceptably when they:

- Afford dignity, trust and respect for everyone and themselves;
- Have awareness of the effects of their behaviour on others and only make reasonable and manageable demands;
- Communicate honestly and openly, clearly stating what they need and expect of others;
- Provide and are receptive to honest feedback based on evidence; and
- Challenge discriminatory language and behaviour in an appropriate way.

Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:

- Using aggressive language, threatening, ridiculing, ignoring people or repeatedly shouting;
- Telephoning people at home unnecessarily (for example, demanding work when the person is absent due to sickness or ill health);
- Focusing only on weaknesses;
- Bringing up details of someone's private life inappropriately;
- Leaving impossibly long lists of tasks and making unreasonable demands;
- Criticising people or maliciously gossiping about them in their absence;
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail; Comments or jokes, about distinctive peoples and nationalities;
- Frequent comments about aspects of physical appearance or using forms of address that are demeaning;
- Threatening or implying, without reason, that, as a colleague, you will cause the person to lose his/her job or fail to get a promotion or suffer some other form of career difficulty or financial disadvantage;
- Coercing someone to join the harassment/bullying of another person;
- Excluding or marginalising someone or refusing to engage with them appropriately.

This list is not exhaustive. It is simply a guide to help individuals consider their own and others behaviour and gain understanding of what behaviours are unacceptable in the workplace.

## **STANDARDS EXPECTED OF VOLUNTEERS**

The standards expected of all volunteers include but are not limited to:

- maintaining standards of behaviour in keeping with the interests and standing of the school. This includes behaviour outside of working hours and in any form that is visible to the public, including social networking or any other electronic medium
- devoting full attention while at school to the duties of their position and in doing so acting with responsibility, good judgement and in good faith
- not divulging to any unauthorised person or making personal use of confidential information connected with the school either intentionally or through negligent behaviour
- observing the rules, regulations and instructions adopted by the school
- following appropriate safeguarding procedures

- participating fully in any investigation into alleged incidents and/or allegations including attending meetings as directed
- using electronic communications appropriately ensuring that information brought to light as a result of any investigation is treated with discretion

Some specific guidance for volunteers:

- We do not use mobile phones in any classrooms. You are never allowed to use it to take photos of children. You must challenge any visitor using their mobile phone in school.
- Never use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- Do not smoke in front of any child or young person.
- Do not use un-prescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.
- Do not give children presents or personal items.
- You should not invite a young person to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times
- You should not engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a young person you meet through duties, or start a personal relationship with them: this would be an abuse of trust and is illegal. Do not engage in rough or sexually provocative games.
- Avoid being alone with a child. In situations where this may be needed (for example where a young person wants to speak in private) think about ways of making this seem less secret: for example, by telling another worker or volunteer what you are doing and where you are, leaving a door ajar, being in earshot of others.
- Volunteers should be aware of the potential for misunderstanding when touching children. If it is an accepted part of an activity, touching should be appropriate to the situation and follow the organisations safeguarding Policy. Comforting a child who is upset, administering first aid or supporting a participant in an activity is acceptable and necessary behaviour. Workers should, however, endeavour to minimise any possible misunderstanding of their actions. Physical contact should be open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset.
- Do not give children a lift in your car
- School equipment, including computers, are not to be used to access pornographic websites or other websites that are of an offensive or sexual nature.

**Absences** Please let us know in advance wherever possible if you are going to be absent so that we can make sure that we inform the relevant member(s) of staff.

**Badges** After signing in, volunteers are requested to wear a 'Visitor' badge.

**Fire Alarm** There are instructions on posters around the buildings and in every classroom to indicate the exit points; please make sure you are familiar with these and also that you are aware of your nearest fire call point. We have a number of First Aiders on site – posters are displayed on both sites on the

Health and Safety noticeboards

**Personal Belongings** Personal belongings can be left in the lockers on the top floor at your own risk.

**Smoking:** The whole school, is a "No Smoking" area.

Any volunteer unsure of any school process or procedure must discuss them with the designated member of staff appointed to oversee their placement.