



Volunteer Policy

Policy Review

Last Review Date: September 2023

Next Review Due: September 2026

1. Volunteering

At Oakwood, we recognise and value the effort taken by parents and other volunteers who contribute towards school activities. We encourage your assistance and acknowledge that many school activities are enhanced and can only take place with your help.

We aim to make sure that your time spent in school is productive and enjoyable as well as enhancing the educational experience and opportunities of the children. The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or for a number of sessions over a longer period, must take account of the needs of pupils and the staff to whom they are assigned. We have a duty to ensure that the welfare of pupils is promoted and that they are safeguarded from harm.

Volunteering in a school is a professional position requiring responsibility and trust. We take this into account in setting out the practices and procedures which will be followed in appointing, inducting, managing and supervising volunteers. This policy also contains a code of conduct with which all volunteers are required to comply, in order for us to provide a safe environment and positive educational climate for pupils.

Our volunteers include:

- Parents
- Former members of staff
- Members of the governing body
- Members of the local community

Your main contacts in the school are:

- The Office Staff
- The Headteacher/Senior Leadership Team
- The Class Teacher

Activities that volunteers are engaged in might include:

- School visits / trips and workshops
- Activities during lessons
- Reading and working with individual children
- Supporting staff to run lunchtime and after school clubs
- Tidying and maintaining areas of the school and its grounds
- Assisting practically for and during events in the school e.g. assemblies/school plays

2. 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. to listen to children read), should approach the Class Teacher, the Headteacher or a senior member of staff.

Before volunteering, volunteers need to:

- attend a volunteer briefing held at school
- read this volunteer policy and sign and return the volunteer agreement
- sign and return the IT acceptable use agreement
- read the following documents:
 - safeguarding leaflet
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) part one
 - Oakwood Child Protection Policy
 - Oakwood Behaviour Policy
 - Oakwood Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Health and safety procedures
 - Fire and evacuation procedures

When volunteering, volunteers need to:

- sign in at the school office when arriving and sign out when leaving
- wear a visitor badge at all times
- adhere to school policies and procedures

Regular volunteers should complete a volunteer Application Form (Appendix 1) and once accepted, the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2) which sets out the schools expectations of its volunteers and confirms that they have received a copy of this agreement.

Most parents undertaking regular volunteering activities are best deployed in classes other than their child's.

Unfortunately, there will be occasions when the Headteacher declines to accept the help of a parent/volunteer if he/she believes it will not be in the best interests of the school community or the right position for the volunteer (and a teacher must always have the last say on what happens in the classroom).

3. Safeguarding children and child protection

Where volunteers are in Regulated Activity (that is where the volunteer provides unsupervised activity of more than 3 times in a 30 day period) they will be asked to complete a DBS and declaration form. This is standard practice for anyone in regular contact and / or in a position of trust with children. Any criminal convictions must be declared.

4. Statutory guidance on the recruitment of a volunteer

- The school will give regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', which states that any adult engaged in regulated activity (working with children

for 3 times in a month or more, or working alone with children) should be subject to pre-appointment checks including a DBS check with barred list check.

- If the volunteer's role is a one-off, such as accompanying teachers and pupils on a day trip, for a school fete or concert, they may not be required to complete a DBS, as long as the person is not left alone in charge of children.
- If the volunteer is recruited by another organisation to work in a school, for instance, sports coaches from a local club, the school should receive written assurance from the organisation that the person has been properly vetted.
- All potential regular volunteers will need to attend an informal interview with the Headteacher/senior member of staff to assess suitability for the role.

5. Supporting the School Ethos

All adults and young people who work within our school, whether as a paid member of staff or as a volunteer, are expected to work and behave in such a way as to promote Oakwood's aims and educational purpose, as identified below:

Oakwood seeks to promote the highest standards of learning for all, nurturing confident, independent learners who show care and respect towards others.

Oakwood Primary School aims to:

- provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment where children feel safe and enjoy their learning
- provide a broad curriculum and enriching experiences which promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual development of each child
- nurture the emotional, social, physical development and wellbeing of each individual
- nurture the positive attitudes and skills necessary to prosper in a changing society, including self-confidence, self-discipline, adaptability, creativity and determination
- encourage each child to show respect, care and consideration for all members of their community and to take responsibility for their actions
- encourage each child to recognise the importance of responsible use of the earth's resources and develop an understanding of how we can all contribute to creating a more sustainable society

6. Induction and Training

All volunteers are required to attend induction training related to their role. In addition, volunteers will be required to attend refresher training in Safeguarding and Health and Safety.

7. Welfare and Safety of Volunteers and Pupils

Oakwood wants to make sure activities are planned properly and safely, and that you are informed of these plans. We strive to ensure that you have access to a member of school staff, should you wish to discuss difficulties or report any issues that may arise.

All visitors and volunteers are required to be identified and located at all times. For this reason, please make sure the following process is adhered to:

- Make sure you sign in and out of the building at the office / reception
- Wear the visitor's badge at all times.
- Please let your contact person be aware of where you are working.

8. Equality Statement

Oakwood Primary School is committed to the principle of equality for all pupils, irrespective of race, religion, gender, sexuality, language, disability or family background. We believe that everyone has the right to feel happy and to be themselves and that everyone will be accepted and feel supported. All pupils have an equal right to learn and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. In addition, all pupils deserve equal access to every aspect of school life.

At Oakwood, we do 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.

9. Health & Safety

Volunteers are required to comply with the school's Health and Safety Policy. Volunteers must model the school's Health and Safety rules to children, especially where lifting and carrying chairs and other equipment is concerned. Volunteers should be made aware of emergency procedures (e.g. evacuation) and safety aspects of being involved in a particular task (e.g. while in a cookery class).

Any potential hazard which you may feel might put people at risk of injury or harm must be reported straight away to the class teacher / deputy head.

10. Absence

Volunteers are asked to inform the school, before 8.45 am if they are unable to attend when expected.

11. Confidentiality

The most sensitive issue around volunteers, especially parent volunteers, is confidentiality. It is therefore essential that anyone helping in school respects that confidentiality and follows our agreed protocols. In addition to information about children's progress, there is other information that needs to be kept confidential; for instance:

- some children have medical needs to which we have to attend – perhaps an allergy or a condition that affects their daily learning;
- some families have complex circumstances which mean that a child is not able to join in some activities.

- some children may be experiencing a traumatic time at home and their behaviour in school may be affected.

As a helper in school you may be asked by other parents about their own or other children. **It is not appropriate to discuss any aspect of a child's progress.**

It is possible that a child will tell you something which is very worrying. You must always refer any concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DSLs) or Headteacher.

Volunteers are reminded that all information about individual pupils and members of staff is confidential and that the sharing of data is protected under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Volunteers are not permitted to discuss or comment on any information about a child or member of staff with other professionals in the school or with people out of school.

Volunteers who break this confidentiality rule will not be able to continue their volunteering at Oakwood.

12. Safeguarding

There may be instances where volunteers MUST pass information to the Headteacher or DSL/s.

These may include incidents where a child discloses he or she is being harmed in any way.

Volunteers must keep this information strictly confidential and not report it to the child's parents.

And finally...

Volunteering in school is a great experience and very rewarding. School is a lively, vibrant environment and most people really enjoy it. However, we recognise it is an environment which may not suit everybody. For instance, some people find that working in an enclosed classroom with 30 children too noisy, or that the low chairs and tables are not comfortable. Also, please remember that at certain times of the year, school may have a high proportion of children with coughs and colds.

Code of conduct for volunteers

Volunteers are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour and conduct while involved in 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 support them to feel valued.
- Be approachable, pleasant and be 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 professionalism and 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, follow instructions given by supervisors, and report to the supervising staff member any potential hazard in the workplace.
- Avoid waste and make proper use of the resources of the school.
- Conduct your work in a co-operative manner.
- **Turn your mobile phone off while you are on school premises.**
- Sign an IT acceptable use agreement and code of conduct

For your protection and that of our children:

You should never:

- Discipline children or tell children off. You may remind them about the behaviour standards their class teacher would expect. If there are any problems, tell the class teacher straight away and he or she will deal with the situation.
- Shout, hit, threaten or manhandle a child.
- Initiate physical contact with a child, for example, hugging or picking up a child except with good reason. (You should discourage children from physical contact with you.)
- Take photographs in school using your own camera without the prior permission of the Headteacher.
- Develop 'personal' relationships with pupils.
- Volunteer 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. For example: smoking or drinking alcohol.
- 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, These would be given to the school, for the school to distribute accordingly.

Please do not use your volunteering time in school as an opportunity to discuss personal issues such as your child's educational progress.

Guidelines for Supporting Children in School-a few thoughts to start you off...

- It is vital to encourage the children to talk about what they are doing in order to support them in using the correct vocabulary. Listen to the teacher who will tell you the vocabulary he/she wants you to model. Always model correct standard English when speaking to the children.
- There is no rush. We give the children plenty of time to complete a task and they will often need to return to it over several occasions.
- Always encourage the children to do things for themselves. It is important that they are independent and although some children may need help and supervision, the end result should always be their own work. Please don't be tempted to do work for them! The learning that goes on while the children are doing an activity is much more important than the end product!
- When playing games with the children, try and encourage the idea of taking turns, sharing and being a good loser.
- Being able to ask the children open questions is a great skill and brings out the thinking in children e.g. I wonder what would happen if we put it the other way up? Why do you think it does that? Where has that answer come from? How did you find that out?
- Helping to clear up is an essential part of learning too. We want all children to see clearing up as a natural part of the activity. A helper should never be the one who clears everything away – which would give negative messages to the children about your role and their responsibilities.

Internet use and social networking

Volunteers are expected to behave in an ethical and lawful manner with regard to the use of the internet and emails. Volunteers must follow the IT Acceptable Use Agreement.

Care and attention should be taken while using social networking sites. Use of these sites should not involve any communication regarding your volunteering 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 make arrangements to meet outside of school.



OAKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Application to join Oakwood Primary School as a volunteer

Name:	Date of Birth:
Address:	Postcode:
Telephone:	Mobile:

Briefly explain why you wish to volunteer and what you hope to contribute?

Tell us about your qualifications and skills and the roles and tasks you are interested in undertaking?

I am available to volunteer on the following days/times

Days	Times/duration
Mon	
Tue	
Wed	
Thurs	
Fri	

Any other information we should know:

Referees

Please list 2 referees who we can contact to comment on your:

- skills and abilities to carry out the volunteering activities you have requested
- character and suitability to work in an environment directly or indirectly with children.

Name:	How they know you:
Status/Occupation:	
Address:	
Telephone:	Email:

Name:	How they know you:
Status/Occupation:	
Address:	
Telephone:	Email:

If accepted as a volunteer, I understand that I will need to attend an induction meeting led by a senior teacher and will need to be aware of, and follow, all school policies.

Signed:

Date:

Is your application connected to a college course / qualification?

Yes No

If yes, please complete the following:

Name of college/Learning Institution:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Course Details:	
Qualification:	
Link Tutor's Name and Telephone:	
My work would be supervised by: (name-if linked to a college qualification)	
My work would be supervised:	Weekly /Termly /Half termly Other (please specify)
Length of course:	_____ years / months



OAKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Volunteer Agreement Form

Please complete the following agreement:

Your name:	
Name of teacher to whom you will report to:	
Times that you will volunteer in the school:	
Duration of Volunteering (to be reviewed after one month):	

I have read, understand and will comply with the following documents:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part One)

Positive Behaviour Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Child Protection

Health and Safety Policy

Volunteers Handbook

General Emergency Procedures (Fire Evacuation)

I understand that I am volunteering for an important professional role in the school.

I understand I will not receive any payment for my duties.

I agree to maintain strict confidentiality and sensitivity regarding information about pupils and staff and not to share any information gained during my volunteering.

I, _____ have read Oakwood Primary School's Volunteer policy and agree to abide by its contents and ethos.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signature		Date	
Teacher		Headteacher	