



*The*  
**Hawthorns**  
Primary School

## **Volunteer Policy**

Last Review Date: 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Next Review Date: November 2026

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## 1. Introduction and aims

The Hawthorns Primary School recognises the immense benefits that volunteers bring to the organisation, and the bridges that they build between the school and the local community. In return, the school hopes to give its volunteers an opportunity to exercise their skills in a different environment and to undertake new experiences.

The school tries to offer a range of volunteering opportunities and, in accordance with its equal opportunities and diversity policies, to ensure that the opportunity to volunteer is widely available.

We believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the school's work, and that they enrich the school through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the school's strategic aims and vision, as well as its development plan.

The aim of the The Hawthorns Primary School volunteer policy is to:

- Encourage the wider community to engage with the school, thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion
- Ensure that volunteers support the school's vision and values, and adhere to our policies
- Provide staff, volunteers and parents with clear expectations and guidelines
- Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers

This policy has been developed in line with the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

## 2. How we use volunteers

A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with the school. The school will agree a role with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the role's requirements and that the school will provide work for the volunteer. However, the volunteer is free to refuse to fulfil the role and the school is not bound to provide the work. It is also expected that both the school and the volunteer will give as much notice as possible if unable to meet these expectations.

At The Hawthorns Primary School volunteers may:

- Hear children read
- Accompany school visits
- Work with individual children
- Work with small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as IT, art or sport

This is not an exhaustive list.

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the governing board
- Parents
- Former pupils

- Students on work experience (Work placement)
- Local residents
- Friends of the school/members of the PTA

This is not an exhaustive list.

Members of the governing board working at the school in their capacity as governors (for instance, conducting school monitoring visits or attending meetings), are not covered by this policy. They are covered by our Governor Code of Conduct.

### 3. How to apply to volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer should :

- Enquire at the school office or email [office@hawthorns.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:office@hawthorns.wokingham.sch.uk)
- Complete an application form (see Appendix 1)

### 4. Appointment of volunteers

Volunteers are appointed by Admin staff and overseen by SLT.

Intake of new volunteers can take up to four weeks and is dependent on the candidate and available spaces within the school.

All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check (if appropriate) and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training.

The Headteacher reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.

Enhanced DBS checks for volunteers working in the school through other organisations will be conducted by the relevant organisation. The school will ask for written confirmation that enhanced DBS checks have been carried out before a volunteer is allowed to start work at the school.

Volunteers are required to complete an application form and will attend a briefing as part of their training.

### 5. Safeguarding

Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, and our volunteers must share our commitment to child protection and Safeguarding.

To ensure we're upholding our responsibility to keep our pupils safe, we will conduct enhanced DBS checks on volunteers who:

- Work one-to-one with pupils unsupervised
- Work with groups of pupils unsupervised
- Supervise or accompany groups of pupils on overnight residential visits
- Consider the results of any DBS checks that return with unspent and spent listed convictions, and assess these on a case-by-case basis, with regard given to the nature of the conviction and the nature of the work the volunteer will be involved in
- Provide safeguarding training to all volunteers **prior** to them beginning work at the school, including ensuring that they have read and understood part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Volunteers will be sent a link from TheKey for e-learning.
- Require volunteers to agree and adhere to our code of conduct (Appendix 2) and to read, and adhere to, the school's policies on:
  - Safeguarding

- Use of mobile phones
- Code of conduct
- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Online safety
- Behaviour
- Confidentiality
- Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised, and are never left alone with pupils
- Conduct a risk assessment to determine whether a volunteer who isn't working in regulated activity needs an enhanced DBS check (Appendix 4). The risk assessment will consider:
  - The nature of the work they will be doing
  - What we know about them
  - References from employers or other voluntary roles
  - Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check. Appendix 5.

There is a clear distinction between visitors and volunteers; people 'volunteering' at the school on a one-off basis will be classed as visitors and will not be left unsupervised.

The school will accept DBS certificates from another organisation for external providers.

Details of volunteers will be added to the single central record by the schools Business Manager

## 6. Induction and training

Induction training/briefing will include:

- Safeguarding
- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety
- Contact with pupils and staff
- Computing code of conduct
- Code of conduct

A hard copy of the briefing overview is provided to all volunteers. An agreement and code of conduct is signed by all volunteers after their briefing.

Volunteers must complete appropriate training/briefing prior to beginning work at the school.

Training requirements will determine the appropriate member of staff carrying out the briefing.

**All volunteers** must have safeguarding training. Other training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing.

## 7. Confidentiality

Information about pupils, parents and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues related to pupils, parents or staff with those outside of the organisation.

If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff. They should not discuss them with pupils or parents.

This does not prevent volunteers from adhering to the school's Safeguarding Policy (with regard to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures).

If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in our Safeguarding Policy, and inform the designated safeguarding lead.

If concerns are related to whistle-blowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our Whistle-blowing Policy.

## **8. Conduct of volunteers**

Volunteers are expected to comply with all the school's policies and procedures while they are on its premises or undertaking any of their volunteering duties. Their induction will include an explanation of these policies and procedures.

Volunteers must comply with the code of conduct set out in Appendix 2.

## **9. Expenses**

Volunteers are not expected to claim expenses as the school would not expect them to purchase any items in relation to the role.

## **10. Insurance**

The School's public liability insurance covers volunteers in the event of an accident or emergency.

If a volunteer is working at the school through another organisation, we will also check that organisation's insurance arrangements.

## **11. Data protection and record keeping**

Our privacy notice for volunteers explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it.

We will retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule.

The Privacy Notice can be found in the schools Data Protection in accordance with the General Data Protection regulation (GDPR) policy.

## **12. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

## Appendix 1: Volunteer Application Form

Complete the application form in full.

Please note that the school may not be able to accommodate all preferences.

### Data protection notice

Throughout this form, we ask for some personal data about you. We'll only use this data in line with data protection legislation and process your data for one or more of the following reasons permitted in law:

- You've given us your consent
- We must process it to comply with our legal obligations

Our Data Protection policy can be found on the school's website.

### Personal details

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Date of birth:</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>	
<b>Telephone number:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>	
<b>Home address:</b>	

### Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) information

The Hawthorns Primary School is legally obligated to process an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before making appointments to relevant posts.

The enhanced 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 role. Any information that is "protected" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 will not appear on a DBS certificate.

Volunteers working in regulated activity will also require a 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.

<b>Do you have a DBS check? (please circle)</b>	Yes/ No
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<b>If yes, what type of check do you have? (please circle)</b>	Enhanced DBS / Enhanced DBS with barred list information
<b>Date of check:</b>	
<b>Certificate number:</b>	

<b>Availability</b>					
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>AM</b>					
<b>PM</b>					
<b>Before school</b>					
<b>After school</b>					
<b>Lunchtimes</b>					
<b>How many hours per week/month can you volunteer?</b>					
<b>Can you commit to at least 1 term?</b>					

<b>Experience and qualifications</b>
<b>Do you have experience working as a volunteer, especially with children? If yes, please include details in the box below.</b>



**Why would you like to volunteer at The Hawthorns Primary School?**

**Do you have any particular skills, employment experience or hobbies you would like to share with the school? (For example, languages spoken, sports, scouting, etc)**

**Do you have any relevant qualifications?**

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### Preferences

What Year group/Key stage would you prefer to work with?	
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### References

Your placement as a volunteer may be subject to satisfactory references. Please give the details of two referees who can comment on your suitability (e.g. employers, colleagues, teachers, etc).

Name:	Name:
Relationship to you:	Relationship to you:
Address:	Address:
Telephone number:	Telephone number:
Email address:	Email address:

### Disability and accessibility

The Hawthorns Primary School is committed to ensuring that applicants with disabilities or impairments receive equal opportunities and treatment.

If you have a disability or impairment, and would like us to make adjustments or arrangements to assist you, please state the arrangements you require:

## Appendix 2: Code of Conduct for Volunteers

### Code of Conduct for Volunteers

By signing this form, volunteers agree to the following:

#### 1. School rules and policies

1.1. Volunteers will follow all school rules and policies, including those on:

- 1.1.1. Safeguarding
- 1.1.2. E-safety, IT and internet acceptable use
- 1.1.3. Data protection
- 1.1.4. Health and safety
- 1.1.5. Equality
- 1.1.6. Whistle-blowing
- 1.1.7. Behaviour Management

1.2. Copies of the school policies are available on the school website or from the school office

#### 2. Professional conduct

2.1. Volunteers must accept and follow instructions provided by supervisors, and ask for guidance or clarification if required. Questions can be directed to the supervising member of staff, or to the school's volunteer coordinator, Deputy Headteacher or senior leaders.

2.2. Behaviour management is the responsibility of school staff. If volunteers witness behaviour that is in breach of the school's behaviour policy, or are struggling to manage the behaviour of pupils with whom they're working, they should alert the class teacher immediately. Volunteers should not attempt to reprimand pupils or issue sanctions.

2.3. Volunteers must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This includes:

- 2.3.1. Dressing in a way that is professional and appropriate to the work they are doing
- 2.3.2. Refraining from using inappropriate language
- 2.3.3. Setting an example for pupils by acting in a way that reflects the school's ethos and values
- 2.3.4. Behaving in a way that is appropriate for the role they are undertaking
- 2.3.5. Ensuring that comments, including those made on social media, do not bring the school into disrepute

2.4. Volunteers must not accept gifts from, or give gifts to, pupils.

2.5. Volunteers must not transport pupils in their own cars unless specific arrangements have been made with the school, and the pupil's parents have consented.

2.6. Parent volunteers with children at the school must not act in a way that favours their own child, and should not approach their child unnecessarily during the school day (for instance, during break times). They may not use their time as a volunteer to discuss their child's education with school staff.

2.7. If a volunteer is unable to come to school when they are expected/scheduled to be in, they must contact their supervisor or the school office as soon as possible. Inconsistent attendance may result in the placement being reviewed or terminated.

### 3. Safeguarding

- 3.1. Volunteers must **have read**, and adhere to, the school's safeguarding and child protection policy. Safeguarding training will be provided to all volunteers before they begin their placement.
- 3.2. If volunteers have concerns about the welfare of a child, or if a child makes a disclosure, they should speak directly to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL. The DSL is the Headteacher.
- 3.3. Volunteers should refrain from physical contact with pupils.
- 3.4. Volunteers must not form personal relationships with pupils, either inside or outside of school, with whom they do not already have a personal relationship. This includes:
  - 3.4.1. Exchanging contact information
  - 3.4.2. Making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media
  - 3.4.3. Arranging to meet pupils outside of school
  - 3.4.4. Alerting the DSL if a pupil develops an infatuation with them
- 3.5. Volunteers should not take or share photos of pupils unless instructed to do so by their supervisor.

### 4. Health and safety

- 4.1. Volunteers must abide by the school's health and safety and first aid policies. Volunteers are not to administer first aid, except in an emergency where none of the designated first aiders are available.
- 4.2. Volunteers must be familiar with the school's fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures.
- 4.3. Volunteers must sign in and sign out at the beginning and end of every visit, and must wear a visitor badge at all times.

### 5. Confidentiality

- 5.1. Information about pupils, parents and staff at the school is confidential, and should not be shared with anyone else. Volunteers shouldn't discuss pupils with parents or other children. If parents approach volunteers for information, they should be directed to speak to a class teacher or the Headteacher.

Failure to adhere to this code of conduct will result in the termination of the placement. In more serious cases, misconduct will be treated in line with the school's staff disciplinary procedures.

Please sign and date below:

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer name (please print)

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer signature

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Appendix 3: Requesting a Volunteer (Information for Staff)

If you'd like assistance from a volunteer in your classroom, or for a specific activity or trip, fill out the form below and submit to the School office.

#### Volunteer Request Form

Activity details	
Year group/class	
Activity details	
Date(s) and time(s)	
Is this activity... (circle one)	One-off? Daily? Weekly? Other? If other, please explain:
Will there be any costs for the volunteer (such as entry fees to museums, materials, or travel)?	
Volunteer details	
How many volunteers do you need?	
Do you need your volunteers to have any specific skills or experience?	

Submitted by:

## Appendix 4:

### Risk assessment for volunteer DBS check

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Use this template to determine whether a volunteer who is not in 'regulated activity' should have an enhanced DBS without barred list check.

The highlighted text provides guidance to help you to complete the risk assessment.

This risk assessment is based on paragraph 186 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Name of volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the volunteer in 'regulated activity'? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, an enhanced DBS **with** barred list check is required. If no, an enhanced DBS **with** barred list check is not required, however you may obtain an enhanced DBS **without** barred list.

AREA TO CONSIDER	NOTES	LEVEL OF RISK
How will the volunteer be working with children?	<b>Consider:</b> The ages of the children The number of children that the individual is working with How vulnerable the children are The nature of the work How they will be supervised?	E.g. high level of risk may occur if little is known about the volunteer, no references can be provided and the individual will be working with vulnerable children
What is known about the volunteer?	What formal or informal information do you have about the volunteer? E.g. information from staff, parents and other volunteers.	

AREA TO CONSIDER	NOTES	LEVEL OF RISK
Are there any referees that can advise on suitability if the volunteer has other employment or voluntary work?	<p>It is good practice to seek references for volunteers.</p> <p>If the volunteer is unable to provide employer references, ask for a character reference from a person of standing in the community such as a doctor or priest.</p> <p>If a prospective volunteer is very reluctant to provide references, this may raise questions about their suitability.</p>	
Is the role eligible for an enhanced DBS?	<p>There are certain circumstances where you may need to obtain an enhanced DBS without barred list check for volunteers who are not in 'regulated activity'. This is set out in <a href="#">DBS workforce guidance</a>.</p>	
OUTCOME		
<p>Summarise the outcome of the risk assessment, explaining whether an enhanced DBS is needed and the reasons for your decision.</p>		

