



**Longcause Community
Special School**

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Signature of Head:	Anne Hutchinson
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CHANGES:

- December 2024**
- Updated checks required for volunteers to include children's barred list and prohibited from teaching checks.
 - Update on Induction process.

1 POLICY STATEMENT

Volunteers offer valuable support and enhance service provision by filling a wide variety of roles, which may involve working with staff, children/students etc.

Legislative requirements impact on the use of volunteers who work with children and vulnerable adults, particularly in relation to their suitability for this type of work. A

Disclosure and Barring Certificate may therefore be required for this role. Volunteers are also required to evidence their entitlement to live and work in the UK in the same way as paid workers.

2 SCOPE

These guidelines have been developed to cover voluntary workers undertaking duties on behalf of, and in support of, the activities of Longcause School. These guidelines set the minimum standards expected.

3 USE OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers make a valuable contribution when supporting contracted staff in providing services to the school. There are a variety of capacities within which volunteers can be of service, but they cannot replace a member of staff, or to cover a vacant post.

In return for their services, a volunteer will receive a sense of identity/fulfillment, social contact, and involvement within the school, together with an opportunity for personal development or continuing professional practice.

Voluntary work by its very nature is unpaid and should not be issued as a commitment to offering of a permanent position, security or remuneration (other than some expenses, which may have been agreed by the school).

If the volunteer is a relative of a pupil or staff member of the school, they can still work in that area, but will not be asked to carry out any work that impinges upon their relationship.

The school accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at their sole discretion. Volunteers must therefore be advised that at any time, for whatever reason, the school can decide to terminate the relationship. If a volunteer wishes to end their relationship with the school, they should inform the Headteacher as soon as possible.

Any volunteer with a personal or financial conflict of interest related to any activity or program must disclose it to the Headteacher.

4 RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

Headteachers must comply with equal opportunities.

Opportunities to undertake a placement should be available to all however there may be some occasions where this may not be possible or appropriate due to the nature of the work, or where there is a conflict of interest.

Headteachers should ensure a person is suitable for the role. It is important that an assessment of skills and suitability to the post are carried out. The process should include:

- 1) Volunteer expresses an interest in working at the school. The nature of what is required and the commitment to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is explained
- 2) Volunteer completes an application form so that the school have their contact details and education/work history
- 3) An informal face to face interview is carried out by a suitable designated person

5 INTERVIEWING VOLUNTEERS

The interview process should be less formal than for paid staff, however, it is important that the interviewer checks that the person is able to undertake the role and understands what will be expected of them. Volunteers will only be placed in a role that would be suitable and safe for them, and safe for anyone else coming into contact with them.

The interview should also promote the role and explain how the individual is likely to benefit from working in the school and the positive input they can make.

6 PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

References will be sought for volunteers working at the school on a regular or frequent basis. If professional references are unavailable then personal ones will be sought. Entitlement to live and work in the UK will also be checked.

Enhanced DBS Certificates will be required for most volunteers. Reasons for the check will be given to the applicant and the interviewer will reassure the volunteer that such checks are a standard procedure when working regularly in a school situation; they should also give reassurance that all information will be treated with the strictest confidence and provide information on how the process will work. A criminal record will not be an automatic bar to volunteering, as only relevant convictions will be taken into account. Volunteers will be subject to a prohibited from teaching and children's barred list check.

Some volunteers, such as a parent volunteering to help out on a school day trip, fair or sports day will not require DBS Certificates. However, a person who regularly or frequently helps at the school will be subject to Enhanced DBS checks. Regular contact is defined as three times or more in a 30-day period.

A person volunteering in a post should not be permitted to start until appropriate checks have been undertaken.

Volunteers who have an unsatisfactory DBS Certificate or reference will be automatically refused and will be advised of the reason for the decision by the Headteacher.

Volunteers who do not agree to these checks will be refused the opportunity to work for the school.

7 INDUCTION

All volunteers will undergo an induction to ensure they understand their responsibilities and what they can expect from the school. This induction will cover safeguarding, health and safety, and the Longcause Code of Conduct.

Volunteers are highly valued for their contributions and are expected to demonstrate motivation and commitment to supporting the school's goals. They are required to adhere to agreed procedures, including health and safety protocols, reliability, and punctuality.

The school will provide appropriate training, along with a clear outline of the volunteer's role and its boundaries. Volunteers will be treated fairly and consistently and will work in a safe and supportive environment.

8 SUPERVISION

Volunteers need to be supervised appropriately within the working environment and receive regular contact with the person responsible for them. They should be advised how they will be supervised and the type of feedback they will receive.

9 CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of their duties, volunteers may need to have access to confidential information. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to determine whether access to confidential information is appropriate and, if it is, to make sure that the information is kept to a minimum. The Headteacher must also ensure that the volunteer understands the confidential nature of the information and their responsibilities regarding confidentiality, it may be appropriate for them to be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

10 HEALTH AND SAFETY

The School has legal obligations towards their volunteers and it is good practice to treat volunteers with equal consideration when it comes to health and safety. The school should ensure that, as far as possible, it meets the same health and safety requirements for volunteers as are demanded by law for paid employees.

The Headteacher must ensure health and safety training and instruction is given to volunteers as defined on the risk assessments relevant to the activities being undertaken. Records should be kept of the information and training provided. The school will ensure that the risk assessment process always involves employees and volunteers who are involved in the activities which are being risk assessed.

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The responsibilities of the Governing body depend on whether the Governing Body is the employer. Where the Local Authority is the employer, the Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that all activities undertaken adhere to the LAs health and safety policy and procedures. Where the Governing Body is the employer, it has overall accountability for health, safety and welfare for the school workforce. It must provide health and safety policies and procedures and ensure through regular monitoring that health and safety policy and procedures are being adhered to.

11 TRAINING

Volunteers may be required to attend training.

12 INSURANCE

The school's employer liability insurance includes a clause covering volunteers, ensuring adequate legal protection for activities performed within the scope of their agreed work.

13 UNSUITABILITY OF VOLUNTEERS

If, after appropriate support and encouragement, it is determined that a volunteer is unsuitable, they should be advised by the Headteacher that they are no longer required.

Where a voluntary arrangement is cancelled, or a volunteer chooses to leave, then all ID cards, together with any other school property, must be returned.

If a volunteer is asked to leave because they harmed or may harm a child/student, Headteachers will be required to refer the details to the relevant authorities such as the Police or the Independent Safeguarding Authority.