

Volunteering Policy

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1. Introduction

The Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust (the Trust) believes that volunteers are a valuable resource and contribute to the work of our schools. Volunteers bring with them a range of skills and experience which can enhance the learning opportunities of all children with the Trust Trust without encroaching on the professional teaching responsibilities of the class teacher.

The Trust is committed to involving volunteers in a way that supports the Trust's vision and values, as well as the academy improvement plans.

2. Aim

The aim of this policy is to:

- encourage the wider community to engage with the Trust, leading to the curriculum being enhanced, raising pupil outcomes and promoting community cohesion;
- ensure that volunteers support the Trust's vision and values and comply with the policies in place;
- establish clear guidelines for both staff and volunteers;
- provide a clear and fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers;
- adhere to the DfE safeguarding guidance;
- ensure that all volunteers have a positive and rewarding experience during their time spent within the Trust's schools.

Volunteers could include any of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents, carers, guardians, elder siblings or grandparents of pupils
- Students on Work Experience or Placement
- University Students
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Staff family members

Activities in which volunteers may be engaged in could include any of the following but is not an exhaustive list:

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children
- Undertaking art and craft activities with small groups of children
- Working with children on computers
- Preparing resources for a future lesson
- Accompanying school visits
- Escorting children on local walks
- Running or assisting with an after school club
- Social activities such as running a disco
- Fund raising activities such as running a cake stall or Summer Fayre
- Interviewing children on a governor visit.

3. How we use volunteers

The deployment of any volunteer, whether for a day or over a longer period of time must take into account the needs of the pupils and staff to ensure that the arrangement is of benefit for all involved.

The deployment of any volunteer will be at the discretion of the Principal / Executive Principal and for an agreed period of time subject to no less than an annual review. The

class teacher remains responsible at all times for the organisation of the class and the methods of work to be used.

Volunteers should not be asked to carry out duties which:

- fall normally within a teacher's remit under loco parentis;
- fall normally within the job description of a teacher or support staff e.g they must not be asked to cover the absence of staff from the school;
- would normally be performed by a contractor engaged by the Trust.

Volunteers must be designated to a specific member of staff to whom they will be directly responsible. This staff member must ensure the volunteers has been adequately inducted into the role. This additional responsibility is not compulsory for staff and should only be delegated with the agreement of the employee concerned. It is imperative that the volunteer is clear which member of staff holds this responsibility.

Volunteers must not be asked to replace paid staff or be given responsibility within the school that would normally be associated with paid employees. Equally, volunteers must not carry out any activities which might cause conflict or restrict professional teaching duties.

Volunteers not undertaking regulated activity e.g adhoc volunteers such as parent helpers on trips are not covered by this policy. These volunteers must be supervised at all times by a member of staff.

Members of a local stakeholder board who also work at the school are not covered by this policy and instead should refer to the [Code of Conduct for Trustees and Governors](#).

4. Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to work as a volunteer who will be in school on a regular basis should completed request a Volunteer Application Form ([Appendix 16](#)). This should be completed and returned with the necessary original Identity documents to facilitate an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Scheme) clearance check and for two references to be sought. Where the volunteering is a placement linked to a course of study the cost of the DBS will be met by the volunteer (or his/her college) unless a portable certificate is available.

5. Appointment of Volunteers

Volunteers are appointed by the Principal of individual schools. Anyone wishing to apply for a volunteering position must be over the age of 18. The Principal reserves the right to withdraw or end a volunteering opportunity at any time.

All appointments are subject to two satisfactory references (see [Appendix 4](#)), a disqualification by association declaration, if appropriate, and a clear enhanced DBS check has been received by the school, the class teacher will interview the potential volunteer and an appropriate placement will be agreed.

This may be in a class which has no family connection to the applicant. A regular day and time will be agreed and the applicant will be expected to adhere to the school's Code of Conduct policy as well as other documents (detailed under 'school expectations').

An entry will be made on the school's Safeguarding Central Record.

The exceptions to this are:

- Work Experience Students or University Placements who apply via their educational establishment as it is expected that all necessary safeguarding checks have been carried out by the educational establishment before arriving at Esher Learning Trust. The student will be expected to adhere to the school's Code of Conduct.
- One-off volunteers i.e. assisting with a school walk, a fund-raising event or a school visit will not require a DBS check but the volunteer will remain under the continuous supervision of a member of staff undertaking a regulated activity, usually the class teacher. Care should be taken to ensure these volunteers do not have sole responsibility for a group of children or provide any form of intimate care. See Appendix 3 Volunteer Risk Assessment.
- Volunteer drivers who would need to be accompanied by another member of staff and should provide to the Visit/Event Manager their current MOT, insurance and driving licence two days before the event.

If there is any doubt as to the level of checks required, a decision should be sought from the People Team.

In special circumstances such as if a parent steps in to support a trip a short notice, volunteers or parents without a DBS enhanced check may help out if they have had a clear Children's Barred List check. Principals should complete the Risk Assessment in Appendix 3 to establish whether a volunteer requires an enhanced DBS check.

Those who help out at external large group activities, i.e. where the whole class or year group are involved, for example, the school fair or walking with us to the carol service, do not need a DBS or Children's Barred List check, but must not have unsupervised access to children

6. Safeguarding

Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance and our volunteers must share the Trust's commitment to child protection.

To ensure we are upholding our responsibility we will:

- Undertake volunteer DBS checks
- Obtain satisfactory references
- Conduct risk assessments where necessary

All volunteers working regularly in school must undertake a short safeguarding induction to include health and safety before commencing their voluntary role and undertake Safeguarding and Child Protection Training, Prevent Training and Manual Handling Training and Health and Safety overview. This will be organised by the teachers approving the volunteer position.

Volunteers should also have access to the following policies which are all available from the school's website or from the school office and will be required to agree and adhere to the Code of Conduct Policy and sign a copy of the Volunteer in School protocol (Appendix 2) :

- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Guidance
- Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Bring your own device Policy
- Acceptable use – ICT Policy

7. Induction & Training

Training requirements will be determined by the Principal or appropriate member of staff.

Volunteers must complete appropriate training prior to beginning to work at the school and may be required to undertake additional training provided by the school or a third party to support activities they are undertaking where appropriate. This could be in the form of online training.

All volunteers must have safeguarding training.

Volunteers will be made aware of the following procedures in addition to those mentioned in the safeguarding section:

- expectations with regards to confidentiality
- access to information related to pupils and/or staff
- expected level of pupil behaviour
- Trust Equality Statement especially focussing on issues relating to discrimination and the use of appropriate language
- The Trust's Complaints Policy

Volunteers will receive support and guidance from their line manager and or department and will receive regular feedback.

8. Confidentiality

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

If volunteers have concerns they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff and under no circumstances should these be discussed with pupils or parents.

This does not prevent volunteers from adhering to the Trust/school's safeguarding policy (with regards to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures). Concerns of this nature should be reported to the school's designated safeguarding lead. If the concern relates to whistleblowing then the Trust's Whistleblowing policy should be followed.

9. Conduct

Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner both inside and outside of work which upholds the Trust's reputation.

The following should be adhered to at all times and further clarification can be sought from the member of staff assigned as the volunteer's line manager:

- The Trust expects all volunteers to deal with one another, the public, pupils and parents in a courteous and civil manner. Relationships between colleagues should be supportive, respectful and courteous at all times.
- Volunteers should notify the Principal if they are in any doubt about the effect of their conduct outside of work.
- Volunteers subject to criminal proceedings must disclose this to the Principal. If any aspect of the information that forms your DBS check changes whilst you are volunteering you are obligated to advise the Principal immediately.
- A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice however, volunteers must ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they are set.
- Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines, DVDs etc or of an electronic nature must not be brought in school premises or stored on any school equipment.
- Volunteers must not post material on social media which may damage the reputation of the Trust or one of its schools or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people. Those whose post material which could be considered inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or misconduct allegations and have their volunteering agreement terminated.

10. Expenses

If a volunteer incurs expenses within their role for the Trust this should be discussed with the Principal or relevant line manager prior to these occurring. If prior agreement is sought and agreed via the correct expense form, the Trust will reimburse these additional costs.

11. Insurance

The Trust and its schools hold risk protection arrangement with third party liability and any person volunteering within the Trust would be covered under this arrangement.

12. Data protection and record keeping

Everyone has rights with regards to how their personal information is handled.

During the course of our activities we will collect, store and otherwise process personal information about our pupils and their families, staff, volunteers, contractors, supplier and other third parties. The Trust is committed to meeting their legal obligations concerning data protection and confidentiality and seeking to achieve best practice in relation to information governance.

Any breach of this or any other information governance policy will be taken seriously and may result in legal action being taken against the school, Trust and/or the individual responsible for the breach.

Full information on this subject can be viewed in our Data Protection which can be found on the website [here](#).

13. Complaints or Concerns

The Trust strives to promote positive working relationships and is committed to creating a working environment where employees and volunteers are treated with dignity, respect and fairness at all times.

The Trust recognises that occasionally an individual may have a problem, concern or complaint regarding their working environment, a member of staff or in some cases another volunteer.

Where a complaint or concern is raised it is preferably this is done so informally between the individual and their line manager or the person the complaint is made against.

In the event the complaint or concern cannot be informally resolved then the volunteer should raise their issue formally with the Principal / or line manager. All complaints and concerns will be handled appropriately before a decision is made on how the complaint or concern may be dealt with.

Responsibilities of the Trust:

- ensure volunteers have the opportunity to share their concern and the outcome sought;
- to seek a resolution to the complaint / concern wherever possible whilst taking Trust policies and procedures into account;
- seek to achieve an early resolution where possible and allow volunteers to take their concerns to a further level of management where appropriate;
- ensure treatment is fair and consistent.

Responsibilities of the volunteer:

- raise complaints only in relation to legitimate concerns and not of a vexatious nature;
- to engage with managers in seeking to resolve any complaint that has been raised e.g. attending meetings or participating in any investigation and providing evidence to support the complaint;
- to make every effort to raise and resolve matters informally at an early stage and to consider mediation as a means of resolving concerns;
- to act in a professional respectful manner towards all parties involved
- to maintain confidentiality.

14. Ending a volunteer agreement

In the event that a volunteer decides they wish to end their volunteering agreement with the Trust they should confirm this in writing to their line manager / Principal.

Whilst there is no set notice period for anyone volunteering the Trust would appreciate as much notice as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made to cover the tasks being undertaken by the volunteer.

15. Monitoring and Review

The Trust Board have approved this policy and will review on a bi-annual basis.

16. Appendix 1 – Application Form

Volunteer Application Form

Volunteer Name:	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email Address:	
If a parent of a child/ren in the school, please give names and classes:	
If you are a student, please enter your educational establishment and address:	
Tutors Name:	Contact Tel number:
Have you read the School Volunteer Policy?	
Are you subscribed to the DBS Update Service? An original copy will need to be shown to the Front Office. OR are you willing to complete an online DBS check?	
Which area/s of the school would you prefer to support?	
Do you have any specific skills/strength that could be utilised?	
Are there any activities that you cannot support? Please give details.	
When are you available to support in school? Please give days and times.	
Referee 1 Name: Company: Email address: Capacity in which you know them:	Referee 2 Name: Company: Email address: Capacity in which you know them:

17. Appendix 2 – In School Protocol

VOLUNTEER IN SCHOOL PROTOCOL

Please read and sign the document below to confirm your agreement with the following school expectations as a volunteer:

As a school we agree to:

- Explain your tasks/jobs carefully so that you are clear about what we would like you to do with the children
- Share the school behaviour and ethos policy with you to help you understand how we manage behaviour
- Ensure that the children you work with behave and work well
- Treat you with the highest respect and care
- Share relevant information about the children you are working with
- Let you know in advance the overall plan for the day and let you know if this changes!
- Treat anything you tell us with confidentiality

We agree not to ask you to:

- Deal with difficult or challenging behaviour
- Carry out a task that you feel unprepared to complete

Signed:
Principal / Class Teacher

Date:

Volunteer (printed name)
Helper:

As a volunteer helper I agree to:

- Use the school behaviour and ethos policy and inform the teacher if I see any inappropriate behaviour
- Inform the teacher/Principal/Designated Safeguarding Lead I observe anything that concerns me in school
- Treat any information with total confidentiality
- Inform the school if I am unable to come into school for any reason by 8.30am in the morning
- Respect and listen to the guidance of the teacher at all times
- Complete the appropriate DBS/Children's Barred List safeguarding checks
- Disclose any criminal allegations to the Headteacher prior to starting as a volunteer helper

I agree not to:

- Look at or compare children's work, records or staff records
- Share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff team

Signed:

Date:

18. Appendix 3 – Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment for Volunteer DBS Check

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

The orange text provides guidance to help you to complete the risk assessment. This risk assessment is based on paragraph 289 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Name of volunteer:

Is the volunteer in 'regulated activity': Yes / No

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?	<p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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.	
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>	

<p>Is the role eligible for an enhanced DBS?</p>	<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 DBS workforce guidance.</p>	
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Outcome

Summarise the outcome of the risk assessment, explaining whether an enhanced DBS is needed and the reasons for your decision.

19. Appendix 4 - Reference Request Form

Reference Request Form

Applicant Name	
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Please ensure that the information you provide is accurate and does not contain any material misstatement or omission. Relevant factual content of the reference may be discussed with the applicant.

Q. 1	How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?

Q.2	What attributes do you feel they would bring to the role of volunteer?

Q. 3	Please provide details of any substantiated allegations or concerns you are aware of that have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people.

Thank you for completing this form.

In writing your reference, and providing any information which you consider relevant to the applicant's suitability for employment, please note that, in order to protect children and young people, the post for which application is made is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Any such information will be kept in strict confidence and only used in consideration of his/her suitability.

Signature			
Name (please print)		Date	

Please return the completed form at your earliest convenience, **marked as confidential**, to:

<u>By post:</u>
<u>By email:</u>

Thank you for your assistance in keeping our school safe.