

Woodcroft Academy

Volunteer Policy

'Be wise, be
wonderful'



Principal: Miss C Wright

Review Date September 2025

Rationale

Woodcroft Academy actively encourages the involvement of parents/carers and other members of local community to enhance experiences of children within our school. It is recognised that when parents/carers are involved, children do better in their education and that involvement by parents and other members of our community, appropriately directed, will benefit the whole school community and enrich the curriculum.

Introduction

We want our school to be open and welcoming to all who would like to support the children. We also want to encourage Parents and other adults to help teachers in a variety of ways. However, our overriding concern is for the safety of the children in our care. This document sets out our school policy, which is to ensure the children benefit from as much help and support as possible and are provided at the same time with the best possible security.

Volunteer helpers can include but not limited to the following:

- Parents or other adult helpers working alongside teachers in school
- Students on work experience
- Governors
- Parents or other adult helpers to assist with school trips/events

Aims of the Policy

- We endeavour to involve helpers as fully as possible in school life whilst ensuring safe boundaries for all involved.
- To ensure the health, safety, well-being and enjoyment of everyone and to provide volunteers with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for working in school.

Volunteer helpers are **not** allowed to do the following:

- Take responsibility for all or some of the class
- Take the children off site without an employed member of staff in charge
- Change young children, or supervise them changing
- Supervise children engaged in PE in other specialist activities

The responsibility for the health and welfare of the child remains with the class teacher at all times.

We endeavour to involve helpers as fully as possible in school life whilst ensuring safe boundaries for all involved. To ensure the health, safety, well-being and enjoyment of everyone we have drawn up the following procedures and guidelines:

1. School Procedures
2. Guidelines for Class Teachers
3. Guidelines for Volunteers
4. Code of Conduct for Volunteers

Requirements To Volunteer

Members of the school community who would like to volunteer in school should approach the school office in the first instance. In accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, volunteer placements will be open to individuals irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age or marital status.

Volunteers will be asked to complete an application form indicating when they would like to volunteer and providing the names of two referees. The school will take up the references to ensure suitability for the role of the volunteer. A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be completed. Disclosure checks must be completed for all volunteers.

The administration of volunteer disclosure checks is carried out by the Office Manager and the School Secretary, the information pertaining to these is held in the school office. The school will provide an induction in the form of a discussion with the Office staff prior to volunteers spending time in school or on trips.

Volunteers will be covered by the School's insurance policy while engaged in approved work. However, personal belongings, including any motor vehicles, are not covered by the school's insurance.

The Volunteer Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) must be signed before any volunteer helps in school or on a school trip. Copies of these will be kept in the school office. As such, arrangements are by mutual agreement both staff and volunteers should be aware that it can be terminated at any point. The Principal or Assistant Principal reserve the right to take the following action:

- To speak with a volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Code and seek reassurance that this will not happen again.
- Offer an alternative placement for a volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another class.
- Inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.

School Procedures

1) Confidentiality

During your time as a helper you will become involved in conversation with individual children. You will also become aware of different abilities and levels of behaviour in different children. The teacher may well discuss the varying needs and requirements of individuals when discussing your programme. Similarly when you join the Staff in the staff room at break times you may well be privy to comments and opinions that you would not otherwise have expected to hear in a formal teacher/parent relationship.

It is important to remember that anything you might learn as the direct result of acting as a volunteer, whether it refers to a child or a member of staff, must remain in absolute confidence.

Any documents that you may have access to during your time at Woodcroft Academy are strictly confidential and should be treated as such. **All staff at the school are expected to observe the same rule.**

Volunteers, as with all other school staff, should not have access to any personal data relating to children or other adults, other than information that is absolutely necessary. It may be important, for example, for a volunteer to have *relevant* medical information for a pupil in their sub-group.

Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with/come into contact with should be

voiced with the Class Teacher and NOT with the parents of the child/persons outside school.

2) Signing In and out

When volunteers arrive in the school they must sign in at the reception desk, including time of arrival and time they leave. They will be given a volunteer's badge, which they should wear at all times.

In the event of absence, volunteers are expected to telephone and inform the office, prior to their start time.

3) Break and lunchtimes

You are welcome to join staff in the staff room for a drink, which will be provided. Please note that smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school grounds.

4) Safeguarding

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All those visiting the school should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the general public. This means that no adult should act in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to be with children or act as a role model.

The school's Safeguarding Policy makes it clear that all adults have a duty to report concerns they have about the welfare of a child. Any volunteer who finds themselves in this position must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Miss C Wright. A copy of the Safeguarding Policy is emailed to prospective volunteers prior to them working in the school and the declaration must be signed before their role as a volunteer commences.

5) Health and Safety

The school has a Health and Safety Policy and this is made available to volunteers prior to them working in the school. Safe practice must be promoted at all times. The induction discussion will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire alarm evacuation/lockdown procedures). It is the volunteers responsibility to identify the evacuation procedure for the area they are based. A fire evacuation plan is located in each room showing their nearest fire exit. Volunteers helping on school trips will be given all relevant safety information from the educational visit lead and are expected to read and understand the Educational Visits Policy.

Volunteers **MUST** report immediately anything to a member of staff employed by the school, which might endanger the wellbeing or affect the safety of anybody and or the school.

6) First Aid

Any child requiring First Aid should be taken to a staff member, please do not treat children yourself as staff have had appropriate training and know the school procedures.

7) Behaviour

At Woodcroft Academy we believe in emphasising, praising and reinforcing good behaviour, expectations are clearly set out in our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Code of Conduct

Thank you for volunteering at our school. It is intended that this is a positive experience that will benefit the learning of the children.

This Code of Conduct reflects relevant legislation, expectations and principles for those working with children, and outlines an expectation for only the highest standards of probity and integrity. The Code sets out the minimum requirements that apply, and is not exhaustive. Inevitably, some issues affect some groups more than others and a 'common sense approach' should be employed to the application of the Code of Conduct.

1) Professionalism

To act professional at all times:

- Confidentiality
- Appropriate use of social media
- Punctuality and attendance
- Taking responsibility for guidelines, procedures and meeting deadlines
- Accountability
- Use of appropriate language

2) Respect for others and their work

- To treat everyone with courtesy, consideration and respect.
- To speak appropriately and professionally to all members of the school community (including parents) treat them fairly and ensure that they are always listened to.
- To be sincere and honest in what is said and done.
- To be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

3) General Requirements

As a Volunteer within the school, you must:

- Be honest and trustworthy
- Follow Health and Safety procedures
- Take care of yourself, your colleagues and others whilst at the school
- Dress and behave in a manner which promotes healthy and safe working practices and is mindful and respectful of cultural diversity
- Display commitment to the aims and ethos of the school conducting yourself in a manner consistent with these at all times
- Respect the confidentiality of information relating to children unless its disclosure is either required by law (a copy of the Safeguarding Policy is available on the school website or available on request). Any concerns or queries must be discussed with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, Principal, Miss C Wright.
- Follow appropriate lines of communication for concerns or complaints
- Disclose as required on appointment, or at any time, any civil, criminal charges or convictions
- Represent the school positively at all times
- Comply with the mobile phone policy.
- Refrain from taking photographs of the children either in school or on school trips
- Not knowingly distort or misrepresent facts about the school With Children
 - Remember that the emotional, physical, intellectual and moral welfare of all the children is the prime purpose and first concern of our school
- Behave with compassion and impartiality

- When communicating with children, be positive and constructive and avoid hurtful comments of a personal nature
 - Do nothing to abuse, exploit or undermine the staff/pupil relationship, which is based on trust
- Social Networking Sites Use of social networking sites should be undertaken with due care and attention. In particular, use of such sites must not involve communication regarding your involvement at this school or any activities which may bring the school into disrepute and/or may question your suitability to work with children. I have read and understood the school's Code of Conduct and am aware of the possible consequences of breaching it.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The day to day monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the Principal. The Principal will report to Governors annually on the number of volunteers, including parent volunteers in school and summarising their value and impact in supporting children's learning.

Declaration

By signing this agreement you confirm that you have received, read and understood the following documents:

- Woodcroft Academy Volunteer Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Educational Visits Policy (where applicable)

I agree to follow the school's policies and I am aware of everything in the policy, and my responsibilities.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____