

Volunteer Policy

Signed:

Chair: S. Gribbin

CEO: R. Swindells

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Review date: June 2028

Statement of intent

This policy applies to the Collective Vision Trust and to all its individual academies.

At Collective Vision Trust we recognise and value the effort taken by volunteers who contribute towards our school.

It is our aim to involve other appropriate adults in our children's education and to develop and maintain links with the local community. In order to enrich the lives of the children and to enable us to deliver the curriculum more effectively, we encourage the involvement of volunteers in the workplace, both during school hours and in extra-curricular activities.

This policy sets out the practices and procedures which will be followed when appointing, managing and supervising volunteers, as well as a code of conduct which all volunteers are required to comply with.

Please note: where this policy uses the term 'headteacher' it refers to the person who is legally registered as headteacher for the school. In some schools this may be the 'Executive Headteacher' unless the policy specifically states the Head of School.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- The Childcare Act 2006
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'

This policy operates in conjunction with all other Trust and School Policies.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy. For the purposes of this policy:

"Volunteers" are individuals who engage in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for pre-approved travel and other approved expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party, i.e. the school, and not a close relative.

"Occasional volunteers" are individuals who only accompany staff and pupils on one-off trips that do not involve overnight stays, or who volunteer at specific one-off events, such as sports days.

"Regular volunteers" are individuals who volunteer at the school:

- Three or more times in a 30-day period
- Once a week or more
- On an overnight stay.

A volunteer will be engaging in **regulated activity** in relation to children if they undertake any of the following:

1. Personal and Health Care

- Providing personal care, including help with:

- Washing, dressing, or toileting.
 - Eating, where assistance is needed due to illness or disability.
- Providing health care, delivered by or under the supervision of a health care professional.

2. Teaching, Training, or Supervision

- Teaching, training, or instruction of children, unless:
 - It is incidental to teaching adults, and
 - It is carried out only on a regular basis under day-to-day supervision of someone already engaging in regulated activity.
- Care for or supervision of children, unless:
 - It is incidental to care for adults, and
 - It is carried out only on a regular basis under day-to-day supervision.
- Advice or guidance provided wholly or mainly for children, where it relates to their physical, emotional, or educational well-being.

3. Frequency and Timing

- Activity is considered regulated if:
 - It is carried out frequently by the same person,
 - Occurs on more than three days in any 30-day period, or
 - Takes place between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m., where face-to-face contact with children may occur.

4. Other Specific Activities

- Moderating a public interactive communication service likely to be used mainly by children.
- Driving a vehicle used only for transporting children (and their supervisors/carers).

5. Workplaces and Roles

An activity is also regulated if:

- It is carried out in:
 - A school, academy, pupil referral unit, nursery school, children's home, or childcare premises.
- It is performed as:
 - Paid work, except where temporary or occasional and not listed above.
 - Voluntary work, except where temporary, occasional, or supervised as described above.
- It is undertaken for or in connection with the establishment, and it allows the person to have contact with children.

Status of Volunteers

A volunteer will not be an employee of Collective Vision Trust. He or she will not be engaged on a contract of employment nor on any type of contract for services. The engagement will be binding in honour only, there being no legal agreement between the organisation and the volunteer.

Volunteers are unpaid. The school is under no obligation to offer or to continue to offer any volunteering opportunity to any person, irrespective of their carrying out volunteering work currently or in the past. Similarly, the volunteer is under no obligation to accept any opportunity offered, and may withdraw from the agreement at any time.

Before accepting the role of volunteer, the individual concerned will agree with the school that they can fulfil the volunteer role expectations. The school may withdraw the offer at any time, including after the volunteer has started their engagement. The volunteer may also withdraw from the agreement at any time. Both parties are encouraged to give the other as much notice as possible, should the agreement be brought to an end.

Recruitment & Selection

The volunteer activity may require a DBS check. However, any DBS check that is required as part of the activity is not the responsibility of the School or Trust. Employees are likely to already have a DBS check for their employment at school but employees should be aware that DBS checks undertaken by the volunteering organisation are not portable to the school. Similarly, the school's DBS check is unlikely to be portable to the volunteering organisation and they may require the employee to apply for another disclosure.

The experience, qualities, skills and needs of any volunteer will be taken into account when deciding about the recruitment of a volunteer in a school. Please note, there is no guarantee that a volunteer will be found an immediate placement or any placement at all within the preferred school or elsewhere. For secondary school, if a volunteer is an ex-pupil, there will need to have been at least a two-year period since leaving school before they will be considered as a volunteer in school. Ex-pupils will be able to volunteer for one off events, for example sports days. If the volunteer has a sibling in school, then they will need to re-apply for a volunteer position once their relative has completed their time at school.

Anyone wishing to volunteer in a school should make contact with the school, using the contact details on the website.

The placement should be mutually beneficial to the school and the volunteer.

A meeting will take place with a view to agreeing a placement in order that the school and volunteer will have the opportunity to find out about each other and to agree a role, timetable, support, dress code etc. The school will outline relevant policies at the meeting.

Any placement of a volunteer shall be of an agreed fixed term. Any placement may however be terminated by the school at any time without notice if the Head of the school deems this to be in the best interest of the school, pupils or staff. Such termination need not involve any fault, shortcoming or wrongdoing attributable to the volunteer.

Occasional volunteers

Occasional volunteers will be appointed at the headteacher's discretion and will not be required to go through the application process. A written risk assessment will be conducted to determine what checks, if any, are required.

An occasional volunteer will always be supervised by a member of staff, unless the appropriate DBS checks have been obtained.

Regular volunteers

Regular volunteers will always go through the following application process:

- The individual will be asked to have an informal discussion with a member of the SLT to ensure they are suitable for the role
- The appropriate safer recruitment checks will be undertaken
- The individual will be made aware of the roles and responsibilities they will be undertaking
- References will be sought where appropriate

All volunteers will sign to say they have read this policy and other related documents (see appendix).

Safeguarding checks

Under no circumstances will a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

All engagements to participate in an activity will be 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.

The school will conduct a risk assessment and use its professional judgement to decide what checks are required. The risk assessment will consider:

- The nature of the engagement with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision.
- What the school knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers.
- Whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability.
- Whether the role is eligible for a DBS check, and if it is, the level of check required.

Details of the risk assessment will be recorded and any DBS checks applied for will be recorded on the school's Single Central Record.

If a volunteer will be working in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information will be required.

The school will not request barred list information on a volunteer if they are supervised, as they are not considered to be engaged in regulated activity.

Enhanced DBS checks for volunteers working at the school through other organisations will be conducted by the relevant organisation if needed. 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.

For volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have the opportunity to come into contact with pupils on a regular basis, it is at the discretion of the school to decide whether or not an enhanced DBS check is required.

Volunteers will not be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check; however, the school will consider obtaining a new DBS check, at the level appropriate to the role, if there are concerns about a volunteer.

All checks will be conducted in line with the school's Safer Recruitment Policy.

Management and Supervision

The school will ensure that volunteers are given suitable induction training at the beginning of their placement.

The volunteer will be given a named contact person who will review the work undertaken by the volunteer and will assist the volunteer generally and, particularly, in the event of any problems occurring.

The volunteer's role, including status with pupils, will be made clear.

Volunteers will be given opportunities to contribute their ideas and opinions about the work that they are engaged in.

Volunteers will be given guidelines/training regarding child protection issues/procedures, especially pupils disclosing possible abuse.

If a volunteer is required to be supervised when undertaking an activity, who would otherwise be in regulated activity if not supervised, the school will ensure that:

- There is supervision by an individual who is in regulated activity relating to children.
- The supervision is regular and day-to-day.
- The supervision is reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of the pupils.

When determining what supervision is reasonable so that the volunteer would not be in regulated activity, the school will take the following factors into consideration:

- The ages of the pupils, including whether there is a large gap in their ages
- The number of pupils that the volunteer is working with
- Whether or not there are other staff members present during the activity
- The nature of the volunteer's work and the opportunity for contact with pupils
- How vulnerable the pupils are
- How many volunteers would be supervised by each member of supervising staff

Induction

Volunteers will be required to read and agree to the Volunteer and Staff Code of Conduct before starting their role at the school. All volunteers must comply with this Code of Conduct.

All volunteers will be required to make themselves familiar with school procedures as part of their induction, including the following:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy
- Equality Policy and Objectives
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Data and Cyber-Security Breach Prevention and Management Plan
- Photography and Video Policy

Volunteers will be provided with access to the above documents upon their induction.

Volunteers will be required to read Part 1 of 'Keeping children safe in education' and will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction.

All volunteers will be provided with a point of contact within the school who they can go to if they have any questions or issues they need to discuss.

Support to Volunteers

As a Trust, we value the work of volunteers in our schools and in order to demonstrate this we expect the school to:

- Show appreciation for the volunteer's work.
- Ensure volunteers have the appropriate and up-to-date information they need to do their work.
- Ensure that they are introduced to staff and other volunteers and have access to a support network.

Safeguarding

Volunteers will be provided with safeguarding information, using a proportionate, risk-based approach.

The school will ensure that activities are planned properly and safely, and that volunteers are informed of these plans. The school will ensure that volunteers have access to a member of school staff, should they wish to discuss difficulties or report on issues that may arise.

All volunteers are required to be identified and located at all times. For this reason, the following process will be adhered to:

- Volunteers will sign in and out of the building at the school office
- Volunteers will wear a visitor's badge at all times
- The headteacher, or senior member of staff responsible, will be made aware of where the volunteer is volunteering

Volunteers will be made aware that they must report any safeguarding concerns in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The identity of the school's DSL and any deputies will be made known to all volunteers.

Any safeguarding concerns or allegations raised regarding a volunteer will be dealt with in line with the Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy and/or the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

Health and safety

Volunteers will be required to read the Health and Safety Policy prior to undertaking any activity on behalf of the school.

Volunteers will ensure that they are familiar with emergency procedures, e.g. evacuation, and of any health and safety procedures relating to the activity they will be undertaking, e.g. whilst in a cookery class.

If a volunteer notices any potential hazard which may put another individual at risk of harm, they will report this immediately to the teacher or a senior member of staff.

Absence

Volunteers are required to follow the school systems and notify the appropriate member of staff, of any absence, giving the same notice requirement of employed staff. The exact requirements for the school will be explained as part of the induction.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be told that information relating to pupils, parents and staff is confidential and volunteers will maintain confidentiality at all times.

Information about volunteers is also a matter of confidentiality and application forms and personal details must be kept securely by the Headteacher and not divulged to others except on a need-to-know basis.

Expenses

Out-of-pocket expenses will be paid to volunteers, only if agreed to in advance, and the procedure for claiming these will be explained at the outset.

The Volunteer

The Volunteer agrees to carry out all reasonable tasks assigned to him/her to the best of their ability and to generally promote the interests of the school and to abide by the terms and conditions set out in this policy and agreement.

As a school, we are committed to the rights of the child, the child's safety and emotional wellbeing and the protection of the child from all forms of abuse. In view of this, the school reserves the right to refuse voluntary help and to terminate or vary a placement at any time without prior notice.

Appendix - Volunteer code of conduct

All volunteers are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour and conduct when undertaking any activity at the school.

Volunteers will:

- Observe the high standards of behaviour and ethical conduct mandated by the school.
- Respect other volunteers, members of staff and pupils, and make them feel valued.
- Be approachable, pleasant and positive role models for pupils.
- Adhere to all school policies, including the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Data Protection Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, and Behaviour Policy.
- Maintain confidentiality of personal information at all times, unless there is a need to report an issue to a member of staff.
- Treat all pupils and members of staff equally.
- Report any incident of challenging behaviour to the relevant person or senior member of staff immediately.
- Dress appropriately and behave in a manner which promotes healthy and safe working practices.
- Accept and follow directions from the supervisor and seek guidance through clarification where uncertain of tasks or requirements.
- Observe safe working practices which avoid unnecessary risks, apply reasonable instructions given by supervisors, and report any potential hazards in the workplace to the supervisor.
- Make proper use of the resources.
- Conduct work in a cooperative manner.

Volunteers will not:

- Discipline pupils; if there are any problems, the teacher or a senior member of staff will be informed immediately, and they will manage the situation.
- Shout at, hit, threaten or handle a pupil.
- Take photographs in school without the prior permission of the headteacher.
- Develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with pupils.
- Work with pupils when not in the proper physical or emotional state to do so, e.g. under medication which causes drowsiness, or under extreme stress which may impair judgement.
- Behave in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner, e.g. smoking or drinking alcohol.
- Share personal contact details with pupils or make personal arrangements to meet pupils outside school.
- Express any extremist or discriminatory views, or any views that would offend others.
- 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 the headteacher, e.g. giving an outgrown sports kit, football boots or uniform to a pupil.

Appendix –

Volunteer Agreement

Name:

Date:

School:

I acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to abide by the Collective Vision Trust Volunteer Policy.

I agree to follow the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Signed: