



VOLUNTEER POLICY v2.0

Last review	July 2026	Review Period	2 years
Date of Next Review	July 2028	AC or Board Approved	Board
Type of Policy	Trust	Signed (chair)	

1. Introduction and aims

- 1.1. Victoria Academies Trust believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the schools and that they enrich the schools through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.
- 1.2. We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the school's strategic aims and vision, as well as its development plan.
- 1.3 The aim of the Victoria Academies Trust 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
- 1.4 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

- 2.1 At Victoria Academies Trust volunteers may:
 - Hear children read
 - Accompany school visits
 - Work with individual children
 - Work with small groups of children

This is not an exhaustive list.

- 2.2. Volunteers may be:
 - Members of the Academy Council
 - Parents
 - Former pupils
 - Students on work experience
 - Local residents
 - Friends of the school/members of the PTA

This is not an exhaustive list.

3. How to apply to volunteer

- 3.1 Information about how to apply is available from the school directly.

- 3.2 Applicants will be invited to talk to designated school staff about why they want to volunteer and experiences that may support the school. This may be through informal coffee mornings or individual or group conversations with school staff.
- 3.3 Applicants will be given the opportunity to spend some time in school to ensure they are aware of the requirements of volunteer and the realities of school life. This will also allow school staff to feed back to SLT.
- 3.4 SLT will contact volunteers to share whether they have been successful and discuss appropriate role and next steps, including DBS, references, safeguarding and further training before the voluntary role begins.

4. Appointment of volunteers

- 4.1 Volunteers are appointed by the school Senior Leadership team.
- 4.2 Appointment and induction of new volunteers can take, often 6 weeks, and is dependent on the candidate and available spaces within the school.
- 4.3 All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check with children's barred list information (if appropriate) and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training.
- 4.4 An enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information must be carried out where volunteers are in regulated activity if it is carried out frequently, or if it meets the period condition. The period condition means:
 - On more than 3 days in a 30 day period
 - Overnight between 2am and 6am

All volunteers engaging in regulated activity will need to have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information, prior to volunteering.

- 4.5 Occasional volunteers such as parents or carers who help out at school on a less frequent basis, for example, at an occasional parent association (PTA) event or on a school day trip will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check without children's barred list information.

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

- 4.6 Enhanced DBS checks for volunteers working in 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.

5. Safeguarding

- 5.1 All volunteers will be expected to complete the Safeguarding Level 1 Qualification with School DSL, and to attend ongoing, all school safeguarding updates.
- 5.2 Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, and our volunteers must share our commitment to child protection.
- 5.3 To ensure we are upholding our responsibility to keep our pupils safe; we will conduct enhanced DBS checks with a barred list check on volunteers who:
 - Work 1-on-1 with pupils unsupervised
 - Work with groups of pupils unsupervised
 - Supervise or accompany groups of pupils on overnight residential visits

- 5.5 Consider the outcome of any DBS checks that return with unspent and spent listed convictions, and discuss with Director of Schools and HR who will discuss the next steps 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.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 Require volunteers to agree and adhere to our code of conduct (see appendix 2) and to read, and adhere to, the school's policies on:
- Safeguarding
 - Use of mobile phones
 - ICT and internet acceptable use
 - Online safety
 - Behaviour
- 5.8 Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised, and are never left alone with pupils.
- 5.9 Conduct a risk assessment to determine whether a volunteer who isn't working in regulated activity needs an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. 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 with children's barred list information

6. Induction and training

- 6.1 Volunteers must complete appropriate training prior to beginning work at the school.
- 6.2 Training requirements will be determined by the headteacher, or the appropriate member of staff.
- 6.3 **All volunteers** must undertake safeguarding training. Other training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing.

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff. They shouldn't discuss them with pupils or parents.
- 7.3 This doesn't prevent volunteers from adhering to the school's safeguarding policy (with regard to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures).
- 7.4 If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in our child protection and safeguarding policy, and inform the designated safeguarding lead.

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

8. Conduct of volunteers

- 8.1 Volunteers must comply with Victoria Academies Trust Code of Conduct and with the academy (insert name of academy) staff Handbook, which will be made available during induction.

9. Expenses

- 9.1 Generally, we do not pay expenses for volunteer positions. In exceptional circumstances, these will be agreed prior to spending with the headteacher, and require volunteers to follow the school claims procedure that will be shared by the finance team.

10. Insurance

- 10.1 The school's insurance policy covers volunteers in the event of an accident or emergency.
- 10.2 If a volunteer is working at the school through another organisation, they should check the organisation's insurance arrangements.

11. Data protection and record keeping

- 11.1 Our privacy notice for volunteers explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it.
- 11.2 We will:
- Retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule
 - Records will be retained in accordance with statutory retention requirements and the Trust's records management policy.

12. Monitoring and review

- 12.1 This policy has been approved by the Board of Trustees and will be reviewed regularly.

Appendix 1: Volunteer Application Form

Insert Name of School: 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 1 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

Personal details

Name:	
Date of birth:	
Gender:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Home address:	

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) information

Victoria Academy Trust 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.

An enhanced DBS check with children's barred list will be carried out for volunteers who are in regulated activity for more than 3 days in a 30-day period or volunteer overnight.

All volunteers engaging in regulated activity will need to have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information, prior to volunteering.

Any data processed as part of the DBS check will be processed in accordance with data protection regulations and the Trust's privacy notice.

Availability

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

Experience and qualifications

Do you have experience working as a volunteer, especially with children? If yes, please include details in the box below.

Why would you like to volunteer at **insert name of 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?

Preferences	
What age group would you prefer to work with?	
Would you prefer to work 1-on-1 or with a small group?	

References	
Your placement as a volunteer may be subject to satisfactory references. Please give the details of 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 Trust 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

(INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL) - 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:

- Child protection
- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Online safety
- Mobile phones
- Data protection
- Health and safety

- Equality
- Whistle-blowing
- Behaviour

1.2. Copies of the school policies are available online 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, (insert name)

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:

- Dressing in a way that is professional and appropriate to the work they are doing
- Refraining from using inappropriate language
- Setting an example for pupils by acting in a way that reflects the school's ethos and values
- Behaving in a way that is appropriate for the role they are undertaking
- 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. The exception is small tokens, such as those exchanged at the end of term or as a way of saying "thank you". This is also aligned to the insert name of academy if applicable Poverty Proofing Charter.

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 be familiar with, 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 insert name and the deputies are insert name.

- 3.3. Volunteers should refrain from physical contact with pupils, and should use their judgement to determine when physical contact is appropriate. If physical contact with pupils is required, volunteers should ask for a pupil's consent before touching them.
- 3.4. Volunteers must alert the DSL if a pupil develops an infatuation with them, and 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:
- Exchanging contact information
 - Making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media
 - Arranging to meet pupils outside of school
- 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 may 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

