School Volunteer Policy

Next Review Date	July 2028	**Version**	3	**Approval Date**	19.08.26
Review Cycle	Every 2 years	**Owner**	Head Of HR	**Approval Body**	Trust Board

Volunteering Policy

This volunteer policy is part of the school's safeguarding system and policy and is in line with the Government guidance on Regulated Activity

Introduction

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. We therefore welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community.

Our volunteers may include:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the school

The contribution of volunteers to the work of the school is especially valued and respected. We believe that by providing voluntary opportunities, volunteers will gain a range of skills and work experience. This policy sets out how we intend to manage and support our volunteers.

Types of Volunteers

We recognise that there are different types of volunteers. These can include:

- **Occasional Volunteers** – These are people who volunteer at occasional events such as an educational visit or help with particular projects. Consequently, they need to be closely supervised by a staff member whilst volunteering. Where a volunteer engages in teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children frequently (more than 3 days in a 30-day period) or overnight, they will be considered to be a 'Regular Volunteer' as they are undertaking regulated activity and must complete the process below, including an Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List information. Occasional volunteers should be asked by the school whether they are currently undertaking volunteering elsewhere or intend to in the future.

- **Regular Volunteers** – These are people who take on a particular task or role, on an ongoing basis. The government has said they are undertaking 'Regulated Activity'. Regular volunteers may include those undertaking reading support, working within classrooms offering support to the teacher, or work on a particular project over a sustained period of time, e.g. helping with a sports club.
-
- **Overnight Volunteers –** the government has defined that a volunteer who is on a school trip or is volunteering overnight between 2am and 6am should be subject to 'Regulated Activity' and should therefore undertake the same checks as a Regular volunteer.

- **Governors** – hold positions of responsibility and have been elected by members of the school. These will go through the safeguarding checking process.

Our School Aims

All adults / young people in our school, whether a paid member of staff, or a volunteer are expected to work and behave in such a way as to actively promote our school aims and educational purpose.

Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one-off event such as a school visit or on a more regular basis, e.g. hearing pupils read, usually approaches the Class Teacher, Headteacher or Senior Leadership Team directly.

It is the school's decision to take on volunteers, and this will depend on the time of year, the number of volunteers we already have in school and the potential impact on the children.

Regular volunteers must complete the Volunteer Application Form (Appendix 1) with their contact details, types of activities they would like to help with, previous experience and the times they are available to help. Occasional volunteers can be asked to do so as well, there should be at least an annual review to check the different types of volunteers and the relevant checks that are needed.

Safeguarding

The Acer Trust takes seriously its responsibility under the Children Act and duties under "working together" to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements exist within our setting to identify and support those children who are suffering harm or are likely to suffer harm.

The School and Acer Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and preventing extremism. All volunteers are expected to share this commitment. Regular volunteers will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and may be subject to online searches for publicly available information. Acer Trust is an equal opportunities organisation, and we welcome volunteers from a range of backgrounds to represent diversity in line with our schools' community.

To ensure the safety of our pupils, we expect volunteers to adopt the following Safeguarding procedures:

- All volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy and are asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement and Confidentiality Contract (Appendix 2)
- Volunteers agree to the Visitors' Code of Conduct
- Volunteers will sign in and out of the school at reception and will wear a visitors badge at all times
- Volunteers who undertake regulated activity must have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Regular volunteers will be expected to complete Generalist Safeguarding Training (normally completed in school) and Prevent Training (online course) as part of their induction process
- Regular volunteers will be asked to read the Whistleblowing Policy
- Regular volunteers will be expected to familiarise themselves with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education – Part One

All volunteers have the responsibility to report any concerns that they may have regarding Safeguarding to the Designated Safeguarding Leads. It is not the role of the volunteer to investigate concerns. The school's Safeguarding Policy explains the guidelines and procedures to follow regarding any concerns. A copy of this policy is available on request and can also be found on the school website.

We follow safer recruitment guidelines to ensure that we safeguard our pupils. We expect our volunteers to share this commitment. The process of recruitment of volunteers mirrors the safer recruitment of paid staff to ensure the most suitable adults for our school. A list of volunteers will be kept in the main office.

Process for Recruiting 'Regular' Volunteers

- Completing the application form (Appendix 1)
- Verification of Identity
- Undertaking references, DBS & disqualification checks (for volunteers undertaking regulated activities) *
- Undertake on-line checks as for staff
- Verify their Mental and Physical fitness to volunteer
- Suitable Induction
- Volunteer Agreement, Visitors Code of Conduct & Confidentiality Declaration
- Safeguarding & Prevent training (for regular volunteers)
- Record keeping in line with the Single Central Register

*Further additional checks may be needed, as appropriate, on volunteers who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) criminal records checks or their equivalent overseas police check for any individual who within the last five years has lived or worked outside the United Kingdom, whether they are a British citizen or not. However, five years is a guide, and we may carry out any further checks that we think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. Advice may be sought from the Trust HR Manager when this situation arises.

Support and Supervision
Volunteers will be supported and supervised by a named person (who has been DBS cleared to an enhanced level), who will be allocated to them. This person will provide the volunteer with supervision, where the volunteer will receive feedback on their tasks and a chance to discuss other issues at regular intervals. Volunteers will normally work in open or visible areas with the children.

Work Experience/ Placement Students
We are happy to take students on placement if we have suitable opportunities available. Secondary schools, colleges and universities wanting students to be placed with us need to formally make contact with the Headteacher or the appropriate person outlining the aims of the placement and duration. The school retains the authority to refuse or terminate a placement to ensure the smooth running of the school.

When organising work experience placements within our schools, which will normally be for under 18-year-olds, we will have appropriate safeguarding policies in place. This includes:

- to consider whether barred list checks are required for those supervising pupils under 16, based on the nature and level of supervision.
- It is recommended that schools carry out risk assessments for volunteers under the age of 18. To obtain a risk assessment please contact the Business Manager.

Work experience placements for Acer students outside of their own school should be managed by the school's Careers Officer.

Volunteers for school visits
School visits are an integral part of learning at our school and afford many pupils opportunities which are outside their usual experiences. The class teacher or staff member leading the visit will brief the volunteer regarding the risk assessment, visit schedule and any other important pieces of information. The visit lead, who will be a staff member, has ultimate responsibility for the pupils. Pupils should never be left unsupervised with a volunteer.

Insurance
Volunteers will be covered by the organisation's policy while engaged in approved tasks. However, voluneers' personal belongings (including any motor vehicles) are not covered by our insurance.

Health and Safety
We will, as far as is practical, care for the health, safety and welfare of our volunteers. Volunteers will receive clear information regarding health and safety procedures. Volunteers are expected to follow the Health and Safety Policy and ensure they take reasonable care of those in their care. Visitors must sign in and wear a visitors badge at all times.

Equal opportunities
We recognise that the activity of volunteering can provide an individual with experience and opportunities for self and career development. In accordance with the school's Equality Objectives, volunteer placements will therefore be open to individuals irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age or religion. Where a prospective volunteer demonstrates hostility to, or a clear lack of support for equal opportunities, she / he will be deemed automatically unsuitable for a volunteer position here.

All volunteers are required to make a commitment to this policy. A copy of this policy is available on request and can also be found on the school website.

Working hours

The volunteering hours will be discussed and mutually agreed between the volunteer and supervisor. Volunteers whose task is more than 6 hours a day must take at least half an hour break. If the volunteer is unwell or absent on the day they should phone the school office as soon as possible to notify the school.

Confidentiality

Volunteers may have access to personal information about some individuals, or other information which may be confidential. All volunteers will be asked to sign a confidentiality declaration and follow its principles (Appendix 2). Volunteers who break this confidentiality will be asked to leave.

Termination of agreement

The school reserves the right to terminate an agreement at any time, if the volunteer does not adhere to the relevant rules, policies and practices.

Complaints Process

The volunteer will have the right to raise any concerns via the school's complaints procedure.

APPENDIX 1

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Volunteers that come in to school and work under the supervision of a DBS checked adult need to complete this application form in detail, for consideration by the Senior Leadership Team. Forms can be handed in to the school office, or emailed to: [CONTACT]

Name:		
Address:		
Telephone number:		
Email address:		
Date of birth:		
Intended nature of volunteering (e.g. work experience placement in KS1):		
Why do you want to volunteer at our school?		
Please tell us your previous experience of working in a school environment (if any):		
How often do you propose to volunteer in school?		
Do you currently volunteer anywhere else? If so, please detail where and how often:		
Referees:	Referee 1 * (Preferably, Current or most recent line manager)	Referee 2 *
Name		
Organisation name and position of referee		
Telephone (inc. area code)		
Email address		
May we contact this referee without further authority from you?	Yes / No *	Yes / No *
Signed:		
Date:		

APPENDIX 2 – Volunteer Agreement & Confidentiality Contract

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at school. Your offer of help is greatly appreciated, and we hope that you will gain much from your experience.

Please read and sign this and hand it in at school. You will receive a copy of it for your records.

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

- I will follow the Safeguarding Policy,
- I have read part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part One) and know who the school's Designated Safeguarding lead is.
- I have received and read a copy of the School's Volunteer Policy
- I agree to support the School's Aims
- I will follow the Visitors Code of Conduct
- I agree to treat information obtained from being a volunteer in school as **strictly confidential**
- I have read the Whistleblowing Policy
- I understand that a Safer Recruitment Process including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be undertaken and that other relevant documents will be needed so I can be added to the school's single central register
- I have been made aware of who is my designated supervisor e.g. Class Teacher, Office etc.
- I agree to the Acceptable Use Agreement for data and ICT
- I will make the school aware of any other volunteering I am undertaking that may be considered Regulated Activity

CONFIDENTIALITY DECLARATION

We encourage volunteers to be actively involved in school activities and welcome assistance in the classroom with reading, art and crafts, computers, music and cookery etc. Assistance and instruction are also offered by volunteers with expertise in sporting activities and on day and residential visits.

The school aims to promote the ethos of the classroom as a happy, caring and safe environment. We encourage children to show respect and consideration for others through their experience of receiving consideration and respect from the adults who care for them in the school.

We welcome and value parental involvement and work towards an effective partnership between parents and teachers. Therefore, we ask you to ensure that you understand the following statement before commencement of classroom involvement.

"I understand that the School recognises the importance of classroom confidentiality and I will ensure that all matters relating to the children I come into contact with will remain within the classroom. I recognise the importance of communicating any areas of concern to the class teacher, the Senior Leadership Team or Headteacher."

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

APPENDIX 3 – Volunteer Process Flowchart