

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Acomb First School



Approved by:	Hannah Williamson	Date: 21.03.25
Last reviewed on:	20th March 2024	
Next review due by:	March 2025	

Introduction

Acomb First School caters for children between the ages of four and nine years

Rationale

This policy has been prepared for the benefit of parents and members of the public who may volunteer their time for the school.

The school appreciates that volunteers contribute valuable assistance and experience that would otherwise not be available and in turn can themselves gain valuable working experience that can enhance their skills and enable self-fulfilment. It is therefore important that the school encourages the participation of volunteers under supervision, whilst ensuring the safety and security of all parties.

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Definition of a Volunteer

A volunteer is a person who freely undertakes to perform a service task or function that is not normally or traditionally performed as a full job and who does so without financial reward.

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

- Members of the Governing Body
- Member of the linked church community
- Parents, carers, guardians, elder siblings or Grandparents of Pupils
- Students on Work Experience
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Staff family members

Becoming a volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer on a regular basis may either approach a teacher directly, or send in a letter explaining why they wish to volunteer in the school, what help they can offer and when they are available.

If a suitable volunteering opportunity can be identified, then the following process will be carried out:

1. The person will be invited to have an informal discussion with a senior leader to ensure they are suitable for the role. The school reserves the right to refuse an approach at any time.
2. If suitable the volunteer will be asked to complete a "Registration Form for Volunteers at Acomb First School".
3. An Enhanced DBS check needs to be carried out for all regular volunteers. This will be arranged by the School Office Manager.
4. The volunteer will be given training, where deemed necessary, directly related to the tasks they will undertake. Health and Safety policies including Safeguarding and other relevant school policies will be shared and followed in every case to ensure volunteers understand the environment they are to work in. Volunteers must sign to say they have read and understood this information and agree to follow it.
5. The volunteer will be linked to a designated teacher, whose responsibility it is to make them aware of the role and responsibilities they will be undertaking.
6. Volunteer records will be kept in the school office. This will include personal information provided by the volunteer.
7. The volunteer coordinator, Hannah Williamson, will oversee the volunteer.

At Acomb First School, volunteers are supervised at all times and never left alone with children.

For the purpose of this policy a ***'regular volunteer' is someone who will be attending school to volunteer on weekly or fortnightly basis for over 6 weeks.*** The volunteer coordinator will monitor attendance and liaise with the school office manager to arrange DBS checks for regular volunteers. This can also be carried out at the discretion of the headteacher.

Before starting to volunteer in a school, the above steps must be completed. No volunteer may start regular volunteering without the appropriate checks, unless with the written permission of the Head Teacher and Risk Assessment completed.

This is not required where a volunteer is engaged in a one-off activity, for example a parent helping on a school trip or coming into class for a specific activity. However, these volunteers must be supervised at all times, and never left alone with a child.

Role of a Volunteer

Whatever tasks are identified for voluntary work, it is important to match the volunteer to the work. The volunteer coordinator will advise Class Teacher of the type of work suitable for the volunteer to undertake. This will be informed by discussions between the Volunteer co-ordinator and the volunteer.

Activities in which volunteers may be engaged in could include any of the following or similar activities:

- 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

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with / come into contact with should be voiced with the class teacher and NOT parents/carers of the child / persons outside school. Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents/carers of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school (this includes communications on social media).

Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in school. Situations of misconduct must be reported to the Headteacher and managed by the Headteacher.

Volunteers are bound by the GDPR Regulations the school has in place. Any queries should be directed to the School Business Manager or Headteacher

Health and Safety

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available to volunteers working in the school. The volunteer coordinator will ensure that the volunteer is clear about emergency procedures (e.g. Fire Alarm Evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks (e.g. using D T equipment/accompanying pupils on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher/ volunteer coordinator/ Head Teacher.

For any school activity undertaken by a volunteer the Council's public liability insurance will apply. Volunteers should be aware that this insurance does not cover them for loss of earnings should

they sustain an injury. Any queries should be addressed to the Risk Manager and Insurance Officer at County Hall.

Expenses

The school does not pay expenses to volunteers.

Equality

The school's commitment to diversity and equality applies equally to volunteers. The school values the contribution made by everyone and especially that made by unpaid volunteers.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of a teacher or full-time member of staff. Teachers retain ultimate responsibility for pupils at all times, including the pupils' behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. Volunteers should have clear guidance from the teacher as to how an activity is carried out and what the expected outcome of an activity is. In the event of any query/problem regarding the pupil's understanding of a task, behaviour or their welfare, volunteers must seek further advice/guidance from the class teacher.

Both the class teacher and volunteer coordinator will be available to discuss queries or problems. This is also important for feedback so volunteers know how they are performing. Should a volunteer's performance fall below the required level steps should be taken to remedy this. Standards need to be established and maintained regardless of the status of the individual.

Teachers will be made aware of this policy and of their responsibilities within it.

Dress Code

Examples of requirements of our dress code include:

- Tattoos and piercings should be covered
- Any jewellery should not be ostentatious
- Flip flops are not allowed for health and safety reasons
- No shoes/ high heels should be worn that could cause injury to a child
- Clothing should allow you to comfortably sit on the floor with modesty
- Skirts should be knee length or longer

Signing in

All children and adults must be accounted for in school; it is imperative that everyone in school is signed in at the office in case of an emergency evacuation. All volunteers are asked to report to the School Office on arrival where they will be given a visitor badge.

Mobile Phones

While volunteering in school/on school visits please ensure that your mobile phone is turned off and safely stored in a bag away from children. Please do not use your phone or camera to take photographs – only school Ipads may be used.

Social Media

No references must be made to the school, or your time in the school, on any form of social media e.g. WhatsApp groups, Facebook etc.

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 & Safety policy, Data Protection policy, Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy
- Always maintain confidentiality of personal information, unless there is a need to report an issue to a member of staff
- Adhere to GDPR Regulations
- Treat all pupils and members of staff equally
- Report any incident of unacceptable behaviour to the class teacher or a 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
- Conduct work in a cooperative manner
- Turn off mobile phones while on school premises

Volunteers will not:

- Discipline pupils; if there are any problems, the class teacher or a senior member of staff will be informed immediately and they will manage the situation
- Following safeguarding and behaviour policies, volunteers will not shout at, hit, threaten or handle a pupil
- Take photographs in school without the prior permission of the Headteacher
- Develop 'personal' or inappropriate relationships with pupils
- Work with pupils when not in the proper physical or emotional state to do so, eg, under medication which causes drowsiness, or under extreme stress which may impair judgement
- Behave in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner, eg, smoking or drinking alcohol
- Share personal contact details with pupils or make personal arrangements to meet pupils outside of 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
- Give or receive (other than token) gifts, unless arranged through the Headteacher, eg, giving football boots or uniform to a pupil

Volunteer Induction Declaration

I have received an induction briefing which included;

- A tour of the school
- Meeting the staff (Including headteacher and deputy headteacher)
- DBS and photo identification checks
- Fire procedure information
- Safeguarding information

I have read, understood and will implement the following policies;

- Volunteer policy and code of conduct
- Safeguarding policy
- Keeping children safe in education part 1
- Health and safety policy
- Behaviour policy and restorative practice

Volunteer:

Signed:.....

Print:

Date:

School based mentor:

Signed:

Print:

Date:

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Thank you for volunteering at Acomb First School. For your information and safety we ask you to read and sign this agreement before commencing duties. You are also required to read the pack of information provided to you.

Your contact person will be _____ who will provide you with guidance for your volunteer role in school.

I have read and understood the schools:

- Volunteer Policy
- Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (Part 1/Annex A)
- Safeguarding Policy

and agree to abide by the principles as stated.

Name (please print).....

Contact number

Email

Signed Date (Volunteer)

Signed Date (On behalf of the school)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>By who</i>	<i>Date due for review</i>
<i>March 2025</i>	<i>Policy written</i>	<i>HW/YC</i>	<i>March 2026</i>
	<i>Ratified by governors</i>	<i>FGB</i>	