



Guidance on Using Volunteers in Schools

1. Recruitment and selection of Volunteers

All prospective volunteers should be asked to:

- Initially complete an expression of interest form
- Take part in an informal interview to discuss reasons for wanting to volunteer the skills and experience they can contribute and what they hope to achieve in return
- Provide details of two referees (who should not be relatives)
- Complete a DBS check if necessary (see paragraphs 2 and 9 below and the "Criminal records checking policy and procedure" for further details) and a risk assessment where a DBS check is not required.

2. Volunteers and DBS Checks

Some volunteers will require a DBS Disclosure because of the frequency of their volunteering activity and the contact they have with children. Some volunteers do not require a DBS check, for example if they are accompanying a school trip out for the day, or attending a school event. Volunteers without a DBS check must not be left unsupervised with children.

An enhanced DBS check will **only** be required for volunteers in the following circumstances:

- a) The volunteer is in the school regularly, which is defined as once a week or more, 4 or more times in a 30 day period, or overnight (between 2 – 6 am).
- b) The volunteer is unsupervised.

Please note that a DBS check is portable within Dorset, so if the volunteer has had an enhanced DBS check from another Dorset school and there is less than a 3 month gap since last volunteering in that school, there is no need to undertake another check.

If a DBS check is required, volunteers must complete the attached criminal record self declaration form (HR14) which should be submitted to the LA with the DBS form and the request for the DBS check form.

Remember that the most effective way of keeping children safe is by having effective safeguarding policies and procedures and being vigilant, not just by DBS checks.

DBS checks are now only sent to the applicant and not the Registered Body. You should always ensure that the school sees the DBS certificate from the volunteer prior to commencement at the school.

3. Training, induction and support of volunteers

Volunteers in schools should be given training appropriate to their role and should be assigned a contact point / nominated member of staff for their task. Schools should be committed to treating volunteers fairly under their equal opportunities policy.



4. Insurance

Volunteers under direct supervision of the school will be indemnified against third party claims under the DCC employers and public liability policy whilst volunteering for the school.

5. Management of Volunteers

All volunteers should:

- Have clear guidelines on what activities they are expected to undertake and the manner in which they should be undertaken
- Be provided with appropriate and sufficient training in undertaking the relevant activities / tasks
- Be provided with relevant equipment / materials
- Be provided with relevant health and safety advice / training and equipment as necessary
- Be made aware of relevant policies and procedures, particularly those relating to safeguarding and child protection
- Be given clear guidelines about confidentiality

6. Health and Safety

Risk assessments should be in place for volunteers in schools. Volunteers should disclose any information which relates to their own health and safety and must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others. Headteachers must ensure that volunteers do not undertake any activities which present a risk to their health or to others.

7. Grievances and complaints

Any problems arising from either side should be resolved through informal discussion. If the issues prove to be irreconcilable, either side has the option to terminate the agreement.

If the conduct or performance of a volunteer falls below that required, they may no longer be offered duties and in some circumstances may need to be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

8. Roles and expectations

It is important to set clear guidelines and expectations in order that the needs of the volunteer and school may be met. Volunteers can expect:

- A supportive, welcoming and positive environment that encourages them to get the most out of volunteering
- An induction training programme and appropriate task related training
- Relevant and up to date information and advice
- To be given copies of policies on child protection and safeguarding children, health and safety and equality.

In return schools should ask volunteers:

- To be a positive representative of the school
- To adhere to their task, responsibilities and commitment as agreed
- To follow any procedures and standards explained by their supervisor including those relating to safeguarding, health and safety and diversity.



9. Further Guidance

If you have further queries relating to using volunteers to assist in schools, you can refer to the guidance in 4.56 and Appendix 13 of Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, published by the Department for Education.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00213145/safeguarding-children-safer-recruitment>

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