

Volunteer Policy

The Spire Federation

Spire Federation



Approved by: Executive Headteacher

Last reviewed on: 11 March 2023

Next review due by: 11 March 2026

Introduction and aims

We believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the school's work, and that they enrich the school through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the school's strategic aims and vision, as well as its development plan.

The aim of the Spire Federation 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

This policy has been developed in line with the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Definition of a volunteer

Volunteers can be divided into 2 groups, either 'occasional' or 'regular':

- **Occasional** can be defined as volunteers or parents who only accompany staff and children on one off outings or trips that do not involve over-night stays, or who only help at specific one-off events e.g. a sports day, school fete. It would be expected that occasional volunteers would be supervised by a 'regulated' member of staff e.g. teacher and would not be left unsupervised.
- **Regular** volunteers can be defined as those who help 3 or more times in a 30 day period, once a month or more or on an overnight stay. If regular volunteers are unsupervised the school will require an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check (See appendix 1).

How we use volunteers

At The Spire Federation volunteers may:

- Hear children read
- Accompany school visits
- Work with individual children

- Work with small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or art

This isn't an exhaustive list.

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the governing board
- Parents
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Friends of the school/members of the PTA
- Local clergy or members of the congregation

This is not an exhaustive list.

Members of the governing board working at the school in their capacity as governors (for instance, conducting school monitoring visits or attending meetings), are not covered by this policy. They are covered by our governor code of conduct.

Recruitment of volunteers

Occasional volunteers would usually be parents or carers who come in to help on a one off outing or occasion and would not be recruited as such to the position of volunteer. They would not be required to go through a recruitment process including the taking up of DBS checks. This would be at the Head teacher's discretion and where there are known concerns about a parent or other occasional volunteer it would be at the Head teacher's discretion not to engage this person as an occasional volunteer.

Regular volunteers would be in a position of trust within the school and even where they are not left unsupervised with children, should always go through a recruitment process. The school should also take into consideration any knowledge they have of the person in their relationship with the school as a parent, grand-parent, previous employee, governor, committee member etc. when deciding if this person will be trustworthy and make a valuable contribution to the school in the capacity of volunteer.

The recruitment process should include:

- DBS checks for all and a barred list check where volunteers have unsupervised access to children and young people.
- Informal Interview with Deputy Head teacher or nominated senior member of staff to include discussion about previous work or contact with children, safeguarding and advise of the school's safeguarding policy, confidentiality, being in a position of trust, any transferable risks.
- 2 references (one of which should, where possible, relate to involvement with children/young people) This should relate to recent paid work or volunteering wherever possible including the last known employer.
- Completion of a volunteer recruitment form (see appendix 1) which includes personal details, background, skills, types of activities they would like to help in, times they are available.

Recruitment and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check

DBS Checks are checks carried out to identify whether or not individuals working in an unsupervised activity with children are suitable to do so. This is because it is known that a small minority of people use this route to gain the confidence of children before causing them harm.

See Appendix 2 for KCSIE guidance.

Having a criminal record does not automatically prevent an individual from being a volunteer. The Head teacher and Governing Body would consider the details of the criminal record and balance this against the activities the individual is to undertake. Advice may be required from HR services in order to make this decision.

If a volunteer commits a criminal offence during their time as a volunteer they must disclose this to the Head teacher in the same way that any employed member of staff should. The Head teacher will assess whether it is acceptable to continue with the volunteering role, whether the activities should be changed, or whether it is the best interests for all concerned to no longer act as a volunteer. HR advice may be required.

Information for volunteers

As part of an induction process volunteers should be given verbal and written information about the school. This would include;

- Volunteer agreement with terms and conditions to sign which would include confidentiality (see appendix)
- School expectations of volunteers
- What a volunteer can expect from the school
- School vision, aims and values

- Health and safety issues e.g. what to do if there is a fire, Lock down procedures, site/premises security, access to staff room, other staff areas, hot drinks on site,
- Code of conduct (including staff behaviour codes) etc e.g. polite, courteous, self-discipline, respectful, being an appropriate role model, language, dress, rules around smoking, use of mobile phone, alcohol and illegal substances
- Child protection and Safeguarding policy, practices and responsibilities including the Prevent agenda, this could be 'signed up to' as evidence that the policy has been read and will be complied with.
- School Behaviour policy and Anti bullying policy.
- Internet/ On-line Safety Policy and Acceptable User Policy (where appropriate).
- Any other policies the school sees relevant to the role at any given time.

Safeguarding issues

- Volunteers should be supervised by a designated member of staff. They should be working in a setting where there is always a paid member of staff present. Even where DBS checks have been undertaken, volunteers should not be left unsupervised for long periods.
- Occasional volunteers should never be left unsupervised, would not take children to the toilet or be left in charge of a small group of children on an outing away from teacher/teaching assistant/staff member supervision unless they have a relevant school DBS (e.g. FOSA/FEWS members)
- Volunteers must be advised about physical contact with children in the same way as employed staff.
- Volunteers should use the staff toilets and staff room for any breaks rather than using the children's toilets or play areas unless separate toilets are not available.
- Volunteers must be advised that if a child discloses any information relating to potential abuse that they must bring this to the attention of the teacher/designated safeguarding lead immediately.
- All volunteers should be given a basic safeguarding briefing by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It may also be appropriate for volunteers to attend any staff training sessions on safeguarding.

Managing the behaviours of Children

- Volunteers should be made aware of the behaviour management policy of the school.
- Volunteers must be advised that it is not their role to discipline children.

- If a potential discipline situation occurs, even where this involves their own child, they must bring this to the attention of the teacher/staff member to resolve or if it has been dealt with at the time, as soon as possible after the incident.
- They must be advised that they must maintain their composure at all times and if things become difficult, they must immediately inform another member of staff.
- Volunteers should be advised of the anti-bullying policy and bring any situations of conflict or bullying or prejudice to the attention of the teacher/staff member.

Confidentiality

- Volunteers must be advised that all information about the children and the school in which they are volunteering is confidential and must not be discussed outside of the school or with children, parents or other visitors to the school.
- Volunteers are asked to sign to say they have understood and agree to abide by the code of conduct of the school.
- They should not have access to school's records, children's personal details etc.
- Any information should be shared on a 'need to know' basis e.g. child's medical condition such as diabetes, ADHD where this may affect their behaviour or well-being.
- Volunteers would not usually attend staff meetings but there may be exceptions on a 'need to know' basis.
- The volunteer must not take any notes/files about children outside of the school.
- At no time should volunteers be permitted to take photographs, films or recordings of children unless on school equipment and requested to do so by a regulated member of staff. This equipment must not be taken home by the volunteer.
- Volunteers should be referred to the relevant school policy on the taking, storage and disposal of images of children.
- Volunteers should abide by the school/ setting E-Safety/mobile phone policy.
- Personal mobile phones and other personal hand held electronic devices should not be brought into the classroom.

Health and safety issues

- Volunteers must be aware of health and safety policies and procedures that are relevant and be advised how to act in an emergency situation the same as for any other staff member.
- The school must ensure that the appropriate insurances are in place for the volunteer.

- They should be made aware of which staff are first aid trained and of the process when first aid is required rather than undertake any procedure themselves.
- Volunteers should be made aware of any medical conditions for children they are working with which may require immediate intervention e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, allergies and how to respond
- Volunteers must sign in and out of the school. They must also wear an ID security badge.
- If a school is considering involving a volunteer in an activity where there could be a level of risk to themselves or to a child, a risk assessment must be undertaken as for any other member of staff and health and safety advice sought.

Supervision/mentoring/allegations

- A volunteer should know who their 'contact' person is in the school. This person would usually be the class teacher (or appropriate staff in setting).
- The contact person should be available during their volunteer sessions to provide direct support/supervision. There should also be an opportunity for a regular volunteer to be able to discuss any concerns, their contribution, any training needs etc.
- If there are any concerns about the behaviour of the volunteer, there should be a discussion between the volunteer and their supervisor. This may need to involve advice from a manager depending on the concern. This discussion must be recorded together with any actions regarding expected change in behaviour. This will then be reviewed. If the unacceptable behaviour continues the offer of the volunteer placement will be withdrawn.
- A volunteer should know who to go to if they have a complaint or grievance, for example where there may be a conflict situation with another member of staff or volunteer. They should also know who to talk with if they have a concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or another volunteer (whistle blowing). This could be the contact person in the first instance, DSL, Deputy Head teacher or Head teacher, given the nature of the concern.
- If a complaint or allegation is made against the volunteer, they need to be made aware of how this will be dealt with and offered appropriate support. Any allegation must be referred to a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and treated as for any other member of staff.
- If a volunteer is involved in an incident outside of school/college which did not involve children e.g. domestic abuse but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children, this is known as 'transferable risk'. (see part 4, KCSIE). The school/college will need to consider what triggered these actions and could a child in the school trigger the same reaction, therefore being put at risk. This may need to include the LADO.

- If specialist skills are being offered by a volunteer, where necessary appropriate qualifications need to be checked and these activities may need to be supervised by a person who also has these specialist skills.
- Any necessary training should be made available to the volunteer through negotiation with their contact person e.g. safeguarding.
- For longer term volunteers a review process would be appropriate. However, any safeguarding concerns in relation to the behaviour of the volunteer must be dealt with immediately and not wait for a review period.

Transport

- Volunteers must not transport children in their own vehicles.
- A volunteer would not be expected to take children on school transport or public transport unless accompanied by a member of staff and where a risk management assessment had been made and this met with health and safety regulations.

Contact with children outside of school

- Volunteers must be reminded that they are in a position of trust and that what they see, hear or are involved in whilst at school must be considered as confidential to the establishment.
- Where people are recruited from the local community and they know some of the children, the impact of this should be talked through with the volunteer as part of their supervision.
- If they become aware of a situation of concern about a child from information received in the community, this should be discussed with their contact person or the Head teacher.

Outings and off site visits

- These may include occasional volunteers as well as regular volunteers.
- Occasional volunteers, or others who have not had DBS checks, must not be left unsupervised or alone with children at any time.
- There should be a briefing meeting at the start of the outing to ensure that volunteers are clear about the plan for the day, who the team leader is, the children who are their responsibility, any special needs of these children, who to ask for advice, who has the first aid kit, basic road safety advice etc.

I declare that I have read the Volunteer policy and agree to abide to the terms and conditions described.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 1: 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

You'll find more information on how we use your personal data in our privacy notice.

Personal details

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

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) information

The Spire Federation 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.

Volunteers working in regulated activity will also require a barred list check.

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

Do you have a DBS check? (please circle)	Yes/No
If yes, what type of check do you have? (please circle)	Basic DBS / Standard DBS / Enhanced DBS / Enhanced DBS with barred list information

Why would you like to volunteer at Spire Federation

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 2 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 Spire Federation 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

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

Volunteers

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

306. Whilst volunteers play an important role and are often seen by children as being safe and trustworthy adults, the nature of voluntary roles varies, so schools and colleges should undertake a written risk assessment and use their professional judgement and experience when deciding what checks, if any, are required.

307. The risk assessment should consider:

- the nature of the work with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision
- what the establishment 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, and
- whether the role is eligible for a DBS check, and if it is, the level of the check, for volunteer roles that are not in regulated activity.

308. Details of the risk assessment should be recorded

When should a DBS with barred list be obtained for volunteers

309. Schools or colleges should obtain an enhanced DBS check (which should include children's barred list information) for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity with children, i.e. where they are unsupervised and teach or look after children regularly or provide personal care on a one-off basis in schools and colleges. See Annex E for statutory supervision guidance. Employers are not legally permitted to request barred list information on a supervised volunteer, as they are not considered to be engaging in regulated activity.

Supervision of volunteers

310. It is for schools and colleges to determine whether a volunteer is considered to be supervised. Where an individual is supervised, to help determine the appropriate level of supervision, all schools and colleges must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State (replicated at Annex E).

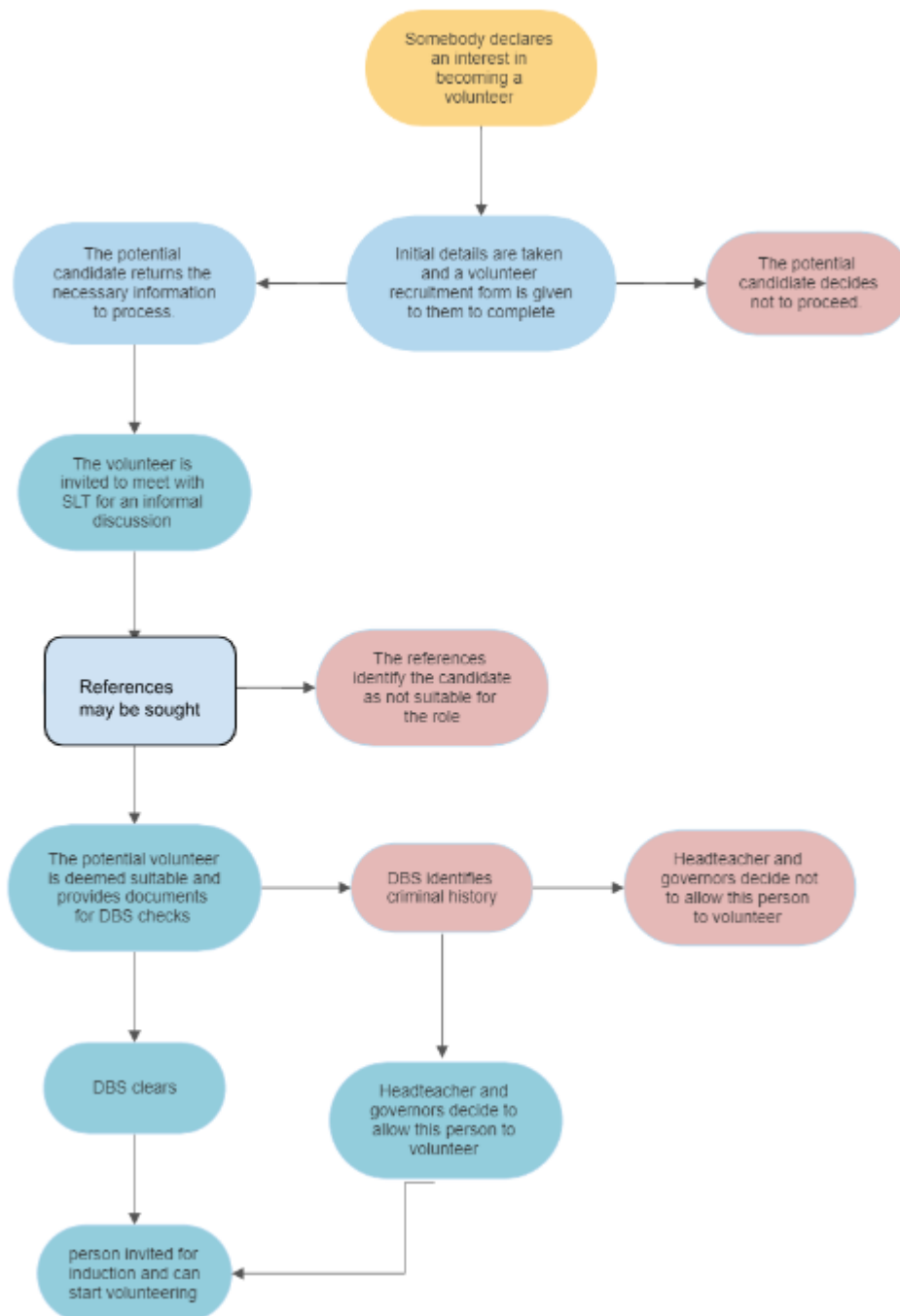
311. For a person to be considered supervised, the supervision must be:

- by a person who is in regulated activity relating to children¹⁰⁵
- regular and day to day, and
- reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children.

Existing volunteers

312. Volunteers do not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which should include children's barred list information if engaging in regulated activity). However, if the school or college has any concerns, they should consider obtaining a new DBS check at the level appropriate to the volunteering role.

The following process will therefore be followed when recruiting volunteers:



Appendix 3 Code of conduct for volunteers

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:
 - 1.1.1. Child protection
 - 1.1.2. ICT and internet acceptable use
 - 1.1.3. Online safety
 - 1.1.4. Mobile phones
 - 1.1.5. Data protection
 - 1.1.6. Health and safety
 - 1.1.7. Equality
 - 1.1.8. Whistle-blowing
 - 1.1.9. 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 Executive Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.
- 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:
 - 2.3.1. Dressing in a way that is professional and appropriate to the work they are doing
 - 2.3.2. Refraining from using inappropriate language
 - 2.3.3. Setting an example for pupils by acting in a way that reflects the school's ethos and values
 - 2.3.4. Behaving in a way that is appropriate for the role they are undertaking
 - 2.3.5. 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".
- 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 Imogen Plaskitt (North Cockerington) or Alison Whitfield (East Wold) and the deputy safeguarding lead is Becky Dhami, Executive Headteacher.
- 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:

3.4.1. Exchanging contact information

3.4.2. Making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media

3.4.3. 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