

Volunteers Policy May 2009

The Policy sets out procedures to be put in place to ensure the safe , fair treatment of volunteers and to preserve the integrity and security of the School.

The policy makes a distinction between the procedures to be followed for volunteers working on a regular basis and those working on a one-off basis. Regular basis is defined by DfES as three or more times within a 30 day period, or overnight.

Key Points:

1.Introduction.

1.2 The Council expects Managers / Head teachers and employees to treat volunteers with respect and protect them from exploitation.

1.4 Where voluntary organisations or community groups are to supply the volunteers, a copy of the providers volunteer policy is required to ensure that procedures are at least equal to those of the Council/School and that the volunteer is properly vetted.

1.7 In addition to this policy Schools should make reference to:

DfES document – Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education January 2007.

The use of volunteers is not intended to replace paid employees.

2.Approval.

2.1 Where new arrangements for the introduction of volunteers are proposed, approval must be obtained from the relevant Assistant Director or in the case of a school , the appropriate committee of the Governing Body. Risk Assessments must be carried out in the same manner as if a paid employee were taking on the role.

3. Recruitment of volunteers who will be undertaking unpaid duties on a regular basis. “ Regular basis” is defined by the DfES as “ three or more times within a 30 day period or overnight”.

3.3 The role of the volunteer will be clearly described in a written form, and where necessary make reference to the volunteers suitability to working with children. The activities to be undertaken will form the basis of the skills, knowledge and qualifications required.

3.4 The Council/School should adopt the same recruitment measures as it does for its paid employees. The volunteer will complete an application form and be interviewed before taking up the duties to ensure the capabilities of volunteers match the work they are to undertake.

3.6 The person responsible for the volunteer will be identified.

3.7 There must be two written reference for volunteers, sought by the employer, from named and contactable referees. Suitability and or non suitability to work with children should be stated on the reference.

3.8 Before any unpaid work commences volunteers who’s duties include working in regular contact with children must have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check.

3.9 Form CRB1 must be submitted to the Human Resources CRB team for processing.

3.10. Appropriate qualifications should be checked e.g. a current driving licence.

3.11 . Volunteer original documents should be verified in List1 or by a combination of two documents specified in List2. All copies should be kept on the volunteers file.

3.12 Volunteers must complete a pre employment health screening questionnaire to ensure they are fit to work. Headteachers can obtain these from the Health and Safety Intranet Site.

3.13 Volunteers should be competent to carry out their role in a safe and healthy manner. Risk assessment should be carried out.

4. Appointment

4.1 Form WWV1 should be completed by the volunteer and Headteacher.

4.2 Volunteers should have a named supervisor who will provide them with an induction session on commencing their appointment.

4.4 All volunteers should be issued with the Council/Schools Code of Conduct and will be expected to adhere to it. This can be obtained from the H.R. Intranet site.

5.0 Recruiting 'one-off' volunteers.

5.1. Volunteers helping in a 'one-off' e.g. Day trip, concert, school fete etc the above procedures are unnecessary provided that the volunteer is not left alone with children.

6.0 Work Placement Students

6.1 This procedure need not be followed in respect of students if they do not have any contact with children.

7.0 Expenses

7.1 The matter for reimbursement of expenses is a matter for the Headteacher. Where volunteers are reimbursed for expenses the Council/School subsistence and travel rates apply.

8.0 Insurance

8.1 The Authority's insurance arrangements will extend to cover voluntary workers. There is no requirement to notify the Insurance Section when a voluntary workers are engaged by the Authority.

8.2 Headteachers should ensure that volunteers using their vehicles are adequately covered by their insurance. Volunteers will sign the Vehicle Detail Form VEH1 to ensure documentation is current and lawful **prior** to travel.

9.0 Record Keeping

9.1 Where necessary a record of volunteer activities, for example for match funding should be kept. Where external funding is dependant on volunteer hours an auditable record should be kept. The information will be kept in accordance to the Data Protection Act.

10. Dealing with Problems

10.1 Where the supervisor identifies a problem with the volunteers capability.

- Minor concerns, informally with an agreed timeframe for improvements.
- If the required improvements have not been made then the volunteer will be informed that their services will no longer be required.

10.2 Where the supervisor identifies a problem with the volunteers conduct.

All volunteers are expected to adhere to the Council/Schools code of conduct.

- Minor deal informally with supervisor.
- More serious. The Headteacher should arrange a formal meeting and inform the volunteer in writing the alleged offence. The volunteer has the right to bring a friend to the meeting. The meeting should be held within 10 days of the alleged offence taking place.
- A written record should be taken of the meeting and agreed by both parties.

Possible outcomes

- A Written warning
- Termination the volunteers services.

10.3 Where a problem is identified relating to the volunteer which has implications under Child Protection Procedures.

The appropriate protection procedures should be followed in all cases

10.4 Where the volunteer identifies a problem with the School or another member of staff

In the first instance the problem should be discussed between the volunteer and supervisor. If a solution cannot be reached then a written record should be kept by both parties. Within 5 working days the Headteacher should receive a copy of the complaint for consideration. The Headteacher should arrange a meeting within 5 working days of receipt of this. The complaint should be considered and the volunteer informed of the meeting whether the complaint is upheld or not. Written records of meetings and decisions signed by both parties should be kept. A volunteer may make reference to the Whistlingblowing Policy.

11.0 Review

11.1 The operation of the volunteer scheme should be monitored and reviewed very quarter to ensure it meets the requirements of the Service.

12.0 Income Tax and National Insurance Implications.

There are no direct implications arising out of this procedure. However reimbursing expenses may lead to Tax and N.I. Therefore all reimbursements should follow the Expenses Claims Procedure