



# The Federation of Sacred Heart & St Mary's RC Primary School, Battersea

## **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

<b>Approved By</b>	Governors
<b>Reviewed On</b>	November 2024
<b>Review Due</b>	November 2026
<b>Review Cycle</b>	Biennial

## **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, vision and development plan.

### **The aim of the Sacred Heart and St Mary's 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 (DfE)'s statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

## **2. How we use volunteers**

### **At Sacred Heart and St Mary's 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.

## **3. How to apply to volunteer**

- By emailing the school office
- Writing to the school marked for the attention of the Headteacher
- Approaching the Executive or Associate Headteachers

#### 4. Appointment of volunteers

- Volunteers are appointed by the Executive or Associate Headteacher.
- Appointment and induction of new volunteers can take several weeks, and is dependent on checks, the candidate and available spaces within the school.
- All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check (if appropriate) and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training.
- The headteacher reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.
- Enhanced DBS checks for volunteers working in the school through other organisations will be conducted by the relevant organisation, if needed. The school will ask for written confirmation that enhanced DBS checks have been carried out before a volunteer is allowed to start work at the school.
- Applicants may be invited for an interview with a nominated member of staff as part of recruiting volunteers and safeguarding procedures. Applicants will be asked to provide evidence of links to an organisation eg school or college.

#### 5. Safeguarding

Adapt this section to include details of safeguarding practice in your school.

For example, you could include details of specific safeguarding training that volunteers must have, or explain that volunteers are required to sign copies of policies to indicate that they've read and understood them.

Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, and our volunteers must share our commitment to child protection.

#### **To ensure we're upholding our responsibility to keep our pupils safe, we will:**

- Conduct enhanced DBS checks with a barred list check on volunteers who:
- Work 1-on-1 with pupils unsupervised
- Work with groups of pupils unsupervised
- Supervise or accompany groups of pupils on overnight residential visits
- Consider the results of any DBS checks that return with unspent and spent listed convictions, and assess these on a case-by-case basis, with regard given to the nature of the conviction and the nature of the work the volunteer will be involved in
- Provide safeguarding induction to all volunteers prior to them beginning work at the school, including ensuring that they have read and understood part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (or the condensed version for volunteers not working directly with pupils). As part of the induction volunteers will be given the school safeguarding leaflets and notified of who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are.
- Require volunteers to agree and adhere to our code of conduct (see appendix 2) and to read, and adhere to, the school's policies on:
- Safeguarding
- Use of mobile phones
- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Online safety
- Behaviour
- Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised, and are never left alone with pupils
- Conduct a risk assessment to determine whether a volunteer who isn't working in regulated activity

needs an enhanced DBS check. The risk assessment will consider:

- The nature of the work they will be doing
- What we know about them
- References from employers or other voluntary roles
- Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check
- The distinction between visitors and volunteers (some people 'volunteering' at your school on a one-off basis are more likely to be classed as visitors, especially if they won't be working unsupervised).
- DBS certificates are not accepted from another organisation. In some instances a letter of assurance may be provided by an organisation eg Up Foundation

## 6. Induction and training

### **Dependent on the role:**

- A nominated member of staff will share key school policies and documents eg Safeguarding, Behaviour.
- A buddy or point of contact may be nominated
- Volunteers must complete appropriate training prior to beginning work at the school.
- Training requirements will be determined by the headteacher, or the appropriate member of staff.
- All volunteers must have a safeguarding induction. Other training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing.

## 7. Confidentiality

- Information about pupils, parents and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues related to pupils, parents or staff with those outside of the organisation.
- If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff. They shouldn't discuss them with pupils or parents.
- This doesn't prevent volunteers from adhering to the school's safeguarding policy (with regard to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures).
- If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in our child protection and safeguarding policy, and inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).
- If concerns are related to whistle-blowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our whistle-blowing policy.

## 8. Conduct of volunteers

Volunteers must comply with the staff code of conduct set out in appendix 1 of this policy.

DRESS CODE expectations

## 9. Expenses

School does not cover costs for volunteers unless it forms part of a school trip eg travel or entry.

## 10. Data protection and record keeping

Our privacy notice for volunteers explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it.

### **We will:**

Retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule

Remove details of volunteers from the single central record (SCR) once they no longer work at our school

## 12. Monitoring and review

This policy has been approved by the governing body and will be reviewed regularly.

## 13. Links to other policies

This volunteering policy is linked to our:

Child protection policy and safeguarding procedures

Behaviour policy

Staff conduct policy (Wandsworth Policy)

## APPENDIX 1

### Staff Code of Conduct

#### Contents

1. Introduction
2. General Obligations
3. Personal and Professional Conduct
4. Safeguarding
5. Disclosure of Information
6. Whistleblowing
7. Political Neutrality
8. Relationships
9. Staff Recruitment & Other Employment Matters
10. Communication and social media
11. Acceptable use of technology
12. Outside Commitments
13. Personal Interests
14. Equality Issues
15. Corruption
16. Use of Resources
17. Hospitality
18. Gifts
19. Sponsorship
20. Confidentiality

#### Footnotes

##### 1. Introduction

##### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This Code applies to all school-based staff in Wandsworth Borough Council Schools. The same principles of good conduct as set out in this Code apply to governors and volunteers alike.

1.2 The Code makes reference to a number of other policies, procedures and guidance in relation to staff conduct. These are highlighted in the relevant sections of the Code.

1.3 To underline the importance that the Governing Board attaches to the Code, you will be required to abide by its provisions as a condition of your employment. Any alleged breach of this Code may lead to disciplinary action which could result in dismissal. Please refer to the Disciplinary Code of Practice for more information.

1.4 Staff must read the Code carefully and ensure they understand it, along with any other documents referred to within it which are relevant to your own work. If you have any queries, please raise them with the Headteacher in the first instance.

1.5 This Code of conduct. Sets out minimum standards of behaviour for employees. provides guidelines to help maintain and improve standards.

aims to protect the reputation of both employees and the school

aims to protect the rights and interests of children and young people involved with the school

1.6 This Code is not exhaustive or exclusive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

## **2. General Obligations**

Governors, staff and volunteers should behave in a manner which demonstrates personal courtesy, integrity and enhances the dignity and standards of the school. In addition, they should strive constantly to develop their own skills and expertise.

Staff, governors and volunteers will:

Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality

Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school

Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect

Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others

Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law

Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within

## **3. Staff responsibilities - Personal and Professional Conduct**

3.1 The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of behaviour from school employees.

Employees represent the school and are trusted to act in a manner which promotes the schools' interest and protects its reputation.

Employees are accountable for their actions and should ask the Headteacher if they require clarification or are not sure of the appropriate action to take.

All employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.

3.2 The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career. Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all time observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position

having regard for the need to safeguard pupil's well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions

showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others

ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

3.3 Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and Codes of the school in which they teach and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

3.4 Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities. Teachers must adhere to:

the terms and conditions outlined in the schoolteachers' pay and conditions document (STPCD).

the Teachers' Standards as set out by the Department for Education. These cover both teaching standards and personal and professional conduct. Teachers' performance will be regularly reviewed against these professional standards.

## **4. Safeguarding**

4.1 Staff, governors and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect. There is also a duty to report low level concerns as detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 section 2 (Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold)

4.2 Staff, governors and volunteers will familiarise themselves with our safeguarding policy and procedures and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

The safeguarding policy and procedures are available in the school office New staff will also be given copies on commencement of employment with the school.

## **5. Disclosure of Information**

5.1 It is a disciplinary offence to speak to the press in the capacity as a spokesperson for the School or Wandsworth Borough Council without prior permission.

5.2 Staff, governors and volunteers should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.

5.3 Intellectual property or copyright created during the course of employment shall remain the property of the School and/or Council and must not be used by employees in personal capacity without prior permission.

## **6. Whistleblowing**

If at any time an employee has a serious concern about something which he/she believes in good faith: -

- is unlawful.
- is against the Council's Standing Orders or policies; or
- falls below established standards for practice; or
- amounts to improper conduct; or
- is a health and safety risk to the public as well as other employees; or
- involves damage to the environment; or
- involves the unauthorised use of public funds; or
- involves possible fraud and corruption; or
- involves sexual or physical abuse of clients

He/she must follow the advice given in the "Policy and Procedure on Whistleblowing." This contains full details about what should be done by the employee. A copy of the Policy and Procedure can be obtained from your headteacher or school office.

## **7. Political Neutrality**

Staff must follow every lawfully expressed school policy and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

## **8. Relationships**

### **8.1 Pupils**

Staff should maintain boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They

should be sensitive in expressing criticism of pupils and avoid hurtful comments of a personal nature. Pupil reports should be based on factual and objective information. Confidentiality should be honoured, and nothing should be done which exploits, undermines or abuses a pupil.

If it is a requirement for staff members and pupils to spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

This takes place in a public place that others can access

Others can see into the room

A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager or the Headteacher immediately.

## 8.2 Colleagues

Staff, governors and volunteers should ensure discussions with colleagues concerning professional problems are kept confidential, that their professional standing is respected, particularly when making any assessment observations of their work, and that they do not denigrate any colleagues in the presence of others.

## 8.3 Parents

Staff, governors and volunteers should give a true representation of facts concerning any aspect of the education development of children. They should respect both the joint responsibility which must exist between the school and parents, and the parental right to enquiry, consultation and information with regard to the educational development of their child.

## 8.4 Governors

Headteachers, teachers and support staff should not knowingly distort or misinterpret facts concerning the school. They should be objective and respect the overall joint responsibilities which exist with the governing board for the conduct of the school.

## 8.5 Children's Services and other Council Staff

Staff, governors and volunteers should support the Children's Services and other Council Staff in reasonable discharge of their duties under the law. They should maintain a professional relationship with those staff. In addition, they should be cognisant of and comply with as relevant, the provisions laid down in such documents as LA manuals of guidance and administration, Standing Orders, memoranda and regulations.

## 8.6 Contractors

Staff and governors should make known to the Headteacher any relationship of a business or private nature with external contractors or potential contractors as these orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders and no special favours should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives involved in the tendering process. No part of the local community should be discriminated against. Headteachers are expected to bring such relationships to the attention of the Chair of Governors.

See: Declaration of Interests and Additional Employment Policy and Procedure

# 9. Staff Recruitment & Other Employment Matters

9.1 Recruitment should always be carried out in a fair and equitable manner. Staff and governors should ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit only. Staff should not mis-represent any



professional or other qualifications. Staff and governors should not seek to advertise or canvass for the purpose of promoting their own advantage. It would be unlawful for an employee to make an appointment which was based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant or have a close personal relationship outside work with him or her. The same approach should be adopted in relation to decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments.

9.2 Requirements to disclose relevant criminal convictions. Criminal convictions have an impact on certain jobs within the school. If a member of Staff is convicted of an offence at any time during their employment with the school, there is a requirement to notify the Headteacher within two weeks of the conviction. Failure to do so will constitute a major offence under the Disciplinary Code of Practice in addition to any disciplinary offence which the conviction, treated separately, may constitute misconduct. Headteachers should make known any such convictions to the Chair of Governors.

## **10. Communication and social media**

10.1 Staff social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

10.2 Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

10.3 Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

## **11. Acceptable use of technology**

11.1 Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

11.2 Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

11.3 We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

## **12. Outside Commitments.**

Staff should be clear about their contractual obligations and should not take outside employment which conflicts with the School or Council's interest or affects professional standing. All Support Staff above Scale 6 must obtain written consent to having, or taking up, any outside employment from the Chair of Governors.

See: Declaration of Interests and Additional Employment Policy and Procedure

## **13. Personal Interests**

Staff must declare in writing to the Headteacher, any financial or non-financial interest including personal relationships, which may influence, or be seen by another party to influence a particular situation. It is not possible to define all possible situations, but a good test is to ask the question, "If other people knew the facts, might they reasonably think I had an interest." The Headteacher must declare in writing any similar

interest to the Chairman of Governors. Copies of all declarations must be sent to the Director of Children's Services.

See: Declaration of Interests and Additional Employment Policy and Procedure

#### **14. Equality Issues**

Staff should ensure that any policies relating to equality issues as agreed by the Governors are complied with in addition to the requirements of the law. All members of the local community have a right to be treated with fairness and equality.

See: Equal Opportunities Statement, Bullying and Harassment Policy, Disability Code

#### **15. Corruption**

Staff must declare in writing any financial interests in the event of there being potential conflict. Furthermore, all staff must be aware that it is a serious criminal offence for them corruptly to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing or not doing, anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person in their official capacity. In such circumstances if any money, gift, etc., is proved to have been paid or given to or received by a member of school staff then such money, gift, etc., is deemed to have been paid or given and received corruptly unless the contrary is proved. Headteachers must declare in writing any similar interest to the Chair of Governors.

See: Declaration of Interests and Additional Employment Policy and Procedure, Disciplinary Code of Practice.

#### **16. Use of Resources**

Staff must ensure that they use public funds and any other assets entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner and not use them for personal ends nor mix them with personal resources. They should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and to avoid legal challenge to the School or Council.

#### **17. Hospitality**

17.1 This involves both the giving and receiving of hospitality. When deciding whether or not it is justifiable, the following points must be addressed:

17.2 Hospitality must always be:

in connection with official duties, justified in the public interest e.g., providing useful working benefits to the school or representing the school in the community; of a modest level; given/received openly. able to meet any subsequent public scrutiny.

17.3 In addition, where hospitality involves visits to theatres, sporting events etc., these can only be accepted in exceptional circumstances, with payment of the face value of the tickets going to the school fund.

17.4 Where any Teachers or Support Staff wish to give or receive hospitality other than between-meal refreshments they must seek written approval from the Headteacher in advance except where no prior notice of an invitation is given. The Headteacher should seek written approval from the Chair of Governors in such cases. The letter should record:

the date of the hospitality.

who it is given by/to.

the reason for the occasion.

the cost.

#### **18. Gifts**

Staff should not accept gratuities, gifts or favours from suppliers etc., that might impair or appear to impair professional judgement. It is recognised that there is a difference between pupils' gifts and those of suppliers

## **19. Sponsorship**

19.1 Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor a school actively the basic conventions concerning the acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

19.2 Where the school sponsors an event or service neither a member of school staff nor any partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure to the Governing Board of any such interest.

## **20. Confidentiality**

In the course of their role, Staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information will never be:

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child is at risk of harm.

## **Footnotes**

### **Financial interests**

There can be no simple definition of what a "financial interest" is. The types of interest which would be relevant are listed below. However, the list is not intended to be exhaustive or inclusive. There may be other possible categories of interest.

Please note that:

(a) a financial interest need not only be something to your financial advantage. It could involve losses as well as gains;

(b) such interests should also include an interest of your spouse, partner or other members of your immediate family; and

(c) if you are in any doubt it is wise to err on the side of caution and declare the interest.

Examples of possible financial interests:

1. A spare time employment that you have to declare for income tax purposes.
2. Any contract for goods, services or works between the Council and you (or a firm in which you are a partner, or a body corporate of which you are a director or in the securities of which you have a beneficial interest).
3. Land and buildings in which you have a substantial interest. This includes property from which you receive rent.
4. Securities where you have a substantial interest, i.e. you own shares or other securities in a company with a nominal value of more than £25,000 which is active in the Borough.

