

St. John's Church of England VA Primary School



Volunteer Code of Conduct

Agreed by SLT

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Volunteer Code of Conduct

Sharing joy and hope in the community

When considering matters of the way in which volunteers conduct themselves it is important for all the school community to reflect, considering our vision statement, 'Sharing joy and hope in the community'; along with the school values Respect, Compassion, Friendship, Service and Endurance. Through this we will ensure we are guided into good decisions to support all those in the St John's community.

1. AIMS, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all volunteers to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

The Vision and Values of the school set out how the family of St John's School is to always conduct itself. All communication and interaction between members of the family of St John's volunteer and children, parents, carers and visitors must reflect our vision and values.

In order to uphold the expectation of sharing joy and hope in the community we model our principles on the *Parable of the Two Builders* (Matthew 7: 24 – 27):

Verse 24 states: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Volunteers are expected to model and demonstrate our Christian values of:

Respect
Compassion
Friendship
Service
Endurance

In doing so, they will set a good foundation upon the rock to allow joy and hope to be shared effectively.

School volunteers have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour both in school and when in the wider community. We expect all Support Staff, Governors, Supply Staff and Volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others. Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our volunteer disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this Code of Conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, volunteers will use their judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of volunteer conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Volunteering \(England\) Regulations 2009](#). In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a Code of Conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

3. GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

Volunteers set an example to pupils. They 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
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

4. SAFEGUARDING

Volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect. 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.

Our Safeguarding Policy and procedures are available on the school website. New volunteers will be given copies as part of induction.

4.1 Allegations That May Meet the Harm Threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in **Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education**. This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a Supply Teacher, Staff, Volunteer, Governor or Contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. A Case Manager will lead any investigation. This will be the Headteacher, or the Chair of Governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

4.2 Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by an adult that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work. All volunteers should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Safeguarding Policy. We also encourage volunteers to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If volunteers are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-

level concern, we encourage you to report it. All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage. This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in the Safeguarding Policy. Procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

4.3 Whistleblowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils' or volunteer's health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Volunteers are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Volunteers should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Volunteers should report their concern to the Head or Deputy Headteacher. If the concern is about the Head or Deputy Headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, they should report their concern to the Chair of the Governing Board.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Volunteers raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For the school's detailed whistleblowing process, please refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.

5. VOLUNTEER-PUPIL/STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

Volunteers will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so. If volunteers and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, volunteers will ensure that:

- Volunteers will only work in the area designated by the classroom teacher
- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the work area
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

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

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

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to volunteers, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from volunteers to pupils are not acceptable.

If a volunteer is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a volunteer is concerned at any point about a fellow volunteer and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in the Safeguarding Policy.

Volunteers must respect that confidential information in the school office, and as such must only enter the office to collect their ID badge and entry. If you have been asked to use the photocopier, please respect the confidentiality of the office and do not disturb the staff.

6. COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Volunteer's 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. Volunteers should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

Volunteers 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.

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

When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) volunteers will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation. There is an expectation that immediate family adhere to the same standards in terms of protecting the reputation of the school.

Volunteers should be familiar with the school Online Safety Policy. Volunteers should sign to confirm that they have read and understood this policy.

7. ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Volunteers 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, viewing pornography and/or other inappropriate content.

Volunteers 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.

Volunteers do not have permission to access the school IT system.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of their role, volunteers may be privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, pupils and their parents/siblings. This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties.
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others.
- Used as gossip.
- Used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was collected and intended.

This does not overrule the volunteer's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel, where volunteers believe a child has been harmed or at risk of harm, as detailed further in our Safeguarding Policy.

9. HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Volunteers should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities. Volunteers will not accept bribes.

Upon commencement, volunteers will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)

- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the volunteer will advise the school as such as soon as is reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may impact on the volunteer's engagement at the school.

10. DRESS CODE

Volunteers will dress in a professional, appropriate manner. Outfits will not be overly revealing. Clothes and tattoos will not display any offensive images or political slogans.

Whilst it is not possible to list every possible clothing option here, it is hoped that volunteers will dress in a way that reflects the high esteem in which we are held by pupils and their families.

Volunteers **MUST** comply with the following regulations:

- All volunteers should be mindful that their dress sets an example to pupils. If volunteers dress smartly, pupils are more likely to follow suit. Volunteers should therefore exercise professional judgment when deciding what to wear during the course of a normal school day.
- You may be called upon to take part in 'messy' or demanding activities, so be prepared by dressing appropriately
- No jeans / combats are allowed
- You must wear appropriate footwear that will not cause you to slip or trip.
- Flipflops, Crocs and flimsy or one/two strap sandals are not permitted.
- When working in areas where there is a danger of foot injuries, due to the nature of the work undertaken appropriate footwear must be worn.
- No uncovered shoulders / 'spaghetti strap' tops

11. CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORK

Volunteers will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

12. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed annually but may be revised as necessary. It will be annually approved by the Full Governing Board. The Governing Board will ensure this Code of Conduct is implemented effectively, and appropriate action is taken, in a timely manner, to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

13. VOLUNTEERING HOURS

Volunteers will only be in school during pupil hours, i.e. 9.00-3.15, unless accompanying an off-site trip. If at any time a volunteer is needed outside of these hours, express permission will be given in writing. Volunteers will not be on site outside of term time.

14. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

- Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy

11 PRACTICAL CODE OF CONDUCT STEPS

We will:

1. Model our behaviour upon the school values.
2. Use a positive statement rather than a negative.
3. Use a calm tone of voice at all times.
4. Avoid using sarcastic words or phrases.
5. Speak respectfully to other adults at all times.
6. Avoid workplace gossip both in and out of school.
7. Maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear.
8. Work as part of a team and care about our colleagues.
9. Work within the school's policies and practices.
10. Dress professionally.
11. Behave in a positive way despite any personal problems.



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Once you have read this Code of Conduct, please sign and return this slip, keeping the Code of Conduct for your reference.

- I have read the Code of Conduct
- I understand the Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school volunteers are expected to observe and follow.
- I agree to adhere to the Code of Conduct. If I breach this Code of Conduct, I understand that I will no longer be permitted to volunteer at St John's Primary School.

Name of volunteer _____

Signature _____

Date _____