



Wessex
Learning Trust
We Learn Together!

Volunteer Policy

Date approved by Trust Board: November 2023

Review Date: November 2026

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Wessex Learning Trust. Registered in England. Company Number 7348580.

Wessex Learning Trust

Volunteer Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees in November 2026.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gavin Ball". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'G'.

Name: Mr Gavin Ball
Position: Chief Executive

Date: 9 November 2023

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Kirkup". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'B'.

Name: Mr Brian Kirkup
Position: Chair of the Board

Date: 9 November 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Wessex Learning Trust (“The Trust”) believes that volunteers are an enriching and value-added resource which brings mutual benefits to learners, staff, parents/carers, and our local community. We welcome volunteers and recognise that they can bring with them a range of skills and experience and help raise the achievements of learners at our schools.
- 1.2 The Trust also believe in providing a safe and nurturing environment for learners, with our overriding priority of safeguarding the young people in our care. This policy seeks to ensure learners can benefit safely from the support of volunteers.
- 1.3 The Trust is committed to safeguarding and expects all volunteers to share this commitment.
- 1.4 The Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all staff and volunteers alike.
- 1.5 Members of the Local Governing Body working at the school/academy 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.

2.0 Aims

- 2.1 The aims of this policy are to:
- Encourage the wider community to engage with schools/academies, thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion
 - Ensure that volunteers support the Trust’s vision and values and adhere to our policies
 - Provide staff, volunteers and parents/carers with clear expectations and guidelines
 - Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers
- 2.2 This policy has been developed in line with the Department for Education’s statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE).

3.0 How We Utilise Volunteers

- 3.1 Volunteers at our schools may include (but are not limited to):
- Parents, carers, elder siblings, or grandparents of learners
 - Local Governors or members of the Trust Board
 - Former pupils
 - Students on work experience
 - Local residents
 - Local Clergy
 - Members of the PTA
 - Members of the local community and community groups
 - Staff family members
 - Members of the local business community
- 3.2 The types of activities that volunteers engage in may include (but is not limited to):

- Working with small groups to assist them in their learning
- Hearing learners read
- Working alongside individual learners
- Assisting with art or other practical subjects (e.g. music, cooking, languages, sport etc.)
- Gardening or forest school activities
- Supporting after school clubs
- Helping with lunchtime activities
- Helping with supervision of learners on school visits

3.3 However, volunteers are not allowed to do the following:

- Take responsibility for all or some of the class
- Change very young children or supervise them changing
- Take an individual learner to the toilet
- Take the learners off the school site without a member of school staff in charge

3.4 When volunteers are working in the school the responsibility for the health and welfare of the learners remains with the class teacher at all times. We expect learners to behave with the same respect and politeness to any volunteers in the school, as they would staff members.

4.0 Becoming a Volunteer

4.1 Anyone wishing to become a volunteer – either on a regular basis or a one-off occasion, for example, completing a work experience placement - should contact the school/academy where they wish to volunteer directly to begin the process.

A volunteer application form (Appendix 1) would then need to be completed and returned.

Once the school/academy has received the application an interview will be arranged with the (Executive) Headteacher to discuss the volunteer's reason for volunteering within a school, availability, skills and work history.

4.2 Volunteer appointments are provisional, subject to satisfactory completion of all safer recruitment checks as outlined in the Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy, including:

- Satisfactory Enhanced DBS Disclosure, including check of Barred List
- Satisfactory references
- Verification of identity
- Confirmation that you are not disqualified from providing childcare, if applicable
- Verification that you are not subject to a prohibition order
- Evidence of further overseas checks, if applicable
- Satisfactory online checks

4.3 The results of any DBS check will be considered. Any results that are returned with spent or unspent convictions needs to be considered 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.

4.4 Where a work experience placement is linked to a course of study, for example as part of a PGCE placement, these checks may be delegated to be completed by the course provider and assurance that the checks have been satisfactorily completed will be sought by the school/academy prior to starting the placement at the individual school.

4.5 Some volunteers who are not volunteering within 'regulated activity'¹, do not require the Safer recruitment checks, detailed in section 4.2, to be undertaken, these include:

- Volunteers who accompany staff and learners walking in the community, such as a visit to an event, when accompanied by members staff.

Such circumstances will be risk assessed by the (Executive) Headteacher to determine if safer recruitment checks and DBS checks are required. The risk assessment will consider;

- The nature of the voluntary work they will undertake
- What we know about the volunteer
- References from employers or other voluntary roles

4.6 Where volunteers are deemed not in regulated activity and have not had all of the safer recruitment checks completed, they must always be supervised by a member of staff and never left alone with learners.

4.7 The appointment and induction of a volunteer can take several weeks, dependant on safer recruitment checks and DBS processing.

4.8 Volunteers will be asked to re-confirm their criminal record status and childcare disqualification status on an annual basis.

5.0 Expectations of Volunteers

5.1 All volunteers will be required to adhere to the Trust's policies, which can be found on the Wessex Learning Trust website [here](#). In particular, volunteers must familiarise themselves with the following Trust policies and sign to confirm they have read the following:

- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Acceptable Use of IT Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Volunteers will, for all intent and purposes, be considered as equal to salaried staff, and as such are subject to all applicable policies including Health and Safety, Data Protection and confidentiality.

5.2 Volunteers are expected to:

- Use their time, skills, and expertise to inspire and enrich the learning of the learners in our care
- Work in a professional manner, consistent with the expectations of salaried staff
- Adhere to Trust and school/academy policies
- Work effectively as part of the school team and foster positive relationships with other staff
- Maintain professional confidentiality and not commit any action which could bring the Trust or any of its school/academy's names into disrepute

¹ 'Regulated activity' is work that a barred person must not do. This includes a) teaching, training, instructing, or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children and b) work for schools with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers.

- Report any concerns relating to the safeguarding of a child to the school/academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

5.3 Volunteers will be expected to commit to a volunteering session once every three months as a minimum to ensure all safer recruitment checks remain valid and to ensure the volunteer remains up to date with all of the school/academy and Trust's policies and procedures. If a volunteer has not attended the school/academy within three months the volunteering position will automatically be terminated. The (Executive) Headteacher can make a decision to reinstate the volunteering position, in such cases all safer recruitment checks, as outlined in section 4, will need to be repeated.

6.0 Training and Induction and Safeguarding

- 6.1 Safeguarding our learners is of paramount importance to the Trust, and our volunteers must share our commitment to child protection.
- 6.2 All volunteers are required to undertake an induction where they will learn about the school/academies Health and Safety and fire evacuation procedures.
- 6.3 All volunteers will need to attend annual safeguarding training, complete Prevent and FGM training and keep up to date with KCSIE updates.
- 6.4 Volunteers may be required to attend and/or complete site-specific training from time to time as determined by the (Executive) Headteacher or another appropriate member of staff.

7.0 Confidentiality and Safeguarding

- 7.1 Information about learners, parent/carers and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues relating to learners, parents/carers or staff with those outside of the organisation.

If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff. They should not discuss them with learners or parents/carers. This does not prevent volunteers from adhering to the Trust's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy, with regards to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures.

- 7.2 If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance set out in the Trust's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The Wessex Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and expects all volunteers to share this commitment.

8.0 Data Protection

- 8.1 We will collect and retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule.
- 8.2 We will remove details of our volunteers from our Single Central Record (SCR) once they are no longer engaged in volunteer work at the school/academy.

9.0 Termination

- 9.1 The Trust and its schools reserve the right to terminate any voluntary position, without notice, where the (Executive) Headteacher believes there to be a legitimate cause for such action.
- 9.2 A volunteer can choose to cease volunteering at any time by informing the (Executive) Headteacher at the earliest convenience.

10.0 Monitoring and Review

10.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

Declaration:

I have read and understood this volunteer Policy and agree to all of the terms as outlined above.

Name:

Signature:

Date: