



Wessex
Learning Trust

We Learn Together

Volunteer Policy



Wessex Learning Trust

Volunteer Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees in May 2028, and then henceforth every three years or earlier if legislation requires it.

Signature:



Name: Mr Gavin Ball
Position: Chief Executive

Date: 21/05/2025

Signature:



Name: Mr Paul Jacobs
Position: Chair of the Board

Date: 21/05/2025

<u>Date approved by Trust Board: May 2025</u> <u>Review Date: May 2028</u>
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Wessex Learning Trust (“The Trust”) believes that volunteers enrich our setting (organisation) and bring mutual benefits to learners, staff, parents/carers, and our local community. We warmly welcome parents/carers and the local community to volunteer with us. We recognise the valuable contribution they make, and bring a breadth of knowledge, expertise and skills which will help each individual setting raise the achievements of learners.
- 1.2 The Trust also believe in providing a safe and nurturing environment for learners, with our overriding priority of safeguarding the learners 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 wellbeing of all staff and volunteers alike.
- 1.5 Members of the Local Partnership Board working at the school/academy in their capacity as Local Partners (for instance, conducting school monitoring visits or attending meetings), are not covered by this policy. They are covered by our Local Partners Code of Conduct.

2. Aims of this policy

- 2.1 The aims of this policy are to:
 - Encourage the wider community to engage with Wessex Learning Trust 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. Working Together with Our Volunteers

- 3.1 Volunteers will not be employed by the Trust and will not be engaged on a contract of employment nor on any type of contract for services.
- 3.2 Volunteers at our schools may include (but not limited to):
 - Parents, carers, elder siblings, or grandparents of learners.
 - Local Partners or members of the Trust Board.
 - Former pupils.
 - Students on work experience.

- Local residents.
- Local clergy.
- Members of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).
- Members of the local community and community groups.
- Staff family members.
- Members of the local business community.

3.3 The types of activities that volunteers engage in may include (but is not limited to):

- Working with small groups of learners to assist them in their learning.
- Listening to learners read.
- Work with individual learners.
- Assist with specialist or practical subjects (e.g. art, music, cooking, languages, sport etc).
- Gardening or forest school activities.
- Support with after school clubs.
- Help with lunchtime activities.
- Accompany school visits and trips.

3.3.1 Volunteers will not be permitted to:

- Take responsibility for all or some of the class.
- Change 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 present and in charge.

3.4 When volunteers are working in the school the responsibility for the health and welfare of the learners remains with the school/academy/ setting staff at all times.

3.5 We expect learners to behave with the same respect and politeness to volunteers in the school, as they would staff members.

4. Becoming a volunteer

4.1 Volunteers are appointed by the individual school/academy/setting. Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either on a regular basis or a one-off occasion, should contact the setting where they wish to volunteer directly to begin the process. All applications to become a volunteer must be completed using the Wessex Learning Trust Volunteer Application Form (Appendix 1). Completed application forms must be returned to the school/academy/setting that the volunteer is interested in.

4.2 Intake of new volunteers can take up to 6-12 weeks from application, this allows time for the setting to follow all safer recruitment processes and checks. For further information please refer to the Wessex Learning Trust Safer Recruitment Policy.

4.3 Please note there is no guarantee that a volunteer will be found an immediate placement. Any placement should be mutually beneficial for the setting and the volunteer. Volunteering spaces are dependent on the candidate interests and experience they will bring to the setting, and the available spaces within the setting.

4.3 Once the setting has received the application an interview will be arranged with the (Executive)Headteacher/Setting leader. The purpose of the interview is to discuss the volunteer's reason for volunteering, availability of the volunteer, and skills and work history.

5. Safer recruitment (vetting) checks

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

5.2 The results of any DBS check will be considered. Any results that are returned with spent or unspent convictions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with regard given to the nature of the conviction and the nature of the activities the volunteer will be involved in.

5.3 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/setting prior to starting the placement.

5.4 Some volunteers who are not volunteering within 'regulated activity'¹, may not require the 'Safer recruitment (vetting) checks' to be undertaken. This includes volunteers who accompany staff and learners walking in the community or visiting an event. In such circumstances, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the (Executive)Headteacher/Setting leader 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.
- Whether the volunteering work they will be undertaking falls in to regulated activity

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

5.6 Volunteers will be asked to re-confirm their criminal record status and childcare disqualification status (where applicable) on an annual basis.

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.

6. Expectations of volunteers

6.1 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.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy.
- AI Policy
- IT Security and Acceptable Use Policy.
- Dress Code Policy.
- Lone Working Policy.
- Staff Harassment and Bullying Policy

6.2 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.
- Work effectively as part of the school/academy/setting 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.
- Report any concerns relating to the safeguarding of a child to the school/academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

6.3 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 applicable 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 will need to be repeated.

7. Training, induction and safeguarding

7.2 All volunteers are required to undertake an induction where they will learn about the school/academies Health and Safety, emergency and safeguarding procedures.

7.3 All volunteers will need to attend annual safeguarding training, complete Prevent training and any other training as required as well as keep up to date with KCSiE updates.

7.4 Volunteers may be required to attend and/or complete site-specific training from time to time as determined by the (Executive) Headteacher/setting leader or another appropriate member of staff.

8. Confidentiality and safeguarding

- 8.1 Information about learners, parent/carers and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues relating to learners, parents/careers or staff with those outside of the organisation.
- 8.2 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.
- 8.3 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 Trust is committed to safeguarding and expects all volunteers to share this commitment.

9. Data protection

- 9.1 The Trust will collect and retain records relating to volunteers in-line with the Wessex Learning Trust records retention schedule.
- 9.2 The Trust 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.

10. Ending a volunteer role

- 10.1 The Trust and its schools reserve the right to end any voluntary position, without notice, where the (Executive)Headteacher believes there to be a legitimate need for the service.
- 10.2 A volunteer can choose to cease volunteering at any time by informing the (Executive)Headteacher/setting leader at the earliest convenience.



Wessex
Learning Trust

We Learn Together!

APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Applicant name:	
Name of school/academy applying for:	
Date application submitted:	

Instructions

Please complete all sections of this form electronically or using black ink.

Applications will only be accepted if this form is completed in full.

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

Personal Information:

Title (e.g. Mr, Mrs, Miss, Dr, Ms):	
Full name:	
Previous name(s):	
Home address:	
Post code:	
Home phone number:	
Mobile phone number:	
Email address:	

Availability

Please mark the boxes to indicate when you would be available to support the school/ academy as a volunteer:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Before School					
AM					
Lunchtime					
PM					
Afterschool					
How many hours per week would you like to volunteer?					
Can you commit to at least one full term?	Yes		No		

Experience:

Please detail any skills, experience and/or qualifications you have working with children and or young people:

Why would you like to volunteer at our school/academy?

Please details any specific skills, interests and/or qualifications you would like to share with the school/ academy?

For example: languages, sports etc.



Protection of Children

The Wessex Learning Trust's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy is available on the Wessex Learning Trust website [Wessex Learning Trust](#)

You will be required to give details of all spent or unspent convictions and cautions, including road traffic offences as this post is exempt from the provisions of Section 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) order 1986. Failure to disclose information will result in your dismissal by the Wessex Learning Trust. A subsequent offer of a volunteer role will be dependent upon the completion of a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service check and childcare disqualification self-declaration (when working with children under 8 years old). This information will be requested from successful candidates.

See Appendix 2 to see what information you will be required to complete.

Positive About Disability:

We welcome applications from people with disabilities. Wherever possible we will make reasonable adjustments to enable a person with a disability to access the application and recruitment process fairly.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	Yes / No
If "yes" would you welcome a discussion ahead of interview to identify any particular needs that you may have?	Yes / No

Overseas

If you have lived and/or worked outside of the UK, the school/academy must make any further checks it considers appropriate (in addition to the usual pre-employment checks).

We will decide on whether this is necessary on individual circumstances, and factors such as:

- The amount of information you disclose in the DBS check.
- The length of time you have spent in or out of the UK.

Please provide a list of time spent abroad for 3 months or more over the last 10 years, including the reason for being abroad and country visited/lived in:

Date from (MM/YY):	Date to (MM/YY):	Reason	Country

References

The placement as a volunteer is subject to satisfactory references. Please indicate two people who can comment on your suitability for the role, e.g. employers, other volunteer role leaders etc. Business/work email addresses for referees must be used where possible.

Reference 1:

Title of Referee:	Mr / Mrs /Miss / Dr / Other (please state):
Name of referee:	
Position held:	
Relationship to you:	
Referee address:	
Email address:	
Telephone number:	

Reference 2:

Title of referee:	Mr / Mrs /Miss / Dr / Other (please state):
Name of referee:	
Position held:	
Relationship to you:	
Referee address:	
Email address:	
Telephone number:	

Data Protection Statement

I hereby give my consent for the Wessex Learning Trust to process and retain on file personal information (including health and ethnic data) contained on this form and in accompanying documents. This is required for recruitment purposes, the payment of staff and the prevention and detection of fraud. This information may be shared with third party organisations including, but not exclusive to, payroll providers, the DBS, the Police and other third parties as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998 and related legislation. All information will be dealt with in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

For more information on our data handling please refer to The Wessex Learning Trust Safer Recruitment Policy and Data Protection Policy.

Safeguarding, Disclosure, Barring and Recruitment Checks

The Wessex Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding young people and promoting the welfare of children.

The school/academy is legally obligated to process an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before making appointments to relevant posts including volunteers.

The 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.

For posts in regulated activity, the DBS check will include a barred list check.

It is an offence to seek employment in regulated activity if you are on a barred list.

We will use the DBS check to ensure we comply with the Childcare Disqualification Regulations. It is an offence to provide or manage childcare covered by these regulations if you are disqualified.

Any data processed as part of the DBS check will be processed in accordance with data protection regulations and the Wessex Learning Trusts Data Protection Policy.

Please refer to the Wessex Learning Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy on the Wessex Learning Trust website to find out more about the recruitment checks undertaken.

DECLARATION

I declare that the information I have given in this application is accurate and true.

Signature:	
Date:	



Self-Disclosure Form

As part of our duty to safeguard pupils, we need to check whether you are barred from working with children, or whether you have convictions that would make you unsuitable to work with children or in the role you have applied for.

Please complete the following form as accurately as possible.

Note: you are not required to disclose convictions or cautions that are 'protected', as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013). If you're not sure whether one of your convictions is 'protected', you can [check here](#).

If you accidentally provide information about 'protected' convictions or cautions, we won't take this into account.

How we'll use this information

We will use the information in this form to:

- Identify whether you may be ineligible for a volunteer role based on barring, a section 128 direction or childcare disqualification requirements.
- Inform our conversations with you about any relevant details during the informal discussion.

If we offer you a volunteer role, we will compare the information you've provided in this self-declaration with the information in your formal DBS check so that we only make decisions based on the most accurate information possible.

Name	
Role	

Self-declaration

	YES/NO
Do you have any unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?	
Do you have any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation	

	YES/NO
of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020?	
Have you committed an offence overseas which would have resulted in disqualification if it had occurred in the UK?	
Do the police or children's social care have your name and/or information on file for any reason?	
If you answered 'yes' to any of the questions above, please provide further information.	

I confirm that the information above is accurate to the best of my knowledge, and that I will make the academy/setting aware of any changes in my circumstances that may affect the answers I've provided above, or my suitability for the role.

Signed:

Date: