



# Orchard Partnership Academies Volunteers Code of Conduct



Reviewed: Autumn 2023

Mrs Victoria Grieves

# VOLUNTEERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Thank you for volunteering to assist at our school/schools. We value the contribution you can make to our pupils' learning.

This Code of Conduct sets out the guidelines that we expect all our volunteers to follow. Please read through them carefully before signing at the end to say you understand and agree to abide by the Code, then return the signed copy to the school office for our records. We will take a photocopy to give back to you. Volunteers who feel they cannot fully abide by the guidelines within this Code should withdraw their offer of help.

All volunteers will start at the beginning of a half term. This will allow the class teachers and DSL to coordinate where the volunteers will be placed, along with ensuring any training and orientation can take place.

## 1. Supervision

- 1.1 All regular volunteers must obtain a valid enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. If a parent volunteers for a single school trip (for example) then a DBS would not need to be obtained...however they would need to be supervised by a member of staff at all times. Please note: Never work alone in a room with one pupil.
- 1.2 You should follow the guidance and instructions given by members of staff about your role in the activity that you are helping with.
- 1.3 Parents of pupils will normally be asked to volunteer in a class other than that attended by their child. If, however, a parent assists in their child's class and a conflict of interest arises, e.g. giving undue attention and support to your own child, or using the time to discuss your child's progress with the class teacher, then the class teacher and/or the head teacher may ask the parent to reconsider their offer of help.

## 2. Professional Relationships

- 2.1 At all times you should maintain a 'professional' relationship with all pupils and staff. This will minimise the risk of any allegations of inappropriate behaviour.
- 2.2 Permission should be sought from a pupil before physical contact is made. Even if you know some of the pupils very well you should limit physical contact with pupils, ensuring physical contact is only ever in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender and ethnicity.
- 2.3 Do not share inappropriate personal information about your views, beliefs, sexual relationships or lifestyle.
- 2.4 Never give or exchange contact details with pupils, including email or home addresses, phone numbers or social networking identities. Avoid any communication with a child or young person that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative. Volunteers are in a position of trust with children at the school.
- 2.5 Occasionally, a child or young person may develop an infatuation with an adult who works with them. An adult who becomes aware that a pupil is developing an infatuation should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the classteacher so appropriate action can be taken to deal with the situation sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned.
- 2.6 Volunteers should use the staff toilet, never the pupils' toilets. On educational visits and outings when public toilets or changing areas may need to be used, you should exercise caution and avoid

placing yourself in a position where your actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation. Male volunteers should use a cubicle in public toilets.

- 2.7 If a pupil tells you something or you see something that concerns you, this should be reported to the class teacher immediately. If you feel what has been disclosed and/or witnessed is of a safeguarding nature which may be putting a pupil's welfare at risk, then this should be reported to the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL. This information will be given to you and can be found in the school office.
- 2.8 Remember that you must not try to investigate the matter any further yourself, for example by asking the pupil questions, and that you should never promise to keep any disclosure by a pupil a secret.
- 2.9 Behaviour management of the children is the responsibility of members of school staff and should not involve volunteer helpers. If you are working with pupils who are misbehaving, please refer this to the class teacher as soon as possible. Never try to reprimand or allocate punishments yourself.
- 2.10 You should act appropriately towards all pupils, parents, carers, staff and other volunteers, whatever their socio-economic background, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief. If you witness or experience bullying, harassment or discrimination, no matter who is the victim or perpetrator, you should raise this with the Head of School.
- 2.11 If you have any concerns about following this guidance or are aware of any incidents that occur that may be misconstrued or give rise to concern, please talk to the Head of School.

### **3. Setting an example**

All volunteer helpers at our school should be positive role models to the children, so we expect you to:

- 3.1 Dress appropriately for the school setting and the tasks and role you will undertake.
- 3.2 Talk politely and calmly to all pupils. Avoid sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments.
- 3.3 Never use inappropriate, offensive or abusive language whilst on the school premises, even in the staffroom.
- 3.4 Never smoke in the school building or grounds as it is strictly prohibited to do so.
- 3.5 Offer encouragement and praise to the children, both verbally and in written comments, e.g. a comment in their reading record. Never show favouritism to a particular child or group of children nor give rewards which are outside of the school's agreed policy.
- 3.6 Promote and follow the classroom rules.
- 3.7 Never discuss subjects that are inappropriate for the age of the pupils to participate in, or listen to, including references of a sexual nature or 'gossip' / sharing of information about staff, parents or pupils.
- 3.8 Never be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when assisting as a volunteer.

### **4 Use of mobile phones, cameras and computers**

- 4.1 Use of personal IT devices and mobile phones is prohibited, except under exceptional circumstances where the prior agreement of the Head of School has been obtained. If you need to use your mobile phone in an emergency whilst on the school premises, please go to the school office. Using the video or camera features of your mobile phone whilst on the school premises is strictly prohibited.

- 4.2 Mobile phones must be placed inside the class teachers cupboard (where, if you have a bag, that can also be stored), the teachers desk or if you prefer, with the administrator in the school office.
- 4.3 The school's ICT equipment may only be used in accordance with the school's Acceptable use of ICT and Mobile Phones Policy and should normally be used for school purposes only.

## **5 Gifts and rewards**

- 5.1 Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. Neither should you give pupils any rewards not covered by school policy. Nor should you accept gifts from pupils (other than small tokens at Christmas or as a 'thank you')

## **6. Transporting pupils**

- 6.1 If you are asked and agree to transport children to an event or other location in your own vehicle, you should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. All passengers must wear seat belts and car seats must be used for children in accordance with current legislation (including the requirement that children must normally use a child car seat until they're 12 years old or 135cm tall, whichever comes first).
- 6.2 Never transport individual children to an event. If only one child needs to be transported, you must have an accompanying adult with you.
- 6.3 It is inappropriate for adults to offer lifts to a child or young person outside their normal duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of the Head of School and has been agreed with the parents/carers.

## **7 Safety procedures**

- 7.1 Volunteers should familiarise themselves with the fire safety procedures and evacuation routes. In the event of the alarm sounding, all volunteers should leave via the nearest available fire exit and should not try to recover personal belongings or search for pupils. The main fire assembly points are clearly marked on each academy's playground. If you have any questions about the fire safety arrangements, then please speak to the school office.
- 7.2 Please sign in the visitors' book on your arrival and sign out when you leave. This helps us maintain an accurate list of the people on the school premises in the event of a fire.
- 7.3 Please obtain a visitor/volunteer's badge from the school office upon your arrival, regardless of how well known you are to the pupils. Those volunteer's with a valid DBS check will be given a badge with a green lanyard, those without will be given a badge with a red lanyard. Please remember to return the visitor/volunteer's badge before you leave.
- 7.4 Exercise reasonable care for the safety and welfare of yourself, pupils, members of staff or others on the school premises at all times.

## **8 Educational Trips and outings**

- 8.1 Volunteers who are accompanying pupils on educational trips or outings must be approved by the school and be subject to the normal checks and arrangements as outlined in the school's Educational Visits policy.
- 8.2 Volunteers should take particular care when supervising children and young people on trips and outings, where the setting may be less formal than the school environment. Adults remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries.

## 9 Medical issues

- 9.1 The class teacher you are supporting should inform you of any pupils who have severe medical needs, so that you are aware of any symptoms to look out for. All medical information about pupils is strictly confidential and therefore only very limited information will be provided.
- 9.2 If a pupil requires medical attention inform a member of staff immediately. They will get a qualified first aider to attend to the pupil. Volunteers should not administer first aid except in an emergency.

## 10 If you are unable to attend

- 10.1 If you are due to help in the school, but are unable to do so because of illness or personal circumstances, please inform the school by ringing or emailing the school office as soon as possible. This will help our teachers adjust their lesson plans if they know your support is unavailable.

## 11 Confidentiality

- 11.1 All information you may hear or see about a pupil is of a **confidential** nature. You should not discuss any pupil outside of school that you have been working with directly or indirectly. This includes speaking to other parents about their child or other pupils, speaking to family and friends and posting messages online about your experiences in the school, e.g. on Facebook or via email. If other parents approach you for information, always explain that you are not allowed to discuss school matters with them and ask them to speak with the class teacher or Head of School if they require further information.

## Breaches to this Code

If the Executive Headteacher or Head of School believes that any of the above guidance and expectations has been breached, then it is at their discretion to decide either to give a warning to the volunteer concerned or to instruct the individual to cease attending the school as a volunteer.

We want all the people who work within our school to maintain the high standards of personal conduct outlined in these guidelines whilst they are on our school site. If the Executive Headteacher or Head of School is concerned that events in your private life may affect the reputation of the school and/or impact on the effectiveness and safety of those who work and attend our school, they will instruct you to cease your support as a volunteer.

## Policies

Upon agreeing and signing this 'Code of Conduct', you also agree to reading the Health & Safety policy, Safeguarding policy, Sections of Keeping Children Safe in Education Government Policy (section recommended for volunteers) and any other relevant policies as determined by the school, which can all be found online.

## Safeguarding training

Volunteer helpers will be required to receive a Safeguarding Induction session from the Designated Safeguarding Lead within 6 weeks of signing this agreement. Those volunteers that require a DBS check and meet the 'frequency and intensity' test will also need to attend the Introduction to Safeguarding training as a statutory requirement every three years.

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### Agreement

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understood the contents of the 'Volunteers Code of Conduct'. I agree to abide by the procedures and expectations for volunteers that are set out in this code.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_