

# Esher Learning Trust

## Volunteers Policy

<b>Status:</b>	Approved
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	September 2021
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Trust
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	Esher Learning Trust: 11 December 2018

*The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.*

### Introduction

The Trust benefits greatly from developing well planned, active parental and community links through participation by adults in the activities of the school on a voluntary basis.

Esher Learning Trust believes that volunteers are a welcome resource for helping to raise children's achievement by supporting the work of teaching staff in delivering the curriculum to all pupils.

Volunteers bring with them a range of skills and experience which can enhance the learning opportunities of all children at Esher Learning Trust without encroaching on the professional teaching responsibilities of the class teacher.

### Aim

The aim of this policy is to establish expectations for both staff and volunteers regarding the work undertaken by volunteers and their conduct whilst in school.

### Categories of Volunteers

Volunteers could include any of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents, carers, guardians, elder siblings or Grandparents of Pupils
- Students on Work Experience or Placement
- University Students
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Staff family members

### Types of Activities

Activities in which volunteers may be engaged in could include any of the following:

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children
- Undertaking art and craft activities with small groups of children

- Working with children on computers
- Preparing resources for a future lesson
- Accompanying school visits
- Escorting children on local walks
- Running or assisting with an after school club
- Social activities such as running a disco
- Fund raising activities such as running a cake stall or Summer Fayre
- Interviewing children on a governor visit.

## **Becoming a Volunteer**

Anyone wishing to work as a volunteer who will be in school on a regular basis should request a Volunteer Application Pack from the School Office. This should be completed and returned with the necessary original Identity documents to facilitate an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Scheme) clearance check and for two references to be sought. Where the volunteering is a placement linked to a course of study the cost of the DBS will be met by the volunteer (or his/her college) unless a portable certificate is available.

When two satisfactory references, a disqualification by association declaration, if appropriate, and a clear enhanced DBS check has been received by the school, the class teacher will interview the potential volunteer and an appropriate placement will be agreed. This may be in a class which has no family connection to the applicant. A regular day and time will be agreed and the applicant will be expected to adhere to the school's Code of Conduct policy as well as other documents (detailed under 'school expectations').

An entry will be made on the school's Safeguarding Central Record.

The exceptions to this are:

- Work Experience Students or University Placements who apply via their educational establishment as it is expected that all necessary safeguarding checks have been carried out by the educational establishment before arriving at Esher Learning Trust. The student will be expected to adhere to the school's Code of Conduct.
- One-off volunteers i.e. assisting with a school walk, a fund raising event or a school visit will not require a DBS check but the volunteer will remain under the continuous supervision of a member of staff undertaking a regulated activity, usually the class teacher. Care should be taken to ensure these volunteers do not have sole responsibility for a group of children or provide any form of intimate care. See Appendix 3 Volunteer Risk Assessment.
- Volunteer drivers who would need to be accompanied by another member of staff and should provide to the Visit/Event Manager their current MOT, insurance and driving licence two days before the event.

If there is any doubt as to the level of checks required, a decision should be sought from the School Business Manager.

In special circumstances such as if a parent steps in to support a trip a short notice, volunteers or parents without a DBS enhanced check may help out if they have had a clear Children's Barred List check. One of the admin team will contact the relevant agency to obtain this once you have provided them with the necessary information.

Those who help out at external large group activities, i.e. where the whole class or year group are involved, for example, the school fair or walking with us to the carol service, do not need a DBS or Children's Barred List check, but must not have unsupervised access to children

### **Deployment of Volunteers**

Volunteers will be asked to support in classes/areas of the school where there is the most need of support. Parent volunteers should be aware that they will not always be able to work in their child's class as for some children this can be distracting for the child and can perhaps place the class teacher in a difficult situation. If this is the case, we may ask you to help in a different class or area of the school. This is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. It is helpful if you can explain to your child that you will be coming into school to help all of the children and that he/she will not always be able to work with you.

### **Safeguarding Induction**

All volunteers working regularly in school must undertake a short safeguarding induction to include health and safety before commencing their voluntary role and undertake Safeguarding and Child Protection Training, Prevent Training and Manual Handling Training and Health and Safety overview. This will be organised by the teachers approving the volunteer position.

### **Information on the Role of a Volunteer**

All volunteers should have access to this policy and the school's Staff Handbook which includes important information about the day to day routines of the school, a site map and advice on protocol and practices in school.

Volunteers should also have access to the following policies which are all available from the school's website or from the school office.

- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Guidance
- Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety and Mobile Phone Policy

### **Volunteers' Expectations from School**

Volunteers in school should expect to:

- be recognised for their valuable contribution to the learning experience for the children they support
- be assigned worthwhile tasks
- access any school policies or procedures that are relevant to their role
- access any training that is necessary for the success of their activities

### **School's Expectations from Volunteers**

School expects all volunteers to:

- Adhere to the name protocol for staff i.e. Miss Smith, Mr Brown.
- Adhere to the school's Dress Code.
- Adhere to the school's Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Data Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Online Safety and Mobile Phone Policy (where appropriate)

- Read and work within the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance (Latest version).
- Be role models for the children they work with i.e. consider the language they use, only walk in school, no smoking or swearing and dress appropriately.
- Refer any behavioural or safeguarding concerns to the class teacher.
- Commit to a regular window of time to allow teachers to plan activities to include the volunteer
- Advise school as soon as possible when it is not possible to attend.
- Immediately disclose any information that may influence the DBS status.

### **Security**

All volunteers must sign in and out of the visitors' book and wear a visitor badge for the duration of their volunteering session.

### **Complaints Procedure**

Any complaints made by a volunteer or about a volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher or Business Manager/Business Lead/Office Manager for investigation.

The Headteacher (or School Business Manager/ Business Lead/Office Manager in his / her absence) reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak with a volunteer about the complaint or behaviour and seek reassurance it will not be repeated
- Offer an alternative placement or activity for a volunteer
- Inform the volunteer that the placement has been withdrawn.

**Appendix 1**  
**School Volunteer Request Form**

Volunteer Name:	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email Address:	
If a parent of a child/ren in the school, please give names and classes:	
If you are a student, please enter your educational establishment and address:	
Tutors Name:	Contact Tel number:
Have you read the School Volunteer Policy?	
Are you subscribed to the DBS Update Service? An original copy will need to be shown to the Front Office. OR are you willing to complete an online DBS check?	
Which area/s of the school would you prefer to support?	
Do you have any specific skills/strength that could be utilised?	
Are there any activities that you cannot support? Please give details.	
When are you available to support in school? Please give days and times.	
Referee 1 Name: Company: Email address: Capacity in which you know them:	Referee 2 Name: Company: Email address: Capacity in which you know them:

**Appendix 2**  
**VOLUNTEER IN SCHOOL PROTOCOL**

Please read and sign the document below to confirm your agreement with the following school expectations as a volunteer:

As a school we agree to:

- Explain your tasks/jobs carefully so that you are clear about what we would like you to do with the children
- Share the school behaviour and ethos policy with you to help you understand how we manage behaviour
- Ensure that the children you work with behave and work well
- Treat you with the highest respect and care
- Share relevant information about the children you are working with
- Let you know in advance the overall plan for the day and let you know if this changes!
- Treat anything you tell us with confidentiality

We agree not to ask you to:

- Deal with difficult or challenging behaviour
- Carry out a task that you feel unprepared to complete

Signed:..... Date: .....  
Class Teacher/Volunteer Co-ordinator/Headteacher

Volunteer Helper: ..... (Printed Name)

As a volunteer helper I agree to:

- Use the school behaviour and ethos policy and inform the teacher if I see any inappropriate behaviour
- Inform the teacher/Designated Teacher if I observe anything that concerns me in school
- Treat any information with total confidentiality
- Inform the school if I am unable to come into school for any reason by 8.30am in the morning
- Respect and listen to the guidance of the teacher at all times
- Complete the appropriate DBS/Children's Barred List safeguarding checks
- Disclose any criminal allegations to the Headteacher prior to starting as a volunteer helper

I agree not to:

- Look at or compare children's work, records or staff records
- Share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff team

Signed:..... Date: .....

## Esher Learning Trust - Risk Assessment for Volunteer DBS Check

Use this template to determine whether a volunteer who is not in 'regulated activity' should have an enhanced DBS without barred list check.

The orange text provides guidance to help you to complete the risk assessment.

This risk assessment is based on [paragraph 164 of Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

**Name of volunteer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Is the volunteer in 'regulated activity'?** \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, an enhanced DBS **with** barred list check is required. If no, an enhanced DBS **with** barred list check is not required, however you may obtain an enhanced DBS **without** barred list.

Area to consider	Notes	Level of risk
How will the volunteer be working with children?	<p><b>Consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ages of the children</li> <li>• The number of children that the individual is working with</li> <li>• How vulnerable the children are</li> <li>• The nature of the work</li> <li>• How they will be supervised?</li> </ul>	E.g. high level of risk may occur if little is known about the volunteer, no references can be provided and the individual will be working with vulnerable children
What is known about the volunteer?	What formal or informal information do you have about the volunteer? E.g. information from staff, parents and other volunteers.	

Are there any referees that can advise on suitability if the volunteer has other employment or voluntary work?	<p>It is good practice to seek references for volunteers.</p> <p>If the volunteer is unable to provide employer references, ask for a character reference from a person of standing in the community such as a doctor or priest.</p> <p>If a prospective volunteer is very reluctant to provide references, this may raise questions about their suitability.</p>	
Is the role eligible for an enhanced DBS?	There are certain circumstances where you may need to obtain an enhanced DBS without barred list check for volunteers who are not in 'regulated activity'. This is set out in <a href="#">DBS workforce guidance</a> .	

<b>Outcome</b>
Summarise the outcome of the risk assessment, explaining whether an enhanced DBS is needed and the reasons for your decision.

*This KeyDoc is featured in our article 'Volunteers: DBS checks and supervision'. To read the article, visit <https://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com> and enter the article title in the search box.*