Safeguarding - Volunteer Policy

Low Ash Primary School

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1. Rationale

At Low Ash we recognise that there are situations in which volunteers can make an appropriate and significant contribution to the work and services of the school. The contribution of volunteers to the work of the school is especially valued and respected. We believe that by providing voluntary opportunities, volunteers will gain a range of skills and work experience. They will develop confidence and motivation to try different things and benefit the community they serve. The policy defines the term and sets out the principles, practices and procedures which will be followed in the selection, management and supervision of volunteers. The policy also sets out how Low Ash intends to support its volunteers.

Definition

Volunteers may be described as individuals who put their experience, knowledge and skills to help an organisation, free of charge, with the primary aim of bringing some benefit to the local community. Individuals may also volunteer to develop their own skills and experience to enhance their employment opportunity.

2. Types of volunteers

There are different types of volunteers including:

- **Occasional volunteers**

These are people who volunteer at events such as an educational visit or help with particular projects or students on work placements. They volunteer occasionally, perhaps a few times a year.

- **Regular volunteers**

These are people who take on a particular task or role, on an ongoing basis. Regular volunteers include those working within classrooms, Friends of Low Ash or volunteers working on a particular project over a sustained period of time.

- **Governor volunteers**

These people hold positions of responsibility and are designated members of the school's Governing Body. Local authority governors are appointed by the local authority. Community governors are appointed by the governing body. Parent governors are elected by parents/carers of pupils at the school. Staff governors are elected by members of staff at the school.

- Regulated Activity

From 1 September 2026 the supervision exemption has been removed. Volunteers who teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children on more than three days in any 30-day period, or undertake overnight activities, are likely to be undertaking regulated activity even when supervised.

3. Becoming a volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one-off event such as a school visit or on a more regular basis, e.g. hearing pupils read, usually approaches the class teacher, headteacher, senior member of staff directly. All volunteer requests should be

directed to the school's volunteer coordinator (2026-2027 this is Miss J Briggs). It is the school's decision whether they have capacity to take on volunteers and this will depend on the time of year, the number of volunteers we already have in school and the potential impact on the children.

Volunteers should complete the Volunteer Application Form (see Appendix 1), with a covering letter with their contact details, types of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help.

The schools volunteer coordinator will review the request and discuss, if appropriate with the senior leadership team to determine whether the request can be accommodated.

The school will assess whether a volunteer is undertaking regulated activity. Volunteers undertaking regulated activity must obtain an Enhanced DBS Check with Children's Barred List information before commencing their role.. The school will make the necessary arrangements to apply for the DBS check.

The school will also request 2 references. All safeguarding checks will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

Upon completing all necessary checks the school will issue the volunteer with a Volunteer Agreement, see Appendix 2. This Agreement will be kept in the Volunteer file in the main school office. They will also conduct an induction and provide the volunteer with the Volunteer/Work Experience Induction Booklet.

The school's coordinator will check with the School's Business Manager to ensure that all the appropriate checks have been completed before a start date for the volunteer is agreed.

4. Induction, information and training

Regular volunteers will receive appropriate induction, which will include information on the aims and objectives of the school, information on key policies and practical guidance on the code of conduct for volunteers.

Basic training in child protection and safeguarding awareness will form part of the induction. Additional information will be provided to help the volunteer in their work. The school will strive to make the information sessions accessible and relevant to the volunteer's needs. Volunteers may also have the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills through training provided at appropriate times and within the constraints of the school's budget.

Occasional volunteers will be given a copy of the visitor safeguarding information guidance sheet.

Safeguarding Training

All volunteers will receive safeguarding induction appropriate to their role, including child protection, online safety, reporting procedures, low-level concerns, staff conduct expectations and contact details for the DSL and Deputy DSLs.

Online Safety

Volunteers must comply with the school's Online Safety, ICT Acceptable Use and Social Media policies. Any online safeguarding concern must be reported immediately.

Allegations and Low-Level Concerns

Volunteers must report safeguarding concerns about children, allegations against adults and low-level concerns in accordance with school procedures.

5. Support and supervision

Volunteers will be supported and supervised by a designated member of staff, who will be allocated at the induction period. This is most likely to be a class teacher, key stage leader or the student mentor at the school. This person will provide the volunteer with supervision, in absence of an enhanced DBS check, where the volunteer will receive feedback on their work, have the opportunity to discuss future work and a chance to discuss other issues at regular intervals. This supervision will take place in a supportive and confidential environment. The volunteer coordinator may also meet or visit to ensure things are operating smoothly.

6. Health, safety and wellbeing

The school will, as far as is practical, care for the health, safety and welfare of its volunteers. Volunteers will receive clear information regarding health and safety procedures and receive appropriate support. Volunteers are expected to follow the Health and Safety and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies and ensure they take reasonable care of those in their care, reporting concerns to their supervisor or a 'Named Person' for child protection.

7. Training and Development

Low Ash is committed to offering volunteers opportunities for training relevant to their volunteer work. It is also committed to offering opportunities for professional and personal development. The school has a strong tradition of offering work placements for volunteers.

8. Absence

Volunteers are expected to telephone and inform their supervisor or the office, prior to their start time, so that any necessary changes to arrangements can be organised.

9. Voluntary work and benefits

Most benefits are not affected by unpaid voluntary work. If you are receiving benefit for which you are required for work, you must still be willing and able to prove your availability for work.

The main benefit which could be affected by volunteering is Incapacity Benefit. The DWP will want to know what kind of voluntary work you will be doing and what is involved.

10. Volunteer Code of Conduct

As a Low Ash volunteer, everyone is expected to conform to high standards of behaviour and conduct whilst carrying out their duties.

Low Ash Primary School expects that volunteers will:

- Respect other volunteers, students, parents/carers and children and make them feel welcomed and valued.
- Be approachable and pleasant and show sensitivity towards others.

- Dress and behave in a manner which promotes healthy and safe working practices and is mindful and respectful of the cultural diversity of our local community.
- Reports any concerns to their supervisor and/or the 'Named Person' for child protection.
- Maintain the confidentiality of personal information at all times.

All volunteers should be aware how their behaviour can affect both colleagues and service users. Everyone has the responsibility to avoid becoming involved in situations that could bring the school into disrepute.

11. Acceptable use of ICT, E-Safety and Social Media Policies

These policies exist to safeguard and promote the proper use of the school's internet and email facilities. Volunteers are responsible for using these facilities in an efficient, effective, ethical and lawful manner. Use of the internet and emails may be monitored at any time for legitimate business reasons. Volunteers who do not adhere to the above policies will be asked to leave.

12. Equal Opportunities

The school recognises that the activity of volunteering can provide an individual with experience and opportunities for self and career development. In accordance with school's Equality and Diversity Policy, volunteer placements will therefore be open to individuals irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age or marital status. Where a prospective volunteer demonstrates hostility to, or a clear lack of support for equal opportunities, she/he will be deemed automatically unsuitable for a volunteer position here. All volunteers are required to make a commitment to this policy. A copy can be given on request.

13. Working Hours

The hours of work will be discussed and mutually agreed between the volunteer and the supervisor or coordinator. The volunteer must be committed and adhere to the voluntary placement and allocated working hours.

14. Lunch Breaks

Volunteers who work more than 6 hours a day must take at least half an hour lunch break (with the exception of school trips where lunch is eaten with pupils). Tea and coffee are provided free for volunteers.

15. Termination of agreement

We would like regular volunteers to commit to at least 3 months of volunteering and give their full commitment during this period. The voluntary opportunity may be extended if considered by the volunteer coordinator and the volunteer supervisor. There is also the opportunity to terminate the agreement by mutual consent. The headteacher reserves the right to terminate an agreement if the volunteer does not adhere to the rules, policies and practices of the school

16. Child Protection and Safeguarding

Safeguarding is our priority and we follow the safer recruitment guidelines to ensure that we in school are committed to safeguarding pupils, young people and vulnerable

adults and expects its volunteers to share that commitment. The process of recruitment of volunteers mirrors the safer recruitment of paid staff to ensure the most suitable adults for our school. A list of volunteers will be kept in the main school office. This will be kept up to date and is the responsibility of the School Business Manager.

All regular volunteers will be expected to complete an enhanced DBS check, organised by the school. No volunteer will be allowed unsupervised access to children before the DBS check has been completed. Prospective volunteers are required to notify the headteacher of any criminal convictions or cautions before putting themselves forward as a volunteer.

All volunteers have the responsibility to report any concern that they may have regarding child protection to the volunteer coordinator or designated Named Person. It is not the role for the volunteer to investigate concerns. The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy explains the guidelines and procedures to follow regarding any suspicions. A copy of this policy is available on request.

17. Disciplinary Procedures

All volunteers are expected to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. Volunteers should be aware that any allegations regarding mistreatment of pupils will be addressed following the same standard procedures for allegations made against staff.

18. Grievance Procedures

The purpose of the procedure is first to allow the volunteer to freely express a complaint or matter of concern and then, where appropriate, to try and resolve any issue raised by means of a discussion and negotiation or, if necessary, counselling or training. If a volunteer feels aggrieved by any matter which arises during voluntary work, this should first be raised with the volunteer supervisor or coordinator. If still not resolved, then it can be taken to a senior member of staff. This will normally be done verbally at each stage, and you are entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee.

If you are unable to achieve satisfaction by this procedure, the final decision on action will be taken by the headteacher, followed by the Grievance Committee of the Governing Body.

The school's Grievance Procedure explains clearly the principles and protocol followed when a Grievance has taken place. A copy of this is available upon request.

Signed …… Chair of Governors

Appendix 1

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM – FOR NEW VOLUNTEER

PLEASE NOTE ALL VOLUNTEERS WILL BE SUBJECT TO REFERENCE REQUESTS AND A DBS CHECK.

Name of Volunteer:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Home phone:

Mobile:

Email address:

Why do you want to volunteer at Low Ash?

What activities/areas of the school's work would you like to help with?

Are there any particular age groups/classes you would like to work with?

Do you have any children attending our school? Yes/No

Do you have any disabilities/other needs we need to take into account or adjustments we need to make to allow you to work as a Volunteer in School? (Please give details)

Have you ever been a teacher in a school?

Please provide details of two people who can provide professional/character references for you:

Name:

Address:

Phone number: Email address:

How do they know you and for how long?

Name:

Address:

Phone number: Email address:

How do they know you and for how long?

Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Application Form. Please hand it to the School Office, marked for the attention of the Head teacher or email it to office@lowash.bradford.sch.uk . Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we will be in touch as soon as possible

Appendix 3

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Name:

Volunteering Class:

Person responsible for volunteer in school:

Date Risk Assessment Completed:

Date Volunteer Disqualification Declaration Signed (Early Years):

Date DBS (standard/enhanced):

Picture Attached Y/N

Volunteer has been given:-

- Volunteer Information Booklet
- 'Keeping children safe in education'
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- School Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Statement
- Use of Social Media Policy
- Designated Safeguarding Leads

Volunteer has been informed about:-

Policies available on the website-

- Confidentiality Protocol
- Health & Safety
- Induction Policy for Staff, Governors and Volunteers
- Safeguarding Policies

Procedures for-

- Child Protection – Named Persons
- Fire Alarm Procedures
- Signing in /Absence Procedure
- Health & Safety

I am confirming that I have received the above documents/information and that I understand the procedures explained in this induction.

Signed: **Date:**

I am confirming that I have now read the documents/information given to me on

Signed: **Date:**