

Volunteer Policy

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1. Definitions

- 1.1 **Trust** means the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust.
- 1.2 **DEMAT** means the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust.
- 1.3 **Academy** means a constituent academy of DEMAT.
- 1.4 **Central Team** means staff who are not employed within an academy.
- 1.5 **Volunteer** means any person engaged in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party and not a close relative.
- 1.6 **Headteacher** means Leader of an academy, in any academy that has an Executive Headteacher, it means Executive Headteacher. The Headteacher may delegate responsibility to another appropriate Line Manager.
- 1.7 **'Head of'** means a Leader within the Central Team. The 'Head of' may delegate responsibility to another appropriate Line Manager.
- 1.8 **Staff** means any person employed by DEMAT, temporarily or permanently.
- 1.9 **Employee** means any person employed by DEMAT, temporarily or permanently.
- 1.10 **Trust Safeguarding Lead** means the named person in the Trust.

2. Application of this Policy

The policy is applicable to all volunteers and governors supporting DEMAT.

The above definitions are included for reference purposes for both academy and central team staff to enable clarity and transparency when applying this policy.

3. Relationship with DEMAT Values

The application of this policy must be applied at all times in a way that reflects the values of DEMAT and our Christian Ethos:

Love – We engender love and tolerance between and for our staff, pupils and others to foster an inspiring atmosphere of mutual support.

Community – We are committed to ensuring our schools are a living part of the community and contribute positively to its needs.

Respect – We do everything to provide a caring, safe and secure place for our staff and pupils to be happy and respected in our schools so they may achieve their potential.

Trust – We acknowledge accountability and responsibility for our actions and ensure that we encourage each other to make brave decisions and then learn from any mistakes.

Ambition – We are determined that our schools offer a place for the joy of learning, enabling those of all abilities to thrive and go on to lead rewarding lives

4. Associated Policies and Documents

This Policy/Procedure should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and the following DEMAT Policies/Procedures:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use of Technology Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Privacy Notice for Applicants to Staff and Voluntary Roles

5. Version control

| No. | Status of document/changes | Prepared by | Reviewed by | Approved by | Date of approval | Review Date |
|-----|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1. | New Policy | SC | HRo | AB | 9 Sept 25 | 1 Sept 26 |

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis.

For all questions in relation to this policy please contact the HR Team on hrteam@demat.org.uk

6. Purpose and Scope

6.1 We believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to our academies and enrich our pupil's experience through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

6.2 The purpose of the DEMAT volunteer policy is to set out the approach DEMAT academies should use when recruiting and appointing volunteers to:

- Establish a robust and effective culture of safeguarding, attract the most suitable volunteers and identify and deter applicants who are otherwise unsuitable to work with pupils.

- Encourage the wider community to engage with the academy and the Trust thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion.
- Ensure that volunteers support the academy's vision and values and adhere to our policies.
- Ensure clear guidelines are followed for the fair recruitment and selection of volunteers.
- Provide clear expectations and guidelines for undertaking the role(s) via induction, the onboarding processes and ongoing mandatory training
- At all times ensure that the highest standard of safeguarding is maintained for our pupils.

6.3 The policy relates to the following categories of volunteers (this is not exhaustive):

- Parents/carers/guardians who support on a regular basis or a one-off occasion
- Governors
- Members of the public
- Ex-staff members
- Members of the local Parent Association

6.4 Categories of students (this is not exhaustive) who are classed as volunteers:

- Under 16 secondary school pupils on a work experience placement
- Post-16 students on a short-term one-off placement
- Post-16 childcare or teaching students on a long-term placement

6.5 The Headteacher/Line Manager has overall responsibility for supporting and managing the volunteer, but this may be delegated to an appropriate Line Manager.

7. Policy Statement

7.1 We believe volunteering can be a positive experience for all and of mutual benefit to both the Trust and the volunteer. To achieve this, we will ensure we offer worthwhile volunteering opportunities and the chance to gain new skills and experiences.

7.2 We are committed to encouraging a safe and supportive environment for all our volunteers and staff. This can only happen when everyone is committed to working together effectively and collaboratively.

7.3 Safeguarding our children is of paramount importance and the Trust will only recruit volunteers who share our commitment to child protection.

7.4 The recruitment and selection process of volunteers follows guidelines for best practice, safer recruitment and avoids unfair discrimination. The Trust will ensure that volunteers are treated fairly and equally in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy and our Recruitment and Selection Policy.

7.5 The Trust recognises it is important to develop and promote policies and systems to ensure that our pupils, staff and anyone associated with our Trust are not unlawfully discriminated against. We encourage a commitment to equality, diversity and fair treatment of all. We have considered the impact of this policy, and the expected standards of behaviour contained within it on those individuals with a protected characteristic(s).

8. Volunteering Activities

8.1 There are a variety of activities which may be undertaken by a volunteer including but not limited to:

- Supporting in the classroom
- Supporting on trips
- Running or supporting academy-based events before/during/after-school.
- Acting in the capacity of a school governor

8.2 Where a student volunteer is appointed, activities may include:

- Observing and assisting another designated member of staff in regulated activity.
- Students with full safer recruitment checks and competency for undertaking regulated activity may be involved in:
 - Planning and carrying out lessons or activities as part of their course.
 - Working with small groups of children to give additional support
 - Any other role covered in their course that their mentor is satisfied that they are competent to carry out

8.3 In all circumstances, a volunteer should not replace the role of a paid employee in the school.

9. Application Process

9.1 The latest volunteering opportunities will be advertised on the DEMAT recruitment portal My New Term at <https://mynewterm.com/home>.

9.2 When applying for a volunteering role the individual should register their details on My New Term and complete all sections of the application form.

10. Appointment of Volunteers

10.1 DEMAT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work. By adopting fair and consistent recruitment practices, this will ensure we recruit an effective workforce that will add value across the Trust.

- 10.2 The recruitment of all volunteers must be undertaken by the Executive Head/Headteacher, 'Head of', or other delegated leader. This person must be up to date with their safer recruitment training. A formal recruitment process, in line with the processes required for staff will be followed in order to promote the safety of our pupils.
- 10.3 Each volunteer role will first be assessed by the Headteacher/'Head of' to decide on whether the role must be supervised or not. Extreme care must be taken to ensure that supervision is carried out by a person who is in regulated activity to children, in line with statutory requirements.
- 10.4 All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an application form, two satisfactory references, completion of a criminal declaration form and an enhanced DBS check and where applicable a children's barred list check (see Appendix 1 for further guidance).
- 10.5 The Headteacher or delegated senior member of staff will conduct an informal interview with the volunteer to establish their motivation for volunteering and ask appropriate safeguarding questions.
- 10.6 An individual file will be created for each volunteer and securely stored by the academy or if in the central team by the relevant team. Only information that is relevant will be kept on file.
- 10.7 If undertaking a role in school, all volunteers must be entered and maintained on the school's Single Central Record.

11. Induction and Training

- 11.1 All volunteers must read and sign to confirm they understand our mandatory policies and attend relevant training/induction as required.
- 11.2 The induction must be undertaken before the volunteer begins their role and include: -
 - Safeguarding training including the school's safeguarding procedures
 - Sharing the following policies, and explaining how they are expected to be put in place:
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - ICT Acceptable Use of Technology Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Code of Conduct Policy
 - Privacy Notice
 - Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- 11.3 A record of all training undertaken by volunteers must be maintained by the school.

12. Safeguarding

12.1 Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, and our volunteers must share our commitment to child protection.

12.2 To ensure we are upholding our responsibility to keep our pupils safe, we will: -

- Conduct enhanced DBS checks with a barred list check on volunteers who:
 - Work 1-on-1 with pupils unsupervised.
 - Work with groups of pupils unsupervised.
 - Supervise or accompany groups of pupils on overnight residential visits.
- Where a Positive DBS check is returned with unspent and spent convictions listed, the Headteacher and School Hub Director (or Head of, if the volunteer is in the Central Team) will complete a Positive DBS Disclosure Form authorised by the Trust Safeguarding Lead. They should assess whether it is acceptable to continue with the volunteering role, whether the activities should be changed, or whether it is in the best interests for all concerned to no longer act as a volunteer.
- Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised and are never left alone with pupils.

12.3 We cannot legally carry out a DBS check on a child under the age of 16 who is volunteering in any capacity. Therefore, any child that is volunteering must always be under an appropriate level of supervision and conduct a risk assessment to consider any potential safeguarding issues.

13. Confidentiality

13.1 Information about pupils, parents and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues related to pupils, parents or staff with those outside of the organisation. Information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis with those inside the organisation.

13.2 If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff. They shouldn't discuss them with pupils or parents. This doesn't prevent volunteers from adhering to our Safeguarding Policy (with regard to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures).

13.4 If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

13.5 If concerns are related to whistleblowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our Whistle-blowing policy.

14 Conduct of Volunteers

14.1 Each time a volunteer attends the school they must sign in and out of the premises at the start and end of each session in accordance with the school's visitor process.

- 14.2 Volunteers will be deployed throughout the school or team depending on where there is need and in line with agreement from the Headteacher.
- 14.3 Volunteers are always expected to abide with the Volunteers Policy, The Code of Conduct and with the school's policies and procedures.
- 14.4 An annual review of the individual's suitability to volunteer will be conducted by the Headteacher or if in the Central team by the 'Head of'. This will be done by reviewing the Single Central Record and the volunteer completing a Self-Declaration and Disclosure Form.
- 14.5 If an individual doesn't volunteer for a period of longer than 3 months, then they will be removed from the school's volunteer single central record. With the school's approval, the volunteer can request to re-start their duties, which will involve all vetting checks being re-done, including DBS.

15. Expenses

- 15.1 Volunteers may apply for reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred through carrying out volunteering activities in line with our Expenses Policy.

16. Managing Concerns

- 16.1 The Trust promotes positive working relationships and is committed to providing a working environment where volunteers are treated with dignity, fairness and respect.
- 16.2 The Trust recognises that occasionally an individual may have a problem, concern or complaint regarding their working environment or another volunteer or employee.
- 16.3 Where a complaint or concern is raised, it is preferable for this to be resolved informally between the individual and the line manager or the person who the complaint is made against, where possible.
- 16.4 In the event that a complaint or concern cannot be resolved informally, the volunteer should raise the issue formally in writing with the appropriate Headteacher/Line Manager. If the concern is about the Headteacher or 'Head of', the concerns should be sent to the HR Team.
- 16.5 All complaints and concerns will be handled fairly, and a level of investigation will be undertaken before coming to a decision regarding the outcome of the complaint.

17. Absences

- 17.1 Volunteers are asked to inform the school as soon as possible if they are unable to attend when expected. If they are called away in the event of an emergency while volunteering, they should let the class teacher, school office or Headteacher/ Head of know before leaving the premises and sign out.

18. Ending the Volunteer Agreement

- 18.1 We recognise volunteers may wish to leave their roles for a wide variety of reasons. Equally, there may also be times when we need to end a volunteer role.

- 18.2 Where possible, volunteers should provide notice to the Headteacher/'Head of' advising they would like to leave to enable the academy to put in place any support required because of the volunteer leaving.
- 18.3 There may also be times when the Trust needs to end a volunteering role. The Headteacher/'Head of' reserves the right to terminate a volunteer placement, at any time. In cases where the role is ended due to conduct it may be done so without notice.

APPENDIX 1

FLOWCHART – CHOOSING THE RIGHT DBS CHECK

Question 1:

Will the person have responsibility for intimate care of a child, or will they be accompanying a residential trip?

YES

NO

Apply for an **enhanced DBS with Children's Barred List Check**. Ensure the person has safeguarding induction training, receives a copy of all relevant policies, and is appropriately trained and supported to do their role.

Question 2:

Will the person be expected to: -

- a. Teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, provide advice on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, or drive children;
- b. work in the above role unsupervised;
- c. work in the above role weekly, or 4 days over a 30-day period?

YES

NO

(N.B. must be yes to all)
apply for an **enhanced DBS with Children's Barred List Check**. Ensure the person has safeguarding induction training, receives a copy of all relevant policies, and is appropriately trained and supported to do their role.

Apply for an **enhanced DBS**, but do **not** request a Children's Barred List check. Complete the *risk assessment overleaf* to detail how the person will be supervised when they are on site. Ensure the person has safeguarding induction training, receives a copy of all relevant policies, and is appropriately trained and supported to do their role.

| Name | | Role | |
|------|--|------|--|
|------|--|------|--|

| Level of DBS required (please circle) | Enhanced DBS | Enhanced DBS with Children's Barred List check |
|--|--------------|---|
|--|--------------|---|

APPENDIX 2 – Volunteer Recruitment Flowchart



APPENDIX 3 – Volunteer Induction Form

| | | |
|--|--------------------|-----------|
| Volunteer Name: | | |
| Academy: | | |
| Manager conducting meeting: | Start Date: | |
| The following should be completed prior to or on the volunteer's start date. | | |
| | YES | NO |
| Expectations of the role | | |
| Do you understand the requirements of the role and expectations of the school? | | |
| Is there anything you wish to clarify? Comment: | | |
| Were you provided with a copy of your job description? | | |
| Health and Safety | | |
| Have you read the Trust Health & Safety Policy? Health & Safety Policy | | |
| Do you understand the health and safety rules and understand your responsibilities? Comments: | | |
| Policies | | |
| Have you read the Trust Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy to read? Code of Conduct Whistleblowing Policy | | |
| Have you read the relevant policies, and do you understand your responsibilities in relation to these? Comments: | | |
| Safeguarding | | |
| Have you read part 1 of KCSIE and do you understand the safeguarding and reporting rules and understand your responsibilities around this? | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Comments: Keeping children safe in education 2024 - Part one | | |
| Behaviour Policy | | |
| Have you read the Behaviour Policy | | |
| Privacy / Data Protection | | |
| Have you read the Privacy Notice for Applicants to Staff or Voluntary Roles? Privacy notice for applicants to staff or voluntary roles | | |
| ICT | | |
| Have you read the ICT Acceptable Use Policy: Volunteers and Visitors? Acceptable use policy | | |

We would value any other comments you have about joining DEMAT. They will help us improve the process in future.

Volunteer Signature..... Manager Signature: