



PRINCE REGENT
TRUST

Volunteer Policy

Prepared by:	HR Alchemy
Adopted by PRST Trust Board:	July 2024
Next review date:	July 2026

How we use volunteers

A volunteer will not be an employee of the Trust. He or she will not be engaged on a contract of employment nor on any type of contract for services. The engagement will be binding in honour only, there being no legal agreement between the organisation and the volunteer.

At the Trust schools, volunteers may:

- Hear children read
- Accompany on school visits
- Work with individual children
- Work with small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or Art
- Assist with national government initiatives

This is not an exhaustive list.

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the local governing body
- Parents
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Friends of the school/members of the PTA

This is not an exhaustive list.

Members of the local governing body working at the school in their capacity as governors (for instance, conducting school monitoring visits or attending meetings), are not covered by this policy. They are covered by the Trust's Governor School Visits Policy.

Application Process

Volunteers are appointed by the individual schools. The volunteer applicant must complete a simple application form which gives permission to obtain references and a Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) check.

Appointment of volunteers

The experience, qualities, skills and needs of any volunteer will be considered when deciding about the recruitment of a volunteer in the school. Please note, there is no guarantee that a volunteer will



be found an immediate placement or any placement at all elsewhere. The placement should be mutually beneficial to the school and the volunteer.

Intake of new volunteers can take up to six weeks and is dependent on the candidate and available spaces within the school.

All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check (if appropriate), satisfactory references and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training.

Enhanced DBS checks for volunteers working in the school through other organisations will be conducted by the relevant organisation, if needed. The school will ask for written confirmation that enhanced DBS checks have been carried out before a volunteer is allowed to start work at the school.

Each school will ensure that volunteers are given suitable induction training at the beginning of their placement. The volunteer will be given a named contact person who will review the work undertaken by the volunteer and will assist the volunteer generally and particularly in the event of any problems occurring. Regular supervision of the volunteer will be provided as appropriate to the task undertaken and the needs of the volunteer. The volunteer's role, including status with pupils, will be made clear. Volunteers will be given opportunities to contribute their ideas and opinions about the work that they are engaged in. Volunteers will be given guidelines/training regarding child protection procedures.

The Headteacher reserves the right to terminate a volunteer placement with immediate effect at any time.

Safeguarding children and child protection

Volunteers will be provided with safeguarding information as determined by the governing board, using a proportional, risk-based approach.

Depending on the level of interaction with the pupil, it may be necessary to obtain a DBS certificate.

The school **is** required to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate if:

- The volunteer intends to carry out activity for the school and it gives the opportunity for **unsupervised** contact with pupils.

The school **is not** required to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate if:

- The volunteer intends to carry out activity for the school and it gives the opportunity for **supervised** contact with pupils.

For volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have the opportunity to come into contact with pupils on a regular basis, it is at the discretion of the school to decide whether or not a DBS check is required.

The school will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information, for any volunteer who is new to working in regulated activity.

The school will not obtain barred list information for any volunteer who does not engage in regulated activity. The DBS cannot provide barred list information on any person, including volunteers, who are not in, or seeking to enter into, regulated activity.

The school may decide to conduct a repeat DBS check on any volunteer of whom they hold concerns about.



The school wants to ensure that activities are planned properly and safely, and that volunteers are informed of these plans. We strive to ensure that volunteers have access to a member of school staff, should they wish to discuss difficulties or report on issues that may arise.

All staff, visitors and volunteers are required to be identified and located at all times. For this reason, the following process will be adhered to:

- Sign in and out of the building at the office/reception
- Visitor's badge worn at all times
- A designated member of staff – the Headteacher – is made aware of where the volunteer is working

All staff and volunteers will remain alert to, and when it comes to their attention report to the LA, the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- Has SEND.
- Is a young carer.
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement.
- Is frequently missing or goes missing from care or home.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalized or exploited.
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges, such as drug and alcohol misuse.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is a privately fostered child.

Risk assessments

The school will undertake a risk assessment, using professional judgement and experience when deciding whether an enhanced DBS check is required for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity. The school will record the details of the risk assessment and store the details in the school office.

The following factors will be taken into consideration when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS certificate:

- The nature of the work with the pupils
- The school's knowledge of the volunteer, including any formal or informal information offered by staff and parents
- Whether the volunteer has any other employment or voluntary activities, and where references can advise of their suitability
- Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check



Disqualification under the Childcare Act

Any individual who is classed as being disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) regulations 2018 and section 25 of the Childcare Act 2006, is unable to provide any means of childcare provision.

Any volunteer who is directly concerned with the management of childcare provision, or who works with children on a regular basis, whether supervised or not, is covered by these regulations and may be disqualified.

An individual will be classed as disqualified if:

- They have been reported on the DBS Children's Barred List.
- They have been noted as committing certain violent and sexual offences against children and adults.
- They have been refused any provision relating to childcare, or have been prohibited from private fostering.
- They have received certain orders in relation to the care of children.

The school will not employ any volunteer who is classified as being disqualified under the above regulations.

When gathering information to make decisions, the school will ensure that they act proportionately in order to minimise any intrusion into an individual's private life. The UK GDPR does not prevent an employer from asking questions relating to the suitability of the individual employed on safeguarding grounds.

Supervision

If a volunteer is required to be supervised when undertaking an activity, who would otherwise be in regulated activity if not supervised, the school will ensure that:

- There is supervision by an individual who is in regulated activity.
- The supervision is regular and day-to-day.
- The supervision is reasonable enough within the circumstances to ensure the protection of the pupils.

When determining what supervision is reasonable so that the volunteer would not be in regulated activity, the school will take the following factors into consideration:

- The ages of the pupils, including whether there is a large gap in their ages
- The number of pupils that the individual is working with
- Whether or not there are other staff members present during the activity
- The nature of the volunteer's work and the opportunity for contact with pupils
- How vulnerable the pupils are
- How many staff members would be supervised by each member of supervising staff



Allegations of abuse

Any allegations of abuse, whereby a member of staff is accused of abusing a pupil, will be reported to the Headteacher.

Should the allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be brought to the attention of the chair of governors immediately.

In any case in which LA children's social care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children are in need of protection, the Headteacher and chair of governors will take account of any relevant information obtained in the course of those enquiries when considering disciplinary action.

If there is no cause to suspect that any significant harm is an issue, but a criminal offence might have been committed, the designated officer (DO) will immediately inform the police and convene a discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed.

The DO will regularly monitor the progress of all cases, either by reviewing strategy meetings, or by liaising with the police and/or children's social work services colleagues or the school, as appropriate.

Clear, comprehensive records of all allegations are kept even if disciplinary action is not taken or proven.

Confidentiality is maintained whenever an allegation is made; however, there may be a need to share information with relevant agencies on a need-to-know basis.

Allegations of abuse made against volunteers will be dealt with in accordance with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

Health and safety

All volunteers will be required to read the Health and Safety Policy, prior to them undertaking any activity on behalf of the school.

All volunteers will ensure that they are familiar with emergency procedures, e.g. evacuation, and of any health and safety aspects relating to the activity they will be undertaking, e.g. whilst in a cookery class.

If a volunteer notices any potential hazard which may put another individual at risk of harm, they will report this immediately to the class teacher or a senior member of staff.

Absence

Volunteers are required to inform the school office by 08.00am if they are unable to attend at the agreed time.

Failure to inform the school office on more than 3 instances may result in the volunteer being unable to attend the school on any further occasions.

If a volunteer is called away in the event of an emergency while volunteering, they will inform the class teacher or senior leader, and will sign out of the building before leaving the premises.



Confidentiality

Volunteers will be reminded that all information with regards to individual pupils and members of staff is confidential, and that the sharing of data is protected under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Volunteers are not permitted to discuss any confidential information regarding a pupil or member of staff, with any other individual at the school.

Any volunteer who breaches the confidentiality rules will be asked to leave the premises and will not be able to return to undertake any further activity.

There may be instances where a volunteer is required to pass information to a member of staff, such as if they notice a pupil being bullied or subjected to harm.

Volunteers will report any concerns to a member of staff and are instructed not to notify the parents.

Internet use

All volunteers will be required to behave in an ethical and respectful manner with regards to email and internet use, and will be expected to follow the processes outlined in the following Trust policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Social Media Policy
- IT and Communication Systems Policy

Volunteers will have restricted access to the school network and will be instructed on ensuring appropriate use.

No volunteers are permitted to make contact with pupils via social media or email, or arrange to meet pupils out of school.

Insurance

All volunteers are covered as set out in the Summary of Cover provided by the Trust's membership of the DfE's Protection Arrangement (RPA) for Academy Trusts.

Monitoring and review

The Headteacher will review this policy on an annual basis, and will communicate any changes to all members of staff and existing volunteers.

All volunteers will be required to read this policy prior to their attendance at the school.



Volunteer code of conduct

All volunteers are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour and conduct when undertaking any activity at the school.

Volunteers **will**:

- Observe the high standards of behaviour and ethical conduct mandated by the school.
- Respect other volunteers, members of the staff and pupils, and make them feel valued. Be approachable, pleasant and a positive role model for pupils.
- Adhere to all school policies, e.g. the: Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Data Protection Policy, Anti-Harassment and bullying Policy.
- Maintain confidentiality of personal information at all times, unless there is a need to report an issue to a member of staff.
- Treat all pupils and members of staff equally.
- Report any incident of bad behaviour to the class teacher/senior member of staff immediately.
- Dress and behave in a manner which promotes healthy and safe working practices.
- Accept and follow directions from the supervisor and seek guidance through clarification where uncertain of tasks or requirements.
- Observe safe working practices which avoid unnecessary risks, apply reasonable instructions given by supervisors, and report any potential hazards in the workplace to the supervisor.
- Avoid waste or extravagance and make proper use of the resources.
- Conduct work in a cooperative manner. Turn any mobile phones off while on school premises.

Volunteers **will not**:

- Discipline a pupil; if there are any problems, the class teacher/senior member of staff will be informed straight away, and they will deal with the situation.
- Shout, hit, threaten or manhandle a pupil.
- Take photographs in school without the prior permission of the Headteacher.
- Develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with pupils.
- Work with pupils when not in the proper physical or emotional state to do so, e.g. under medication which causes drowsiness, or under extreme stress which may impair judgement.
- Behave in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner, e.g. smoking or drinking alcohol.
- Share personal contact details with pupils or make personal arrangements to meet pupils outside school.
- Express any extremist or discriminatory views, or any views that would offend others.
- Make inappropriate jokes or remarks of a sexual, racial, intimidating, discriminatory or offensive nature.



- Behave in a manner which may bring the school into disrepute when representing the school.
- Give or receive (other than 'token') gifts, unless arranged through the Headteacher e.g. outgrown sports kit, football boots or uniform.

