



**Northern Lights**  
LEARNING TRUST

# VOLUNTEER POLICY

**Review Date:** Spring 2017  
**Next review date:** Autumn 2018  
**Person in charge:** CEO  
**Link Governor:** Chair of Board

## **Pastoral Care**

The quality of relationships between all members of school, staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents and carers is the area that is most commonly associated with the ethos of a church school. It is expressed in the terms of sharing and caring. Jesus was clear in His instructions to the disciples on this matter. “Love your neighbour as yourself” – Matthew 22:39. “This is my commandment: love each other.” John 15:17. Everyone associated with the school is made in the image of God and is to be loved. This is the commandment from which Benedict Biscop Church of England School derives its policy for pastoral care.

We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships which include governors, staff, children parents, church members and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our pastoral work will strive to meet the significant challenge to create and maintain such networks in ways which reflect the Gospel. Those who are in leadership roles, which includes all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

It is from this premise that Christian love will pervade all aspects of life at Northern Lights Learning Trust. It will influence how we reward and punish. It will affect how we value work and achievement of pupils and staff. It will be seen in the way in which the school environment is created and cared for. In the way in which teaching and non-teaching staff work together effectively as a team.

**The school's volunteer policy is part of the school's safeguarding systems.**

**Please refer to DFE Guidance relating to Safeguarding pupils, Disclosure and Disqualification.**

## **Introduction**

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of children at our school. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community.

Our Volunteers include:

- Members of the Local Governing Body
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- University students referred to us by Student Volunteer Services
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the school

The types of activities that Volunteers are engaged include:

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children
- Undertaking art & craft activities with children
- Running after-school clubs e.g. country dancing
- Working with children on the computers
- Accompanying school visits

### **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 children read, usually approaches the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher's directly.

Volunteers should complete the *Volunteer Information Sheet* (Appendix 1) with their contact details, type of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help.

Before starting to help in school, volunteers should complete the *Volunteer Agreement* (Appendix 2), which sets out the school's expectations of volunteers and asks Volunteers to confirm they have received a copy of this policy.

The school will seek DBS clearance for any volunteer before they come into school to protect the staff and children.

### **Our Trust Vision**

All adults who work in schools within our Trust, whether a paid member of staff or a volunteer are expected to work and behave in such as way as to actively promote our school vision.

*Our vision is to provide a high quality education where high expectations, inclusive approaches and excellent teaching and learning form the basis of all our work, within the light of our Christian Faith. Our children will be encouraged to have a positive attitude to learning and achieve their full potential while working in a caring Christian environment.*

*We will create a culture of achievement for all.*

*We are committed to providing stimulating learning activities that will ensure our children leave our academies with the skills and knowledge that will prepare them for lifelong learning. We will do this by fostering a love for learning, self confidence and respect for others, while we work in partnership with parents, our Church ministry and the local community.*

This vision is underpinned by the following aims and values.

### **Aims**

- To enhance the quality of children's learning through highly effective teaching.
- To promote and sustain a challenging, stimulating and caring learning environment.
- To maintain high standards of behaviour through self-discipline, tolerance and mutual respect.
- To work closely and openly with parents/carers and the wider community to maximise children's development.
- To continually seek ways to improve every aspect of the school's work and life.

### **Values**

- We will respect our children's individuality, encourage creativity and assist them to make the most of their abilities.
- We want our pupils to leave us well educated, self-confident and caring members of society.
- We will endeavour to promote equality of opportunity for all of our children irrespective of gender, race, creed, ability or disability.

### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with / come into contact with should be voiced with the Class Teacher and NOT with the parents of the child / persons outside school. If it is a comment which a child makes which gives rise to concerns then the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy designated safeguarding leads should be informed directly.

Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school. Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Designated safeguarding leads.

### **Supervision**

All volunteers work under the supervision of the Class Teacher of the class to which they are assigned. Teachers retain responsibility for children at all times, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the Teacher as to how an activity is carried out / what the expected outcome of an activity is. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice / guidance from the Teacher in the event of any query / problem regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

### **Health & Safety**

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available on request to Volunteers working in the school. Class Teachers ensure that Volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire alarm evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (e.g. using DT equipment / accompanying children on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the Class Teacher / Headteacher.

### **Child Protection**

The welfare of our children is paramount. To ensure the safety of our children, we adopt the following procedures:

- All Volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy and asked to sign a *Volunteer Agreement* (Appendix 2)
- To ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all of our Volunteers must have been cleared by the DBS. A certificate is issued to the individual to produce in school.
- Where a Volunteer is engaged in a 'one-off' activity e.g. helping supervise a group of children as part of a class visit, no formal checks are carried out on these volunteers. These volunteers, who are under constant supervision of school staff, must read and sign our *Off-site visit agreement* (Appendix 3).

### **Complaints Procedure**

Any complaints made about a Volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher for investigation. Any complaints made by a Volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak with a Volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again;
- Offer an alternative placement for a Volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another Class;
- Inform the Volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.
- The full Complaints Procedure is set out in the School Handbook (available from the School Office).

### **Monitoring and Review**

This Policy has been approved by the Trust and will be reviewed annually and updated in the light of new guidance from either the DfE or LA.

**APPENDIX 1**

**VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET – FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS**

See Office File for most up to date sheet when volunteering

**APPENDIX 2**  
**Northern Lights Learning Trust**

**VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

Thank you for offering your services as a Volunteer at Northern Lights Learning Trust

Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope that you will gain much from your experience here.

Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement Sheet and hand it in at school.

You will receive a copy of it for your records.

- I have received a copy of the School's Volunteer Policy
- I agree to support the School's Aims and Core Values
- I agree to treat information I learn from being a Volunteer in School as confidential
- I understand that I am required to undergo a DBS check to advise the school of my suitability as a volunteer.
- If you already have a DBS certificate, please hand it to the school, the number will be recorded and checks made with the issuing body.

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

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

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

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Northern Lights Learning Trust - OFF-SITE VISITS VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

School trips are an integral part of learning at our school and afford many children opportunities which are outside their usual experiences. We are pleased that you have come forward as a volunteer helper: you will have an important role to play in the success and safety of this school trip.

Please read and return this appendix, and sign and return the helper's slip.

This is part of our school's risk assessment planning and safeguarding arrangements.

#### **Role of the Volunteer Helper**

- to be responsible and look after, in equal measure, all of the children in your group
- to stay with your allocated group of children, ensuring that their well being and safety is maintained for the total duration of the school trip
- to promote polite, respectful and courteous behaviour towards each other and members of the general public. We all go as ambassadors of our school!
- to ensure that your group keep up with the body of the school visit party, be it walking, entering or exiting from transportation or following speakers for the trip
- to contact your child's class teacher/member of staff if there are issues with first aid, safety and/or behaviour. If you have any concerns about a child or a child says something to you which worries or concerns you then you are required to inform the class teacher or the Principal [designated SAFEGUARDING LEAD] immediately. Should the Principal not be available then the Vice Principal is the Vice designated safeguarding lead.
- TO KEEP CONFIDENTIAL ANYTHING YOU MAY HEAR OR SEE WITHIN SCHOOL.

#### **Working alongside school staff**

School staff expect volunteer helpers to:

- comply with all of the above whilst being under the direct line management of school staff
- show a commitment to their group, an interest in the focus of the visit and assist children in their learning by helping them to read signs/labels/information, asking questions that encourage children to think about the task and help to explain areas of interest
- follow guidance from the school staff



- dress appropriately

### **What is not permitted**

- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to bring additional siblings on the school trip.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to re-organise school visit groups.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to smoke, drink alcohol or engage in any illegal practices.
- Volunteer helpers are not permitted to take photographs of children.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to give/buy their group treats e.g., icecreams, biscuits, sweets – before, during or after the school trip.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to use their mobile phones whilst caring and working with children. They should be switched off in class.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to ask personal questions of any child or repeat outside school anything they hear or see.
- Speak to the media about any school issues, should an emergency arise.

### **First Aid**

For each class on the school visit, there will be at least one qualified first aider.

You will be informed if any child in your group has medication/needs. If medicine needs to be administered, this will be done by a member of staff unless it is your child who requires medicine in which case you will be asked to administer this and be responsible for carrying the medicine.

All other medicines and first aid box(es) will be carried by staff.

### **Emergencies**

You are expected to inform a member of staff as soon as possible.

If you have become separated from the rest of the school party, please telephone one of the members of staff on your contact list or telephone the school.

I have read the volunteer Policy

I agree to the terms and conditions as stated in the policy

I will support the young people in enjoying the trip and actively contribute to the smooth running of the occasion.

I will treat any information I may hear about children as confidential and will not discuss it out of school.

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

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **Northern Lights Learning Trust – In school VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

Inviting adults into school is an integral part of learning at our school and afford many children opportunities which are outside their usual experiences. We are pleased that you have come forward as a volunteer helper: you will have an important role to play in the success of additional opportunities and are very welcome in school.

Please read and return this appendix, and sign and return the helper's slip.

This is part of our school's risk assessment planning and safeguarding arrangements.

#### **Role of the Volunteer Helper**

- to be responsible and look after, in equal measure, all of the children in your group
- to stay with your allocated group of children, ensuring that their well being and safety is maintained for the total duration of your school visit
- to promote polite, respectful and courteous behaviour towards each other and members of the general public. We are all ambassadors of our school and therefore should behave in accordance with school policies and procedures.
- to ensure that your group follow the school rules and are never put at risk.
- to contact your child's class teacher/member of staff if there are issues with first aid, safety and/or behaviour. If you have any concerns about a child or a child says something to you which worries or concerns you then you are required to inform the class teacher or the Principal [designated person] immediately. Should the Principal not be available then the Vice Principal is the Vice designated person.
- TO KEEP CONFIDENTIAL ANYTHING YOU MAY HEAR OR SEE WITHIN SCHOOL.

#### **Working alongside school staff**

School staff expect volunteer helpers to:

- comply with all of the above whilst being under the direct line management of school staff
- show a commitment to their group, an interest in the focus of the activity and assist children in their learning by helping them to read signs/labels/information, asking questions that encourage children to think about the task and help to explain areas of interest
- follow guidance from the school staff
- dress appropriately

### **What is not permitted**

- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to bring additional siblings into school.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to re-organise school activities without the knowledge of the class teacher.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to smoke, drink alcohol or engage in any illegal practices.
- Volunteer helpers are not permitted to take photographs of children.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to give/buy their group treats e.g., icecreams, biscuits, sweets – before, during or after a school activity.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to use their mobile phones whilst caring and working with children. They should be switched off in class.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to ask personal questions of any child or repeat outside school anything they hear or see.

### **First Aid**

There will be at least one qualified first aider in school.  
You will be informed if any child in your group has medication/needs.

### **Emergencies**

You are expected to inform a member of staff as soon as possible.

I have read the volunteer Policy

I agree to the terms and conditions as stated in the policy

I will support the young people in enjoying the trip and actively contribute to the smooth running of the occasion.

I will treat any information I may hear about children as confidential and will not discuss it out of school.

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