

Lowbrook Volunteers Working in School Policy

The school's volunteer policy is part of the schools safeguarding systems and procedures.

Introduction

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. The Board of Governors therefore, welcomes and encourages volunteers from the local community.

Our volunteers may include:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents and Caregivers of pupils
- Grandparents and Relations of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the school eg; Rotary

The recruitment of new volunteers can take up to half a term and intake of new volunteers will be dependent on the candidate and available spaces within school. The smooth running of the Academy for Lowbrook pupils will always be a priority. Senior Leadership maintains the right to refuse volunteers and also terminate placements. It may not always be possible to give detailed explanation to volunteers as to why they have been terminated e.g. staff on capability, behaviour analysis, ongoing safeguarding investigation, etc.

The types of activities that volunteers engage in, on behalf of the school, include:

- Hearing pupils read
- Working with small groups of pupils to assist them in their learning
- Working alongside individual pupils, as an additional tutor
- Accompanying school visits
- Sharing of skills/lectures

Our School Aims

All adults / young people who work in our school, whether a paid member of staff, or a volunteer are expected to work and behave in such a way as to actively promote our school aims and educational purpose, as identified below.

School Vision

At Lowbrook Academy all our children will be given the opportunity and experiences to nurture their talent, realise their potential and achieve success in academic and personal development. We will value each other, our families and the wider community. Volunteers must promote the vision of Happy, Healthy, High Achievers.

Headlines:

- The school is driven by a strong sense of equality for all.
- Its core purpose is to give children aspirations, ambition and life chances - nothing is more important. We promote happy, healthy, high achieving children.
- The quality of the day to day teaching and learning gives the children life chances they rightly deserve.
- All staff are dedicated to making sure these aims are met.

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, Principal or senior member of staff directly. It is the schools decision 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 (Appendix 1), along with a covering letter requesting interest, with their contact details, types of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Safeguarding is our number one priority and we follow the safer recruitment guidelines and KCSIE 2023 to ensure that we as a 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 office. This will be kept up to date and the responsibility of the Office Manager.

To ensure the safety of our pupils, we adopt the following procedures:

- All volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy and asked to sign a *Volunteer Agreement* (Appendix 2)
- All of our frequent volunteers (those who intend to help out in the school three times or more) must have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). A DBS Disclosure will be issued to the individual to present to the designated member of staff in school.
- Volunteers have a clear job description (Appendix 4) and their supervisors will address any concerns in their work.
- Volunteers agree to the visitors code of practice daily when they sign the visitors book at reception.
- Volunteers undertake safeguarding training, delivered by the Academy's DSL, every three years.
- Infrequent volunteers, without a DBS check, must have a risk assessment undertaken by the Executive Principal or Headteacher (see Appendix 5).

Online Safety

Online Safety relates to the teaching and learning of technology and through technology in a responsible and safe environment, focusing on raising awareness of the core messages of safe content, contact and conduct when using it. This can include accessing websites and online content, email, online chat rooms, mobile phones, gaming and games consoles, social networking sites, instant messaging (IM), viruses and spam. Volunteers, like staff are expected to follow the E-mail, Internet and E-safety Policy which is available from the main office or the school website. Dave Rooney leads on Online Safety and as DSL, volunteers will be trained in safe and acceptable use.

Personal devices including mobile phones and wrist watch phones that connect to the internet should not be used in school during class time. Use of phones or phone watches must be limited to non-contact time when no children present. Staff and volunteers should keep devices out of sight in lockers, desks or cupboards when on school property.

Frequent or Intensive Volunteers

Activity which is described as 'frequent' or 'intensive' covers the meaning given in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

'Frequent' once a week or more often on an ongoing basis; and 'Intensive' – three or more occasions in a 30 day period, or overnight (between 2am – 6am).

Volunteers who are frequent or intensive need an enhanced DBS.

Where a volunteer is engaged in a 'one-off' activity, e.g. helping supervise a group of pupils as part of a class visit, no formal DBS checks are required. However, such volunteers, who will be under the constant supervision of school staff, must read and sign our Off-Site Visit Agreement (Appendix 3) and be experienced at all times. A risk assessment of all such volunteers must be completed.

Volunteers for school visits

School visits are an integral part of learning at our school and afford many pupils opportunities which are outside their usual experiences. The class teacher or staff member leading the visit will brief the volunteer regarding the risk assessment, daily schedule and any other important pieces of information. The visit lead, who will be a staff member, has ultimate responsibility for the pupils. Pupils should never be left with a volunteer unsupervised.

Process for recruiting Volunteer who will be working frequently or intensively

- A) Volunteers will be directed to the school office and will be given the volunteer policy. They will be asked to complete Appendix 1 with a supporting covering letter and return.
- B) A responsible officer, Frances Garland, will identify the need and role for volunteers.
- C) Candidates will be attracted by means of school communications system.
- D) The candidate/s attend the school for an informal discussion with the DSL to ensure the applicant is suitable for the role.

- E) Enhanced DBS check undertaken if frequent or intensive.
- F) The volunteer will be made aware of the role and responsibilities they will be undertaking.
- G) Two references should be sought where the volunteer arrangement will continue on a regular basis.
- H) Induction – school and corporate policies and documentation explained and issued. These to include, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Behaviour Management Policies and Whistleblowing Policy.
- I) Volunteer records to be kept in a central place within the school office.
- J) Safeguard Training will be provided by the DSL.

Before starting to help in a school, a volunteer should complete the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2), which sets out the school's expectations of its volunteers and to confirm they have received a copy of this Agreement. The school will seek DBS clearance for a volunteer before they come into school, to make an informed decision when accepting volunteers to work with children. This is not required where a volunteer is engaged in a 'one-off' activity. In these circumstances the volunteer will be supervised 100% of their time in school.

Work Experience/ Placement Students

Lowbrook Academy has a long standing relationship with various local secondary schools, colleges and universities. We are happy to take students on placement if we have suitable experiences available based on the smooth running of Lowbrook Academy. Secondary schools, colleges and universities wanting students to be placed with us need to formally make contact with the Executive Principal or CPD Lead, Frances Garland, outlining the aims of the placement and duration.

If the placement is as part of a teaching course (BA/ Bed. or PGCE) the CPD Lead, Frances Garland, will deal with further correspondents details. If the placement is just for work experiences purposes the school/ college is asked to provide the reference for the student and the student is requested to complete the volunteer's paperwork. Lowbrook Academy retains the authority to refuse or terminate a placement to ensure the smooth running of the Academy. Safeguarding checks for placements is detailed in the schools Child Protection policy.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the pupils they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the designated supervisor and NOT with the parents of the child/persons.

Volunteers who are concerned about anything in the school, which may affect their work should raise the matter with the Principal, DSL or the Deputy DSL's. Any information gained at the school about a child or adult should remain confidential.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of a teacher or full time member of staff. Teachers retain ultimate responsibility for pupils at all times, including the pupils' behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. Volunteers must not work alone with children and are not to supervise toileting stops, e.g. on school trips, etc.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the designated supervisor as to how an activity is carried out/what the expected outcome of an activity is. In the event of any query/problem regarding the pupils understanding of a task, behaviour or their welfare, volunteers must seek further advice/guidance from their designated supervisor.

Health and Safety

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available to volunteers working in the school. An appropriate member of staff will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. Fire Alarm Evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks (e.g. using D T equipment/accompanying pupils on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the designated School Business Manager. Volunteers are covered by LBN Health & Safety Statement and indemnity and Public Liability Insurance.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer the person concerned must follow the schools complaints policy which is found on the school website.

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been approved by the Governing Body and will be revised annually alongside the schools Child Protection policy.

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Signed:

Principal



APPENDIX 1

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM –FOR NEW VOLUNTEER

Name of Volunteer:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Home phone:..... Mobile:

Email:.....

What activities/skills/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 currently have a DBS?

Have you ever been banned from working with children or in school?

Have you any past convictions or pending police investigations?

YES/NO

If YES please elaborate.

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)

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

(If this is a work experience placement from a secondary school you only need to provide one reference from the school that you attend)



Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone number:	Phone number:

Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Application Form

Please hand it to the School Office, marked for the attention of the Principal. Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we will be in touch as soon as possible.

APPENDIX 2

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at school.

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

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 will follow the Lowbrook Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- I have received a copy and understand the requirements in the School's Volunteer Policy
- I agree to support the School's Aims
- I will follow the Visitors' Agreement
- I agree to treat information obtained from being a Volunteer in School as **Strictly Confidential**
- I understand that an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be undertaken
- 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. A new enhanced DBS check must be undertaken.
- I have been made aware of who is my designated supervisor e.g. Class Teacher, Year Teacher, Principal and DSL.
- I agree to follow the E-mail, Internet and E-safety Policies and not use personal phones whilst onsite. Photographs must not be taken.
- I agree to undertake safeguarding training, delivered by the Academy, every three years or sooner if the DSL has updates.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 3

Off-Site Visits Volunteer Agreement

School visits are an integral part of learning at our school and afford many pupils 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 visits.

Please read and return this appendix, and sign and return the helpers slip. This is part of our school's risk assessment planning and safeguarding.

Role of the Volunteer Helper:

- To be responsible and look after, in equal measure, all of the pupils in your group under the instruction and supervision of the Leader of the school trip.
- To stay with your allocated group of pupils, ensuring that their wellbeing 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.
- To follow the schools E-mail, Internet and E-Safety policy on the use of mobile phone procedures.
- Work alongside school staff

School staff expect volunteer helpers to:

- Comply with all of the above whilst being under the direct supervision of school staff.
- Show a commitment to their group, an interest in the focus of the visit and assist pupils in their learning by helping them to read signs/labels/information, asking questions that encourage pupils to think about the task and help to explain the areas of interest
- Follow guidance from the school staff

What is not permitted:

- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to bring additional children, e.g. siblings or children in the care of the volunteer on the school trip.

- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to smoke, drink alcohol or engage in any illegal practices whilst undertaking their volunteer duties.
- Volunteer helpers are not permitted to take photographs of pupils.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to give/buy their group treats e.g. ice creams, biscuits, sweets before, during or after the school trip.

First Aid

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 you are the Parent/Carer of the 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 boxes) 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 and agreed 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 event.

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

Covid-19

The Covid-19 guidance allows visitors and volunteers to now attend the school site.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Designation: _____

APPENDIX 4

Visitors Code of Conduct

1. Everyone who is part of the school community must adhere to the Single Equality Scheme Policy and Equality Duty Statement which is available on the school website or from the main office.
2. Use appropriate language and behaviour with children.
3. Please sign in and out of the premises and wear a visitors badge at all times.
4. Report any breakages, health and safety hazards or accidents to the main office.
5. If you feel any way uncomfortable about the behaviour of a child please discuss this with the staff or Designated Safeguarding Lead, Dave Rooney.
6. Seek permission to bring a vehicle on to the school premises from the main office before arrival as the office manager, Louise Berry, will need to assess the risk.
7. Never give a pupil a lift in your vehicle unless you have appropriate insurance, parental consent, SLT consent and a member of staff present.
8. Mobile phones should be turned off when on site. In an emergency please use the phone in the main office.
9. All photography and filming within school is prohibited unless permission is granted from the Executive Principal, Head of School or Designated Safeguarding Lead. This is only permitted on school devices.
10. If a child attempts to make contact with you through a social networking site, screen print the page, inform the school immediately and do not respond.
11. All visitors should be aware that Lowbrook Academy has Whistleblowing, Child Protection and Safeguarding, Online Policies - these are available on the school website or at the main office.
12. Clothing should be respectful of pupils, staff and the working environment and community.
13. Professionals should bring photographic ID and proof of DBS or DBS compliant through volunteer agency. We request that all professionals make appointments so that their visit is organised and purposeful and does not interfere with the classroom learning.

In signing the visitors' management system you are agreeing to the above code of conduct

APPENDIX 5

Lowbrook Academy Volunteer Activity Risk Assessment

	Hazard	Level of Risk	Suggested action/control measure (prevention measures). <i>This list is not exhaustive. Below are some control measures which you may find useful when completing your risk assessment.</i>
01.	Poor selection process for volunteers	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> carry out a suitable and sufficient selection process to ensure volunteers are suited to the tasks they perform minors are not permitted to take part in volunteer work unless supervised in-house training to be made available for volunteers who require it
02.	No DBS check for volunteers	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular volunteers should have a DBS check, the number is checked and to be kept in SCR volunteers will not work unsupervised with children.
03.	Lack of induction for volunteers	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all one-off volunteers will have an induction by one of the DSLs and respect of Safeguarding arrangements.
04.	Poor equipment maintenance used by volunteers	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> inspection and maintenance regimes are in place for equipment used by persons working in the Academy. electrical equipment provided by volunteers must not be used unless it has been PAT tested by a competent person.
05.	Minor improvement works e.g. painting	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> volunteers do not work on mechanical, gas or electrical equipment unless qualified to do so. all minor improvement works are specifically risk assessed. volunteers doing improvement works on site are supervised by a competent member of staff. volunteers not to work at height unless trained through recognised training providers. works to be carried out in school holidays, otherwise DBS checks will be required if volunteers are to be left alone, unsupervised.
06.	Lack of adequate teacher supervision for pupils on school trips (Refer to www.gov.uk Health and Safety of	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a relevant risk assessment should be discussed with volunteers for each separate occasion. arrange for an adequate amount of volunteers to assist with pupil supervision; to complement staff numbers, not replace them.

	Pupils on Educational Visits).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a risk assessment must be completed and agreed by Frances Garland, the school EVC Lead.
07.	Lone working (Refer to Lone Working arrangements)	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> volunteers will not work alone
08.	No Public Liability Insurance Cover	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check with either your Insurance Company or Lowbrook Insurance and the Risk Management Team, to confirm that adequate Public Liability Insurance is in place. In the case of parents sharing expertise, e.g. Science Week, the school is liable.
9.	No First Aid Provision	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all staff are First-Aid trained ensure all volunteers are briefed on first aid provision, where you go for medical assistance and the name of the first aider available on specific day
10.	No instruction or information provided to volunteers.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure all volunteers are briefed on all risk assessments that are relevant to them ensure sufficient information and instructions are given to the relevant volunteers

Checklist:

	Risk assessment discussed with Volunteer
	Volunteer disclosures made to DSL if appropriate, e.g. criminal convictions
	Fire and emergency procedures discussed with Volunteer
	Asbestos and legionella management discussed with Volunteer
	Toilet arrangements discussed with Volunteer
	Mobile Phone, Social Media and Digital Technology (e.g. photography) discussed with Volunteer.
	Access / Chaperone arrangements shared.
	Covid-19 Risk Assessment has been read and all control measures are fully understood.

Volunteer name: **Volunteer signature:**

DSL name: **DSL signature:**