VOLUNTEER POLICY

Reviewed September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

Context

The St Francis volunteer policy is in place to define the role of volunteers within our organisation. It explains the activities and what is expected of volunteers. The policy also ensures fairness and consistency in managing volunteers and helps volunteers know where they stand and how they can expect to be treated. This policy demonstrates our commitment to our volunteer programme and individual volunteers.

The role of volunteers at St Francis takes various forms. We may ask family members to volunteer as readers, visitors during our themed weeks or with assembly preparation etc. Family members may also volunteer to assist teachers on school trips and learning opportunities outside of school.

Volunteers take part in a meeting with a member of the senior leadership team or member of staff where their roles and responsibilities will be discussed and important policies/codes of conduct such as safeguarding and behaviour will be shared. Each volunteer will be assigned a staff member to report to and who will oversee their role during their time at school. Volunteers will never be left to manage whole classes or large groups of children without the supervision of a member of the St Francis staff. Once a volunteer is accepted to begin at St Francis, they will be formally introduced to the staff and their role will be explained.

1. Introduction and aims

We believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the school's work, and that they enrich the school through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the school's strategic aims and vision, as well as its development plan.

The aim of the St Francis volunteer policy is to:

- Encourage the wider community to engage with the school, thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion
- Ensure that volunteers support the school's vision and values, and adhere to our policies
- Provide staff, volunteers and families with clear expectations and guidelines
- Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers

This policy has been developed in line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) from the Department for Education (DfE).

2. How we use volunteers

At St Francis volunteers may:

- Hear children read
- Accompany school visits
- Work with individual children
- Work with small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT, PE or art
- Support in after school clubs

This is not an exhaustive list.

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the governing body
- Parents
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Friends of the school
- Local clergy or members of the congregation

This is not an exhaustive list.

Members of the 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 our governor code of conduct.

3. How to apply to volunteer

Volunteers should excess their interest by either

- emailing a named member of staff, or sending an email to the school office
- approaching senior leaders, class teachers, other staff or governors and expressing an interest

The volunteer will then be invited to meet with the Head of School or a delegated staff member.

4. Appointment of volunteers

Volunteers are appointed by the Head of School/Executive Head

Appointment and induction of new volunteers can take up to six weeks or more, 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) and other safeguarding and recruitment checks (where appropriate) and relevant training.

The Head of School/Executive Head reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.

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.

5. Safeguarding

Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, and our volunteers must share our commitment to safeguarding and child protection recognising that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility here at St Francis school.

To ensure we're 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
- Consider the results of any DBS checks that return with unspent and spent listed convictions, and assess these on a case-by-case basis, with regard given to the nature of the conviction and the nature of the work the volunteer will be involved in
- Provide relevant safeguarding training to all volunteers **prior** to them beginning work at the school, including ensuring that they have read and understood part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Volunteers **not working directly** with children can read a condensed version of part 1 (located in annex A) of Keeping Children Safe in Education or the full version of part 1]
- Require volunteers to agree and adhere to our code of conduct and to read, and adhere to, the school's policies on:
    - Safeguarding
    - Use of mobile phones
    - ICT and internet acceptable use
    - Online safety
    - Behaviour
    - Safe Touch
    -
- Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised, and are never left alone with pupils
- Conduct a risk assessment to determine whether a volunteer who isn't working in regulated activity needs an enhanced DBS check. The risk assessment will consider:
    - · The nature of the work they will be doing
    - · What we know about them
    - · References from employers or other voluntary roles
    - · Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check

We legally cannot carry out a DBS check on a child under the age of 16 who is volunteering at our school. We will ensure that children who are volunteering are always under an appropriate level of supervision, and conduct a risk assessment to consider any potential safeguarding issues.

Regular volunteers and visitors to the school will be added to the Single Central Record. (A regular visitor is someone who visits the school more than once a term)

Valid enhanced DBS certificates from the school local authority will be accepted within three years of issue. All staff and volunteers must be rechecked every three years. No other DBS certificates will be accepted.

6. Induction and training

Volunteers must complete appropriate training prior to beginning work at the school. Training requirements will be determined by the Head of School or the appropriate member of staff. Training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing.

All volunteers must have safeguarding training and agree and sign the St Francis school code of conduct.

7. Confidentiality

Information about pupils, parents/families and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues related to pupils, parents or staff with those outside of the organisation.

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 the school's safeguarding policy (with regard to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures).

If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in our safeguarding policy], and inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

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

8. Conduct of volunteers

Volunteers must comply with the code of conduct set out in appendix 2 of this policy].

9. Insurance

The school's Public liability insurance policy does cover volunteers in the event of an accident or emergency.

If a volunteer is working at the school through another organisation, we will also check that organisation's insurance arrangements.

10. Data protection and record keeping

Our privacy notice for volunteers explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it.

We will:

- Retain records relating to volunteers in line with data protection policy
- Remove details of volunteers from the single central record (SCR) once they no longer work at our school

11. Monitoring and review

This policy has been approved by the [governing board and will be reviewed regularly.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

12. Links to other policies

This volunteering policy is linked to our:

- Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures
- Staff conduct policy
- Volunteer conduct Policy
- Safe touch policy

Appendix 1: Volunteer details

Data protection notice
Throughout this form, we ask for some personal data about you. We'll only use this data in line with data protection legislation and process your data for 1 or more of the following reasons permitted in law: · You've given us your consent · We must process it to comply with our legal obligations

Personal details	
Name:	
Date of birth:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Home address:	
Next of Kin contact details (only in case of an emergency)	

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) information

The [school/trust] is legally obligated to process an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before making appointments to relevant posts.

The enhanced DBS check will reveal both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings, and any other information held by local police that's considered relevant to the role. Any information that is "protected" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 will not appear on a DBS certificate.

Volunteers working in regulated activity will also require a barred list check.

Any data processed as part of the DBS check will be processed in accordance with data protection regulations and the [school's/trust's] privacy notice.

Do you have a DBS check? (please circle)	Yes/No
If yes, what type of check do you have? (please circle)	Basic DBS / Standard DBS / Enhanced DBS / Enhanced DBS with barred list information
Are you signed up to the DBS Update Service. **If Yes, please complete your update service details**	
Date of check:	
Certificate number:	

Appendix 2: code of conduct for volunteers

Code of conduct for volunteers

By signing this form, volunteers agree to the following:

1. School rules and policies

1.1. Volunteers will follow all school rules and policies, including those on:

1.1.1. Safeguarding and child protection

1.1.2. ICT and internet acceptable use

1.1.3. Online safety

1.1.4. Mobile phones

1.1.5. Data protection

1.1.6. Health and safety

1.1.7. Whistle-blowing

1.2. Copies of the school policies are available online or from the school office

2. Professional conduct

2.1. Volunteers must accept and follow instructions provided by supervisors, and ask for guidance or clarification if required. Questions can be directed to the supervising member of staff, or to the leadership team of the school.

2.2. Behaviour management is the responsibility of school staff. If volunteers witness behaviour that is in breach of the school's behaviour policy, or are struggling to manage the behaviour of pupils with whom they're working, they should alert the class teacher immediately. Volunteers should not attempt to reprimand pupils or issue sanctions.

2.3. Volunteers must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This includes:

2.3.1. Dressing in a way that is professional and appropriate to the work they are doing

2.3.2. Refraining from using inappropriate language

2.3.3. Setting an example for pupils by acting in a way that reflects the school's ethos and values

2.3.4. Behaving in a way that is appropriate for the role they are undertaking

2.3.5. Ensuring that comments, including those made on social media, do not bring the school into disrepute

2.4. Volunteers must not accept gifts from, or give gifts to, pupils. The exception is small tokens, such as those exchanged at the end of term or as a way of saying "thank you".

2.5. Volunteers must not transport pupils in their own cars unless specific arrangements have been made with the school, **and** the pupil's family have consented.

2.6. Parent volunteers with children at the school must not act in a way that favours their own child, and should not approach their child unnecessarily during the school day (for instance, during break times). They may not use their time as a volunteer to discuss their child's education with school staff.

2.7. If a volunteer is unable to come to school when they are expected/scheduled to be in, they must contact their supervisor or the school office as soon as possible. Inconsistent attendance may result in the placement being reviewed or terminated.

3. Safeguarding

3.1. Volunteers must be familiar with, and adhere to, the school's safeguarding and child protection policy. Safeguarding training will be provided to all volunteers before they begin their placement.

3.2. If volunteers have concerns about the welfare of a child, or if a child makes a disclosure, they should speak directly to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL. The DSL is Paula Murphy and the DDSL is Colin Bartlett.

3.3. Volunteers should refrain from physical contact with pupils, and should use their judgement to determine when physical contact is appropriate. If physical contact with pupils is required, volunteers should ask for a pupil's consent before touching them in line with the safe touch policy.

3.4. Volunteers must alert the DSL if a pupil develops an infatuation with them, and must not form personal relationships with pupils, either inside or outside of school, with whom they do not already have a personal relationship. This includes:

3.4.1. Exchanging contact information

3.4.2. Making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media

3.4.3. Arranging to meet pupils outside of school

3.5. Volunteers should not take or share photos of pupils unless instructed to do so by their supervisor and only ever on a school device

4. Health and safety

4.1. Volunteers must abide by the school's health and safety and first aid policies. Volunteers are not to administer first aid, except in an emergency where none of the designated first aiders are available.

4.2. Volunteers must be familiar with the school's fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures.

4.3. Volunteers must sign in and sign out at the beginning and end of every visit, and must wear a visitor badge at all times.

5. Confidentiality

5.1. Information about pupils, parents and staff at the school is confidential, and should not be shared with anyone else. Volunteers shouldn't discuss pupils with families or other children. If families approach volunteers for information, they should be directed to speak to a class teacher or the Head of School.

Failure to adhere to this code of conduct may result in the termination of the placement. In more serious cases, misconduct will be treated in line with the school's staff disciplinary procedures.

Please sign and date below:

Volunteer name (please print)

Volunteer signature:

Date:

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St Francis Risk Assessment Matrix

What are the hazards?	Step 2 Who might be harmed and how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk rating	Step 4 Is anything further needed?	Step 5 Action & review
Spot hazards by: ▪ walking around your workplace ▪ asking those doing the task what they think ▪ checking manufacturers' instructions ▪ considering health hazards	Identify groups of people, consider: ▪ employees ▪ temporary / agency staff ▪ contractors ▪ volunteers ▪ members of the public ▪ children (including work experience) ▪ lone workers ▪ pupils ▪ service users	List what is already in place to reduce the likelihood of harm or make any harm less serious, examples include: ▪ guarding ▪ training ▪ procedures, safe systems of work	Trivial, low, medium, high or stop (please see matrix below)	You need to make sure that you have reduced risks 'so far as is reasonably practicable'. An easy way of doing this is to compare what you are already doing with good practice. If there is a difference, list what needs to be done.	Remember to prioritise Deal with those hazards that are high-risk and have serious consequences first. List: ▪ actions required ▪ who needs to do them ▪ by when ▪ check actions completed

	Slightly harmful	Harmful	Extremely harmful
Highly unlikely	**Trivial risk**	**Low risk**	**Medium risk**
Unlikely	**Low risk**	**Medium risk**	**High risk**
Likely	**Medium risk**	**High risk**	**STOP**

Risk level	Action and timescale
Trivial	**No action required and no documentary record needs to be kept.**
Low	**No additional physical control measures are required, however monitoring is necessary to ensure that the controls are maintained.**
Medium	**Efforts should be made to reduce the risk and the reduction measures should be implemented within a defined period. Where the medium risk is associated with extremely harmful consequences, further assessment may be necessary to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the need for improved control measures.**
High	**Work should not be started until the risk has been reduced to an acceptable level. Considerable resources may be allocated to reduce the risk. Where the risk involves work in progress, urgent action should be taken.**
Stop	**Work should not be started or continued until the risk has been reduced. If it is not possible to reduce risk even with unlimited resources, work has to remain prohibited.**

Activity/operation/event: Volunteer Work	Assessment date: September 2024
Establishment: St Francis Primary School	Review date: September 2025

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Risk rating	Step 4	Step 5 Action & review Review		
Identify the hazards	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you already doing?	trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Is anything further needed?	Action required	Responsible person	Date completed (To be completed upon admission of new volunteers)
Poor selection process for volunteers.	Children who may not be treated appropriately or benefit from the support from a volunteer.	• 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 (work experience) • in-house training to be made available for volunteers		No		DSL & Deputy DSL	

No DBS check for unsupervised volunteers .	Staff and children may be at risk dependent on any possible crime committed.	• volunteers should have a DBS check and a copy to be to be kept securely on site • volunteers must be DBS checked if they are in regular contact with children under 18 as part of their normal duties		Administrator and DSL to ensure single central record is up to date and only take volunteers in once it has been received and is clear.		School Administrator, DSL & Deputy DSL	
Lack of induction for volunteers.	Volunteer, children & staff	• all volunteers are briefed prior to working on site • all volunteers to be told about relevant parts of policies and guidance • a risk assessment for volunteer role to be produced and explained to each individual; pointing out the relevant control measures		No		DSL & Deputy DSL	
Poor equipment maintenance used by volunteers.	Volunteer, children & staff	• inspection and maintenance regimes in place for equipment used by volunteers • electrical equipment provided by		No		Site Manager and Head of School	

		volunteers must not be used unless it has been PAT tested by a competent person • volunteers are not permitted to use ladders					
Lack of adequate teacher supervision for pupils on school trips. (Refer to www.gov.uk Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits).	Children may not be treated appropriately or be kept safe from harm.	• 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		No		EVC & Class teacher	
Lone working	Children	• an individual risk assessment for specific volunteers working alone on site must be produced and communicated • if small group is asked to be carried out, this should be clearly directed by the staff member overseeing		No		DSL, DDSL & class teacher	

		volunteer when on site • all work spaces meet health and safety expectations e.g. glass in all classroom and small group room doors.					
No Public Liability Insurance Cover	Volunteer, children & staff	• Public Liability Insurance is in place		No		Executive Head and Finance Department	
No First Aid Provision	Children who may not be treated appropriately or be kept safe from harm.	• ensure that a fully qualified first aider is present at all times • 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		No		SENCO & DSL	
No instruction or information provided to volunteers.	Children who may not be treated appropriately or be kept safe from harm. Volunteers could behave in an inappropriate way or in a way	• ensure all volunteers are briefed on all risk assessments that are relevant to them • ensure sufficient information and instructions are		No		DSL, DDSL and class teacher	

	which is not in line with school policy or code of conduct.	given to the relevant volunteers					

Assessor name(s):	**Job title:**
Signature:	**Review date:**