



Leigh Academy
Paddock Wood

Volunteer Policy

Date of Policy: September 2024
Date of next review: September 2025

Introduction

The value of well-deployed volunteers in schools is widely recognised at Leigh Academy Paddock Wood and are a welcome resource for helping to raise children's achievement, complementing the work of teachers and support staff. It should be emphasised that the role of volunteers in schools provides enrichment of the pupil's learning experiences, but must not encroach on or restrict professional teaching duties.

The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or for a number of sessions over a longer period, must be managed with care; in particular taking account of the needs of the pupils and the staff to whom they are assigned.

Leigh Academy Paddock Wood is mindful of deploying volunteers appropriately. Volunteers should not be asked to replace paid staff or be given responsibility within the school that would normally be associated with paid employees.

Volunteers at Leigh Academy Paddock Wood

Our volunteers include:

- Members of the Local Academy Board
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience or volunteer days
- University students on alternative placements
- Local residents
- Paddock Wood PTA

The types of activities that Volunteers engage in include:

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children within the class
- Working alongside individual children within the class
- Undertaking art & craft and other practical activities with children
- Running after-school clubs e.g. netball
- Working with children on the computers
- Accompanying school visits

Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer will need to apply online:

<https://www.jobtrain.co.uk/leighacademiestrust/Job/JobDetail?JobId=7655>

Much like applying for a job and for the purposes of safer recruitment this process must be followed. Once the application is complete there will be an interview at the Academy. The self declaration form and safeguarding questions will be included in this. We will then be able to offer the role and the Enhanced DBS checking process will begin. LAT HR will contact the volunteer. Prior to commencing the volunteer will receive safeguarding advice for volunteers (Appendix 1) and sign a confidentiality agreement. (Appendix 2) which sets out the school's expectations of volunteers, including confidentiality within school and understanding this policy.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any behaviour concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with or come into contact with should be voiced with the class teacher rather than with the parents of the child / persons outside school. 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 Principal, Mr Thomas Moore.

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

Health and Safety

The Academy has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available on request to volunteers working in the school. Class teachers should 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 / Principal.

Safeguarding and 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 safeguarding advice for volunteers/handbook (Appendix 2), this Volunteer Policy and asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix 3) and an Off-site Visits Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 4).
- To ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all of our volunteers must have a DBS check by the school.
- All volunteers are trained once a year by the DSL.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Principal for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be referred to the Principal.

The Principal 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 on the school website.
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APPENDIX 1 SAFEGUARDING ADVICE FOR VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

1. Introduction

Welcome to Leigh Academy Paddock Wood

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and as such we expect all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.

This information is designed to help volunteers in our Academy to understand the expected behaviour of staff and children in order to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Please keep this information in a safe place so that you can read it again if you need to. If you need any more information, or have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

2. What are my Responsibilities?

- All visitors must sign in using our electronic sign in system at Reception and sign out before leaving.
- Visitors will be issued with a lanyard, this should be worn and visible at all times.
- Visitors are asked to read this information in full on arrival on their first visit as well as the visitor handbook.
- Volunteers will be required to sign the confidentiality agreement and volunteer policy.
- Mobile phones are not to be used on the school site
- Photographs are not to be taken unless by prior agreement by the school
- Be a good role model to our pupils by being respectful, fair and considerate of others.
- If a child misbehaves whilst under your instruction or you witness unacceptable behaviour then please report this to your class teacher or use our behaviour policy if working as a supply teacher.
- When working with a pupil(s) ensure you are visible to others
- Your dealings with the children are confidential between you and the teacher. If you have any concerns, please talk to the class teacher , Vice Principals or Principal.
- Children should not be left unattended at any time.

All regular visitors and volunteers have a Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced Clearance.

If you feel that a child may be at risk of harm but you are not sure, then please inform a member of the Safeguarding Team immediately. They will offer advice and take appropriate action. Child abuse can happen to any child regardless of elements such as gender, culture, religion, social background, ability or disability. A copy of the Academy's Safeguarding policy is located in the staff room and on the school website.

Types of harm

We all have a responsibility to keep children safe, both at home and in school. Harm is identified under four categories:

Physical – hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, fabricating symptoms of, or deliberately inducing illness.

Sexual – Involves forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Emotional – persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

Neglect - Persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or physiological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.

3.1 If a Child Tells You Something

If a child discloses they might be subject to abuse, react calmly, listen carefully, and keep any questions to a minimum. Do not promise confidentiality. Explain to the child that you must pass on information if you are worried about their safety.

Do not ask leading questions or make judgements. Clarify and check your concern if you feel that you are not sure, by using, for example ‘Tell, Explain, Describe’ (T.E.D)

Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing

Record carefully using a school’s cause for concern form which is found in the staff room. Record using the child’s own words including how and when the account was given. This must then be dated and signed and immediately passed to one of the Safeguarding Team.

3.2 Our Safeguarding Team

SLT: Mr Moore (Principal), Mr Page & Mrs McLeish (VPs)



InclusionTeam: Miss Gunning (DSL), Mrs Thorne (SENCO)



APPENDIX 2

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

For all adults that volunteer at Leigh Academy Paddock Wood

Dear Volunteer,

I would like to thank you for all the support you give us to enable our children to learn so effectively in the classroom.

When you work in an environment such as a school, the matter of confidentiality is huge and we always ask a question about it at interviews for staff.

Confidentiality means that you do not discuss school matters with anyone outside the building no matter who they are. If you are approached and asked a school related question, you must refer it to the class teacher or any other member of the Senior Leadership Team. Please don't discuss anything about another child's behaviour with their parents either. This is a matter between the school and that child's parents.

One of the reasons rules are so strict in school is for Child Protection purposes. If you inadvertently discuss school business outside school, you could be putting a child at risk.

We do value tremendously the support we receive from volunteers, and we couldn't do our job nearly as efficiently without it, so a huge thank you for everything you do.

Mr Thomas Moore

Principal

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I have read and understood the Confidentiality Agreement:.

Name:

Signed:.....Date:



APPENDIX 3

OFF-SITE VISITS VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

School trips are an integral part of learning at Leigh Academy Paddock Wood 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.

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 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

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

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.
- Volunteers are not permitted to accompany children to the toilets without a member of staff.
- Volunteer helpers are not permitted to take photographs of children.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to give/buy their group treats e.g., ice-creams, biscuits, sweets – before, during or after the school trip.

- Volunteers are not allowed to touch or reprimand children but should speak to a school staff member if there are any difficulties. If you need to move a child or gain a child's attention we always use their name and under no circumstances are we to come into physical contact with a child.

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. Under no circumstances will a volunteer be asked to administer medication of any kind. 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.

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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.

Signed: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX 4 SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Leigh Academy Paddock Wood is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils. Strict child protection and recruitment procedures operate and all appointments are subject to satisfactory references and enhanced checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The academy has appointed Charlotte Gunning as the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school. The academy has appointed Thomas Moore, Simon Page, Charlotte McLeish, Sarah Thorne and Samantha Chapman as the Designated Safeguarding Deputies.

If an adult has a concern about any aspect of the welfare or well-being of a child they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the deputies and record it as a concern.

Everyone should listen; a child will disclose to a person who they trust. As a staff team we are confident in recognising, referring, responding and recording