



Pontesbury CE

Primary School

Volunteer Policy

Reviewed November 2026:
Due for review: November 2027

At the forefront of this policy is the Church of England's vision for education 'Educating for life in all its fullness' and the school's vision 'Aim High, Climb Higher' (which is reflected by Psalm 121 "Lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD"). The following policy outlines how all our school community can promote the flourishing of children and adults in our school community through volunteering (whilst ensuring that legislation and guidance are followed).

Purpose and scope

Pontesbury CE Primary School values the time, skills and experience that volunteers bring. Volunteers can enrich learning, strengthen community links and help children and adults flourish. Safeguarding pupils remains our first priority.

This policy applies to adults and young people supporting the school without payment, apart from agreed expenses. It covers regular and occasional volunteers, including parents, governors, former pupils, local residents, church and PTA members, students and people accompanying educational visits. Work experience, trainee and placement arrangements may also be subject to separate requirements.

Principles

- Volunteering must benefit pupils and support the school's vision, values and development priorities.
- No volunteer has an automatic right to a placement. Roles are agreed according to need, suitability, available supervision and safeguarding requirements.
- Volunteers supplement, but do not replace, employed staff or take sole responsibility for teaching, behaviour management, intimate care or duties outside their agreed role.
- The school will promote equality, dignity and inclusion and will consider reasonable adjustments for disabled volunteers.

Examples of volunteering

- Hearing pupils read or supporting learning activities
- Supporting art, computing, sport or other curriculum activities
- Helping with clubs, events, the PTA or the wider school community
- Accompanying day visits or residential visits
- Supporting individual pupils or small groups under agreed arrangements

Recruitment and appointment

Prospective volunteers should contact the school office and complete the application and agreement. The headteacher, or a delegated senior leader, will decide whether a suitable role is available.

- An informal discussion will clarify the role, availability, boundaries, supervision and any adjustments required.
- The school may obtain references, verify identity and complete other proportionate checks before a placement begins.
- The school will provide a written or clearly explained role description and name a supervising member of staff.

- Appointment is subject to satisfactory checks, induction and training. Information will be recorded in line with the school's safer recruitment and record-retention arrangements.
- The headteacher may decline, delay, suspend or end a placement where this is necessary for safeguarding, conduct or operational reasons.

Safeguarding and suitability checks

The school will assess each role before it begins, considering the activities involved, frequency, location, level of contact with pupils, opportunity for unsupervised contact and whether the activity is regulated activity.

Regulated activity from 1 September 2026

A volunteer who teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children on more than three days in any 30-day period, or undertakes qualifying overnight activity, may be in regulated activity even when supervised. The school will apply the current legal definition and statutory guidance to each role.

- A volunteer undertaking regulated activity must have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. The school must establish that the person is not barred before permitting regulated activity.
- For a role that is not regulated activity, the school will make and record a proportionate decision about whether an enhanced DBS check without barred list information is appropriate and legally available.
- Occasional volunteers will be appropriately supervised. Supervision does not replace a barred list check when the role is regulated activity.
- A person under 16 cannot have a DBS check. The school will complete a specific risk assessment and ensure appropriate supervision.
- The school may review checks and role eligibility if the volunteer's duties or frequency change. Volunteers must tell the headteacher promptly about any matter that may affect their suitability.

Induction and training

Before starting, every volunteer will receive induction proportionate to their role. This will include:

- the school's child protection procedures and the identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs;
- how to report concerns about a child or an adult, including low-level concerns and whistleblowing;
- expected conduct, professional boundaries, confidentiality and information sharing;
- online safety, mobile phone, photography and social media expectations;
- signing in, identification, health and safety, first aid, fire and emergency arrangements;
- the volunteer's role and arrangements if that person is absent.

Volunteers will receive safeguarding information and training appropriate to their role and must confirm that they understand it. Volunteers undertaking regular or substantial work with children may be required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education in full. Training will be refreshed when necessary.

Safeguarding concerns

- A concern about a child, including a disclosure, must be reported immediately to the DSL or a deputy DSL. The volunteer must not investigate, promise confidentiality or delay passing on the concern.
- If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of serious harm, emergency services or children's social care should be contacted as appropriate, and the DSL informed without delay.
- Any concern about the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer, contractor or other adult, however small, must be reported promptly to the headteacher. A concern about the headteacher must be reported to the chair of governors.
- If a volunteer feels unable to raise a safeguarding concern internally, they should follow the school's whistleblowing procedure.

Conduct and professional boundaries

Volunteers must follow the Volunteer Guidance and Agreement in this document, instructions from staff and all relevant school policies. In particular, volunteers must:

- act professionally, respectfully and in a way consistent with the school's Christian vision and values;
- work only within the agreed role and under the direction of the named supervisor;
- leave behaviour management and sanctions to school staff;
- avoid favouritism and maintain appropriate boundaries, including where their own child attends the school;
- not give or accept gifts except small, openly exchanged tokens approved by staff;
- not exchange personal contact details or communicate with pupils through personal email, messaging, gaming or social media accounts;
- not photograph, film or record pupils, or post information about pupils or school activities;
- keep personal mobile phones and smart devices stored away unless their use has been expressly authorised;
- not transport a pupil, meet a pupil outside the agreed role or be alone with a pupil unless the arrangement has been specifically authorised and appropriately risk assessed.

Physical contact and personal care

Volunteers must maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Physical contact must be necessary, appropriate to the role and in the child's best interests. Volunteers must not initiate unnecessary contact, engage in rough play or provide intimate or personal care unless specifically authorised, trained and included in an agreed plan. Any incident or concern must be reported promptly to the supervising member of staff or DSL.

Confidentiality, information sharing and data protection

- Information about pupils, families, staff and school business is confidential and must not be discussed outside school or used for personal purposes.
- Volunteers must not access records or systems unless authorised and necessary for their role.
- Questions from parents about a pupil must be referred to the class teacher or headteacher. A parent volunteer must arrange a separate appointment to discuss their own child.
- Safeguarding information must be shared promptly with the DSL or deputy DSL. Data protection must not be treated as a barrier to necessary and proportionate safeguarding information sharing.

- Volunteer records will be stored securely, retained in accordance with the school's retention schedule and removed from current records, including the single central record where applicable, when no longer required.

Health, safety and emergencies.

- Volunteers must sign in and out, wear the identification provided and follow site security rules.
- Volunteers must follow health and safety, fire, evacuation, lockdown and educational visit instructions.
- Hazards, accidents, injuries and near misses must be reported immediately.
- Volunteers should obtain help from a trained first aider and must not provide first aid unless trained and authorised. In an immediate life-threatening emergency, they should call for help, contact 999 where necessary and act within the limits of their competence.

Concerns, complaints and ending an arrangement

A volunteer should raise practical concerns with their supervisor and unresolved concerns with the headteacher. Complaints will be considered under the appropriate school procedure. Either the volunteer or the school may end the arrangement. The school may suspend or end it immediately where necessary to protect pupils, maintain standards of conduct or meet operational needs.