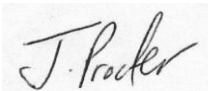




Achievement for All, Learning Together, Learning for Life



Volunteer Policy

Review cycle	1 / 2 / 3 years	Date: January 2026
Approved by	Full Governing Body / Executive Headteacher	
Changes made in this review cycle		
Linked policies	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Health and Safety Policy	
Signed		Date: January 2026
Position	Executive Headteacher	
Date of next Review	January 2028	

Introduction

Volunteers at our schools 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 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 in include:

- Hearing children read
- Supporting in Forest School sessions
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children in the classroom
- Undertaking art & craft activities with children
- Running after-school clubs
- Working with children on the computers
- Accompanying school visits
- Driving children to activities (current driving licence, insurance documentation & MOT required)

Becoming a Volunteer

- New volunteers must complete a Volunteer Application form.
- All volunteers are expected to meet with the Head of School and read the Volunteer Policy.
- All volunteers must read and sign the Volunteer induction pack of policies
- Volunteers who have signed the Volunteer Agreement, met with the Head of School and hold an Enhanced DBS Clearance will not be expected to complete the Volunteer Application form. However, if there is a 3 month or more lapse in volunteering at school, it will be necessary to complete the Volunteer Application and reapply for DBS Enhanced Disclosure.

Our School Vision

All adults 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 vision. Click on each School's badge to see the Vision and Values of individual schools.

Aims

- ✶ 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 parents with clear expectations and guidelines
- ✶ Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers
- ✶ This policy has been developed in line with the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Confidentiality

- Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality
- Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with and come into contact with should be voiced with the Head of School (and Designated Safeguarding Lead) and NOT with the parents of the child or 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 Executive Headteacher or Head of School immediately.

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 and 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 or problem regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

Health & Safety

The school's Health and Safety Policy is available on individual school's websites. 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 in the first instance.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, and our volunteers must share our commitment to child protection. To ensure we're upholding our responsibility to keep our pupils safe, we will:

- Conduct enhanced DBS checks on volunteers who:
 - Work one-on-one 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 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

- Require volunteers to agree and adhere to our code of conduct (see appendix 2) and to read, and adhere to, the school's policies on:
 - Safeguarding
 - Use of mobile phones
 - ICT and internet acceptable use
 - Online safety
 - Behaviour
- Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised, and are never left alone with pupils

All volunteers must hold an Enhanced DBS Disclosure before they can help at school. All volunteers must have met with a DSL regarding Safeguarding procedures and have signed to say they have read the safeguarding policy.

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 Online Safety Policy which is available from the main office or the school website, Personal devices including mobile phones and watches that connect to the internet should not be used in school during class time. Staff and volunteers may not make or receive calls during teaching time. Use of phones or phone watches must be limited to non-contact time when no children are present. Staff and volunteers should keep devices out of sight in desks or cupboards when on school property. Staff and volunteers must only use school-owned devices for capturing, recording and storing data or photos of children.

Work Experience/ Placement Students

The Pioneer Federation has a number of relationships 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 Pioneer Federation Schools. Secondary schools, colleges and universities wanting students to be placed with us need to formally make contact with the Executive Headteacher or Head of School outlining the aims of the placement and duration. 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.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a Volunteer will be referred directly to the Executive or Head of School for investigation. Any complaints made by a Volunteer will be referred to the Executive or Head of School.

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.
- Refuse or terminate a placement to ensure the smooth running of Pioneer Federation Schools.

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 our records retention schedule.

Managers and Volunteer Co-ordinators will:

- ensure that all volunteers receive a health and safety induction on their first day
- ensure that volunteers and volunteer groups are advised of the relevant health and safety arrangements for the work they undertake
- ensure that all necessary risk assessments have been carried out for the tasks they are carrying out
- approve all volunteer activities and satisfy themselves on a risk assessment basis that the volunteers have the appropriate knowledge and skills required and are competent and capable of undertaking their tasks safely. This is particularly important where volunteers may be children or young people, for whom a specific risk assessment will be required
- ensure that volunteers, where appropriate, have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before they are allowed to work with, or come into contact with children or vulnerable adults
- ensure that each volunteer or volunteer group is provided with information, instruction and training
- ensure that each volunteer or volunteer group is provided with appropriate supervision the extent of which will be determined by age, ability, health, mobility, etc. of the volunteers
- ensure that appropriate training is arranged e.g. manual handling according to their needs. Those volunteers providing direct personal care to service users, pupils, etc. with limited mobility, particular health needs etc. may require specific manual handling training arranged through their Service Department.
- ensure that safe systems of work are in place so that the health and safety of vulnerable people such as service users and pupils, are not endangered by the inappropriate storage, transportation, use and disposal of hazardous substances
- ensure that all volunteers have access to first aid facilities
- ensure that volunteers are aware of the procedure for reporting health and safety incidents e.g., accident, near miss etc.
- ensure that volunteers do not work with hazardous substances labelled as dangerous, i.e., toxic, corrosive etc.; and never apply pesticides unless in possession of the appropriate certification
- ensure that volunteers are provided with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary, in accordance with the Corporate PPE Policy.
- If the voluntary work involves the use of powered work equipment:
- ensure that powered work equipment, e.g. hedge cutters, brush cutters, strimmers, is not loaned by the County Council to volunteer groups
- ensure that volunteers are competent, trained and in possession of an appropriate certificate to use our powered work equipment
- ensure that volunteers working on countryside projects will, in addition to first aid facilities, have access to mobile phones and/or mobile radios. If working alone must follow the lone working procedure for the group
- issue Countryside volunteers with relevant information, e.g. 'County Council booklet health information for Countryside Workers' on avoiding disease and infection or the Volunteer Handbook

Volunteers will:

- ensure that during their work activity they do not endanger themselves or anyone else
- if working alone provide the volunteer co-ordinator with information of their whereabouts and the time of their intended return to home or depot
- report any incident, accident or near miss to the manager or volunteer co-ordinator

- follow instructions and control measures of any risk assessments
- work according to any information, instruction and training they have received
- ensure that their own work equipment is maintained
- ensure appropriate use of any personal protection equipment provided.

Health and Safety Arrangements

Managers must be familiar with the health and safety aspects of the tasks to be undertaken by volunteers/volunteer groups under their control.

Those volunteers required to work full time or part time for the County Council, on tasks which otherwise might be carried out by direct employees, e.g. provision of personal care/lifting and handling for vulnerable people, should be required to submit a Pre-Employment Health Questionnaire for assessment in the usual way and advice can be sought from County Council's Occupational Health Provider in such situations. In addition, the employing department may require additional safeguards, e.g. police checks, to be put in place.

Insurance Implications

Volunteers are not included in the County Council's Employers Liability Policy. However, for Public Liability claims purposes the volunteer may be treated as acting on behalf of the County Council in certain circumstances, e.g. when under instruction or supervision on a specific project. Third party claims arising out of the negligence of the volunteer are included within the scope of the County Council's Public Liability Policy subject to the normal policy terms and conditions.

The Council secures a limited amount of Personal Accident insurance cover for volunteers suffering personal injury (not attributable to negligence on the part of the County Council) while on County Council business.

Further information on this and other insurance matters for specific situations must be obtained from the County Council's Insurance Manager within the Business Services Department.

Appendix 1: Volunteer Guidelines

Thank you very much for volunteering to help at The Pioneer Federation.

The following are a set of guidelines, which we hope will help to establish a successful partnership between staff and volunteers at the school.

- Teachers work hard to plan lessons and direct learning in advance. If you are unsure of the purpose of the activity you have been asked to assist with, please clarify it with the teacher or teaching assistant at the start of the session.
- If you are committed to helping on a regular basis and for any reason is unable to attend on a day when you are expected, please inform the teacher or the school office in advance. Similarly if your help is not required on a particular day (due to a trip or other school activity), then the teacher will provide you with advance notice of this.
- Helping in the school that contains your own child will give you an insight into his or her education. Should you have any questions that arise out of this please direct them to the class teacher privately on a separate occasion, through Parent/Teacher consultation evenings, or through the other channels that already exist within the school.
- When you are working with the children, it is important to create an atmosphere that makes the children want to learn. Enthusiasm and encouragement are extremely important in helping with development.
- Should a child or children spoil an activity in which you are participating for others, please give one warning before asking the teacher or teaching assistant to intervene.
- Under the Children Act 1989 relating to child protection, if a child tells you something that you feel is of concern but you might not know the relevance of, you should discuss this privately with the teacher and no further.
- Confidentiality regarding what might be seen, heard or discussed within the class by children or adults is extremely important. School staff are bound by the rule of confidentiality that as a volunteer will also apply to you. Please do not discuss any issues that might arise in class with anyone other than the class teacher or Head of School who is best placed to decide on the correct course of action.
- Volunteers will in no way discriminate on the grounds of age, gender, race or religion, sex or sexual orientation.

You may be aware that legislation requires all people working with 'vulnerable members of society', whether in a professional or a voluntary capacity, have to apply for a "Disclosure" from the Criminal Records Bureau (DBS). DBS disclosures are not 'portable' therefore, even if you have one already, you will need to apply for a new one. Applications can be completed online, please ask the school office how to apply.

Thank you very much for volunteering, your time, effort and enthusiasm to help in school. You can be assured that your help is greatly appreciated and will be of genuine help to both children and staff alike.

Yours sincerely

James Procter

Executive Headteacher

Appendix 2: Volunteer Agreement

Thank you for offering your services as a Volunteer at The Pioneer Federation

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 to the school office.

You will receive a copy of it for your records.

- I have received a copy of the School's Volunteer Policy and have read the Volunteer Guidelines
- I agree to support the School's Aims and Values
- I agree to treat information I learn from being a Volunteer in School as confidential
- I understand that I am required to hold a DBS Enhanced Disclosure before I can start volunteering at school.

I have a current East Sussex County Council DBS Enhanced Disclosure dated.....

I do not have a DBS Enhanced Disclosure and require a Volunteer Application Form

☐

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3: Volunteer Information

Name of Volunteer: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

What skills / areas would you like to help with in school?

Please circle days you would be most able to help.

Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri

Are there any particular age groups / classes you would like to work with?

Do you have any disabilities / other needs we need to take into account when working 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:
Email address:	Email address:
Phone number:	Phone number:

Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Information

Appendix 4: Visitors Code of Conduct

All visitors and school volunteers must:

1. Everyone who is part of the school community must adhere to the Equalities Policy which is available on the web site or from the main office.
2. Use appropriate language and behaviour with children.
3. Sign in and out of the premises and wear a visitors badge at all times.
4. Report any breakages or accidents to the main office.
5. If you feel any way uncomfortable about the behaviour of a child. discuss this with the DSL.
6. Never give a pupil a lift in your vehicle unless you have appropriate insurance, parental consent and have school permission.
7. Mobile phones should be turned off when on site. In an emergency, please use the phone in the main office.
8. All photography and filming within school is prohibited unless permission is granted from the SLT or DSL.
9. All visitors should be aware that Pioneer Federation has a Whistleblowing, Child Protection and Safeguarding, Online Policies- these are available on the school web site or at the main office.
10. Clothing should be respectful of pupils, staff and the working environment and community.
11. Professionals should bring photographic ID and proof of DBS.

When signing in, you are agreeing to the above code of conduct.