ROKESLY INFANTS SCHOOL

Volunteer Policy

Ratified: March 2026

Review Date: March 2027

Introduction

Volunteers at our school 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

• Local residents

• Volunteers from local organisations

The types of activities that Volunteers are engaged in include:

• Hearing children read

• Working with small groups of children

• Working alongside individual children

• Undertaking art & craft activities with children

• Running after-school clubs e.g. dancing

• Working with children on the computers

• Accompanying school visits

• Addressing areas of development highlighted in the School Improvement Plan,

• Supporting pupils who have been identified by the Inclusion Team as needing additional support

• Providing positive role models and one to one support

- Working within the school library to maintain books and the tracking systems

To support the children in their education academically, socially and emotionally including developing independence skills, we do not permit parent volunteers to volunteer on a regular basis in their own child's class.

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 children read, usually approaches the school office and leaves their details for them to be contacted by a member of the senior management team. Volunteers should complete the Volunteer Information Sheet (Appendix 1) with their contact details, type of activities they would like to help with, and the times that they are available to help.

Before starting to help in school, volunteers should complete the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2), which sets out the school's expectations of volunteers and asks Volunteers to confirm they have received a copy of this policy and completes all checks.

All prospective volunteers are required to provide the details of two referees as part of the safer recruitment and safeguarding process.

Referees should:

- Be individuals who have known the applicant in a professional, academic, or voluntary capacity
- Not be close family members or partners
- Be able to comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children

The school will:

- Contact both referees prior to the commencement of any volunteering activities
- Request information regarding the applicant's character, reliability, and suitability to work in a school environment
- Follow up on any concerns or discrepancies identified in references

In line with safeguarding guidance, at least one reference should, where possible, be from a recent employer, educational setting, or organisation where the applicant has worked or volunteered with children.

Volunteering placements will not be confirmed until satisfactory references have been received and verified.

The school reserves the right to decline or end a volunteer placement where it considers this necessary, including where an individual is deemed unsuitable for the role or where the arrangement is not in the best interests of pupils or the school.

Decisions will be made fairly and in line with the school's safeguarding duties and the Equality Act 2010.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality.

Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with or come into contact with should be voiced with the class teacher and NOT with the parents of the child 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 head teacher or a member of SLT.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of the class teacher 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 guidance from the teacher in the event of any query regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

A member of the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) will co-ordinate the placement of all parent volunteers and will hold regular meetings for parent volunteers.

Health & Safety

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available on request to volunteers working in the school. 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 I accompanying 2 children on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher / head teacher.

Child Protection

The welfare of our children is paramount.

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

• All regular volunteers are given a copy of the school's Child Protection Policy

• All volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy and asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2)

• To ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all of our Volunteers must have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS). A certificate is issued to the individual to produce in school.

• Where a Volunteer is engaged in a 'one-off' activity e.g. helping supervise a group of children as part of a class visit, a barring list check is carried out on these volunteers. These volunteers, are under constant supervision of school staff and must read our off-site visit agreement (Appendix 3).

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the head teacher, deputy head teacher or assistant head teacher for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be referred to the head teacher, deputy head teacher or assistant head teacher.

The head teacher 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.

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been approved by the governing body and will be reviewed annually and updated in the light of new guidance from either the DFE or local authority.

APPENDIX 1 VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET - FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

Name of Volunteer:

Date of Birth:

Other names known by (including maiden names):

Email:

Address:

Phone Number:

Child/Class:

Next of kin name:

Contact:

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

Are there any particular age groups / classes you would like to work with (not your own child's class)

Do you have any disabilities or other needs (including medical) we need to be aware of? (please give details)

Availability

At what times are you interested in volunteering

Please enter times available in the table below:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Am					
Pm					

Please state the length of time you would be available: _____ months/weeks

Please share details of 2 referees below:

Referee 1

Name: ……

Relationship to candidate:……..

Contact details

Number:……..

Email:……

Referee 2

Name: ……

Relationship to candidate:……..

Contact details

Number:……..

Email:……

Thank you for taking time to complete this volunteer information sheet.

Please return to the school office.

Your offer of help is appreciated and we will be in touch shortly.

APPENDIX 2

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at Rokesly Infant School or Rokesly Junior School. 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 in at school.

You will receive a copy of it for your records.

• I have received a copy of the school's volunteer policy

• I agree to treat information I learn from being a volunteer in school as confidential

• I understand that I am required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check to advise the school of my suitability as a volunteer.

• I have been shown the fire safety plan and am aware of my obligations

• I have been shown the 'health and safety law' poster and know who to go to if I have a health and safety concern.

• I have read the schools safeguarding policy and know I must speak to a member of school staff if I have any concerns. I have been signposted to KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education)

Signed: _____

Name:_____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 3 OFF-SITE VISITS VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

School trips are an integral part of learning at our school and afford many children opportunities which are outside of 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.

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 well-being 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 consult with the teacher in charge before allowing children to go to the toilet.

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.

• Volunteer helpers are not permitted to take photographs of children.

• Volunteer helpers are not allowed to give/buy their group treats e.g. icecreams, 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.

Please do not use a mobile phone as this may cause a distraction, leaving the children at risk.

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 or any other specific 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 bags 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.