

Volunteering Policy

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Review cycle/date:	Every 3 years; March 2026
Party responsible:	Staffing, Finance and Premises Committee
Linked policies:	Staff Code of Conduct Policy; Health & Safety Policy; Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy; Staff Discipline Policy; Staff Grievance Policy; Equality Plan

Introduction

This policy sets out the broad principles of voluntary involvement in The Swanage School. It is of relevance to all within the school, including volunteers, staff, and those elected or appointed to positions of responsibility.

Volunteers have an important role in bringing a range of skills and experience that can enhance and promote the learning opportunities we offer our students.

Our volunteers include:

- Members of the Governing Body*
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Ex-members of staff
- Students on work experience
- University students
- Local residents
- Friends and supporters of the school

* Members of the Governing Body are governed by a separate procedure

The types of activities that volunteers engage in, include:

- Working with small groups of students to assist them in their learning
- Working alongside individual students, as an additional tutor
- Accompanying school visits
- Assisting with extracurricular activities

Commitment

The Swanage School values the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions. The Swanage School recognises its responsibility to arrange volunteering efficiently so that the volunteer's time is best used to our mutual advantage.

Statement of values and principles

Volunteering is a valuable activity that is supported and encouraged by The Swanage School and is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The role of volunteers complements but does not replace the role of paid staff.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers.

The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their voluntary activity. Likewise, the school cannot be compelled to provide either regular work or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer.

Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the school expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the school.

Volunteer Co-ordination

All volunteers will have a nominated member of staff or volunteer to offer guidance and advice to help the volunteer carry out tasks effectively. Volunteers will be informed of who to contact to receive support and supervision.

Recruitment & Process for Recruiting Volunteers

The Swanage School is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all. The acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role will be based on the individual's suitability to carry out agreed tasks.

The school will follow this process:

- a) Identify the need and role
- b) Attract candidates by means of a local advert/other methods of communication used by the school
- c) The candidate(s) attend a meeting at school for an informal discussion to ensure that they are suitable for the role
- d) The candidate completes a Volunteer Application Form.

- e) References are applied for and screened if deemed necessary, and a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Enhanced Disclosure is undertaken before the volunteer starts working.
- f) The volunteer will be made aware of their role and responsibilities within the school (this is not required where a volunteer is participating in a one-off activity)
- g) Induction – relevant school policies and documentation should be explained and issued. This will include mandatory safeguarding training.
- h) Volunteer records will be kept centrally within the school

Volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence.

Training & Development

All volunteers will be made aware of and have access to all the school's relevant policies, including those relating to volunteering, health and safety, child protection and equal opportunities, discipline and grievance.

Support, Supervision and Recognition

All volunteers work under the supervision of a teacher or permanent member of staff. Teachers retain ultimate responsibility for students at all times, including students' behaviour and the activity that they are undertaking. Volunteers should have clear guidance from the designated supervisor as to how an activity is carried out and the expected outcome of the activity. In the event of any query or problem regarding the student's understanding of the task, their behaviour or welfare, volunteers must seek advice/guidance from their designated supervisor.

Expenses

The school's volunteers are able to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence of the expenditure. What can be reclaimed from the school and the calculation of expenses will be explained to the volunteer before they start any activity likely to give rise to expenses. Volunteers will be made aware of the procedure for the reimbursement of expenses.

Insurance

The school's liability insurance policies include the activities of volunteers and liability towards them. The school does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage.

Confidentiality

The school will advise the volunteer on its confidentiality policy and procedures, where relevant. This would include those relating to personal information held by the school relating to the volunteer.

Rights and Responsibilities

The school recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is (and what is not) expected of them
- have adequate support in their volunteering

- receive appreciation
- have safe working conditions
- be insured
- know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
- receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses
- receive appropriate training
- be free from discrimination
- be offered the opportunity for personal development

The school expects volunteers to:

- be reliable
- be honest
- respect confidentiality
- make the most of training and support opportunities
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the school
- work within agreed guidelines
- respect the work of the school and not bring it into disrepute
- comply with the school's policies

Appendix I – Volunteer Application Form



The Swanage School: Volunteer Form

Thank you for volunteering to support The Swanage School – this is very much appreciated by the whole Swanage School community.

At The Swanage School we aim to create a safe and enjoyable learning environment for our students.

In order to ensure that our school is run safely, our volunteers are required to conform to our school's safeguarding policy, and will be asked to:

- Provide photo proof of identity (passport and driving licence)
- Provide a recent proof of address (utility bill, bank statement etc)
- Undertake a DBS check (this will be organised and paid for by the school)
- Provide contact details for two referees (these can be personal or professional)
- Demonstrate that they are competent to carry out the task for which they have volunteered
- Read and agree to implement the child protection/safeguarding policy of the school.

Please complete the details below and arrange to bring in original copies of the above documents which we will photocopy and retain.

Title: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Miss Name: _____

Address: _____

Mobile phone number: _____

Landline number: _____

Email address: _____

Date of birth: _____

Referees: (Must be someone you have known for more than 2 years and not a relation)

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone number:	Phone number:
Email address:	Email address:

Please describe the activity you would like to undertake your experience and/or qualifications in relation to the volunteering you would like to undertake:

Activity: _____

Experience/Qualifications: _____

Emergency Contact 1	
Name:	
Relationship to you	
Phone number (mobile):	
Phone number (landline):	
Email:	
Address:	

Emergency Contact 2	
Name:	
Relationship to you:	
Phone number (mobile):	
Phone number (landline):	
Email:	
Address:	

The School's relevant policies, including those relating to volunteering, health and safety, discipline and grievance are available on request.

Appendix 2 – Volunteer Agreement



The Swanage School Volunteer Agreement

This volunteer agreement describes the arrangement between The Swanage School and you. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

Volunteer name:

Your role as a volunteer is: (state nature and components of the work)

Your volunteer role commences on: (date)

This volunteering role is designed to (state how this volunteering role benefits the school)

Your named staff contact is: (state name of member of staff)

Part 1: The Swanage School commits to the following:

A. Induction and Training

To provide a thorough induction on the work of The Swanage School, its staff, your volunteering role and the induction and/or training you need to meet the responsibilities of this role.

To clearly explain your duties and the parameters of your role within the School.

B. Supervision and Support

To explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them. To provide a named person who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering and any successes and problems. To do our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us.

Classroom based volunteering: To ensure you work under the supervision of a class teacher (unless otherwise agreed by the Headteacher) who will retain responsibility for students behaviour and the activity they are undertaking unless otherwise agreed by the Headteacher.

To provide you with clear guidance as to how an activity is carried out and what the expected outcome of an activity is. You are encouraged to seek further advice/guidance from the teacher in the event of any query/problem regarding a student's understanding of a task or behaviour.

C. Expenses

To reimburse those expenses that have been appropriately authorised. Where reimbursement has been agreed please ensure you provide receipts and ensure you follow the School procedures to claim back any expenses.

D. Health and Safety

To provide adequate training and feedback in support of the Swanage School's Health and Safety policy, a copy of which can be found on the School website.

To ensure that you are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire alarm evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (e.g. using specific items of equipment or accompanying students on visits).

E. Insurance

To provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst carrying out volunteering roles which have been approved and authorised.

F. Equality and Diversity

To ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with the Swanage School's Equality and Diversity Statement, a copy of which can be found on The Swanage School website.

G. Problems

To try to resolve fairly any problems, complaints and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us. To ensure that you know who to address concerns about anything another adult in the School does or says.

H. Confidentiality

To ensure that you are aware of the confidentiality required in relation to your work in school, and to let you know to address any concerns that you may have about the students to the class teacher (or your contact staff member) and not to the parents of the student or persons outside the School.

Part 2: The Volunteer

We expect you:

- A. To help The Swanage School fulfil its [describe role/function/services which the volunteer will be helping with];
- B. To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability;
- C. To follow the School's procedures (including Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, and Health and Safety), in relation to its staff, students, visitors and other volunteers;
- D. To follow the School's standards on good practice as set out in the Staff Handbook;
- E. To maintain the confidential information of the School and of its students;
- F. To meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed to and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible;
- G. To provide two referees who may be contacted, and to agree to a Disclosure and Barring Service check being carried out.
- H. Read and conform to the advice and guidance set out below in the Child Protection summary

Appendix 3 - Child Protection Declaration for volunteers, supply staff or contractors working on the school site

Child Protection Summary

As you are volunteering to work in this school you have a duty of care towards all pupils. This means you must act at all times in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare.

You must follow the principles of safer working practice, which includes use of technology – on no account should you take images of pupils on personal equipment, including your mobile phone.

If the behaviour of another adult in the school gives rise to concern, you must report it to the Headteacher.

If you have a concern about a child, particularly if you think s/he may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm, it is your responsibility to share the information promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Mandy Sands or the Deputy/ies who are: Jenny Maraspin, Kay Lawton, Dan Ringrow, Steph Humby, Eleanor Morris.

The following is not an exhaustive list, but you might become concerned as a result of:

- Seeing a physical injury which you believe to be non-accidental
- Observing something in the appearance of a pupil which leads you to think his/her needs are being neglected
- A pupil telling you that s/he has been subjected to some form of abuse

In any of these circumstances you must write down what you observed or heard, date and sign the account and give it to the DSL or Deputy.

What to do when a child discloses abuse:

1. Stay calm and listen
2. Go slowly
3. Reassure them that they have not done anything wrong
4. Be supportive
5. Gather essential facts. Do not ask leading questions
6. Tell them what will happen next
7. Report immediately to the DSL or another member of the safeguarding team
8. Makes notes with date and time and pass these to the DSL as soon as possible

Do not ask the pupil to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school, ask him/her or any other pupil to write a “statement,” or inform parents. You are not expected to make a judgement about whether the child is telling the truth.

Remember: share any concerns, do not keep them to yourself.

This school has a Child Protection Policy and a Staff Code of Conduct – available from the DSL if you would like to read them.

I have read, understood, and agree to abide by the Child Protection Policy Summary and The Swanage School's Volunteering Policy.

Name:

Date:

Signature: