

Volunteering Policy

Date approved:	February 2026
Review cycle/date:	Every 3 years; March 2029 (or earlier if statutory guidance changes.)
Party responsible:	Staffing, Finance and Premises Committee
Linked policies:	Staff Code of Conduct Policy; Health & Safety Policy; Safeguarding & Child Protection 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 applies to all individuals who support the school in an unpaid capacity, including:

- regular and occasional volunteers
- student helpers and ex-students who return to support activities
- work-experience participants
- university trainees
- external partners or adults taking part in school-arranged activities, whether on-site or off-site.

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 volunteers bring and is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions. Volunteering enhances, but does not replace, the work of paid staff. Volunteers support school activities without entering into any form of employment contract, financial obligation, or expectation of minimum hours. 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

Every volunteer will be assigned a named member of staff who will provide guidance, support, and oversight. Volunteers who work directly with students will receive an induction that includes safeguarding expectations, reporting routes, and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Volunteers who have regular contact with students will be required to read **the school's safeguarding policies and the appropriate section of Keeping Children Safe in Education** (Part 1 or Annex A).

Recruitment & Process for Recruiting Volunteers

The school uses a consistent and appropriate process for selecting and preparing volunteers for their roles. 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) Publicise the volunteering opportunity using the school's established communication methods
- b) Invite the candidate for an informal discussion.
- c) Completion of a Volunteer Application Form and verification of identity.
- d) Obtain references where appropriate.

e) A discussion will be held by SLT to determine the level of supervision and whether the role meets the definition of regulated activity.

f) Arrange appropriate DBS checks:

Enhanced + Barred List Check only for volunteers in regulated activity

Enhanced DBS Check (without barred list) may be carried out for supervised but regular volunteers

One-off or fully supervised volunteers will not require DBS unless identified by risk assessment

g) Volunteers must attend an induction covering safeguarding, confidentiality, conduct, and reporting concerns. Volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence.

h) All relevant checks, risk-assessment outcomes, and induction details will be recorded on the Single Central Record (SCR).

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.

Supervision, Support and Professional Boundaries

All volunteers work under the supervision and guidance of school staff. Volunteers will **not** be left unsupervised with students unless their role has been risk-assessed as regulated activity and all appropriate checks have been completed. 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. Volunteers must not exchange personal contact details with students or communicate with them via personal email, phone, or social media. All communication must take place through approved school channels.

Safe Environment and Use of Technology

All volunteer activities must take place in open or supervised environments. Volunteers must comply with the school's Online Safety Policy, including expectations around safe use of technology, filtering and monitoring systems, and reporting concerns relating to online behaviour or content.

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 and Data Protection

Volunteers must follow the school's confidentiality procedures and data protection requirements. Personal data must be handled securely and only for authorised school purposes. Volunteers will receive information on the school's privacy notice, secure handling of data, and procedures for reporting any data breaches or concerns.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations

If a volunteer has a concern about a child, or if a child makes a disclosure, the volunteer must report it immediately and verbally to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL. A written record may be completed afterwards on guidance from the DSL. Volunteers must not promise confidentiality, attempt to investigate, or share concerns with anyone other than safeguarding staff.

Any concerns, allegations or low-level concerns about the conduct of a volunteer must be reported to the Headteacher or DSL immediately. The school will follow its managing allegations procedures, including consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where required.

Rights and Responsibilities

Overseas Volunteers, and Right-To-Work

Volunteers are not required to undergo right-to-work checks unless the nature of the role could be interpreted as creating an employment-like relationship. Overseas volunteers must ensure that their visa conditions permit volunteering. The school will not place volunteers in roles that could be considered employment or contractual work.

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 a volunteer or visitor working in this school, you have a duty of care to protect and promote the welfare of all pupils. You must act at all times in a way that is consistent with their safety, wellbeing, and rights.

This summary outlines the essential safeguarding expectations you must follow while on site or working with students under school arrangements.

Required Reading

- All volunteers who have regular contact with students must read: Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 — Part 1
- Volunteers with supervised or one-off / low-contact roles must read: KCSIE 2025 — Annex A (Condensed version of Part 1)

This will be confirmed with you by your supervising member of staff.

Key Contacts

The following staff hold lead responsibility for safeguarding and volunteer management:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Anne-Marie Forde
- **Deputy DSL(s):** Jenny Maraspin, Richard Foster, Steph Humby, Mike Kirkham, Michelle Smith, Kara Barry
- **Headteacher:** Jenny Maraspin
- **Safeguarding Governor:** Tanya Hamilton-Fletcher
- **Data Protection Officer:** Andrew Thomas

Safer Working Practices

- You must follow safer working practice at all times, including:
- Maintaining professional boundaries.
- Never taking images or videos of pupils on personal devices (including mobile phones).
- Using only school-approved systems for communication and reporting.
- Ensuring interactions take place in open, visible areas or under direct supervision.
- Following the school's Online Safety and Filtering & Monitoring expectations, including safe use of technology and reporting any concerning online behaviour or content.

Reporting Concerns About a Child

If you are worried about a child's safety or welfare, you must report it immediately.

You may be concerned because you have:

- Seen a physical injury that may be non-accidental
- Noticed changes in appearance or behaviour suggesting neglect or harm
- Heard a pupil disclose that they are being abused or feel unsafe
- Observed worrying behaviour from an adult or another pupil

You must:

1. Report verbally immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL.
2. Record what you saw/heard factually, with date and time.
3. Give your written record to the DSL/Deputy as soon as possible.

Do not:

- Investigate or ask leading questions
- Promise confidentiality
- Ask a child to repeat their disclosure
- Request written statements from pupils
- Discuss the concern with anyone other than safeguarding staff
- Inform parents yourself

If a Child Discloses Abuse to You

- Stay calm and listen
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing
- Do not pressure them to speak
- Ask only open, non-leading questions if needed for clarity
- Explain what will happen next (that you must share this with the DSL)
- Report immediately to the DSL/Deputy
- Write brief, accurate notes as soon as possible with date/time

Concerns About an Adult's Behaviour

If you are concerned about the behaviour of any adult working with children (including staff, visitors, contractors, supply staff, or volunteers), you must:

- Report the concern immediately to the Headteacher OR
- If the concern involves the Headteacher, report directly to the Chair of Governors.

This includes low-level concerns, such as behaviour that may be inappropriate, unprofessional, or inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct.

All concerns will be managed under the school's procedures for handling allegations, in accordance with KCSIE 2025 Part 4.

Policies You Must Be Aware Of

These are available on request or during induction:

- Safeguarding Children & Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- E-safety & ICT Policy
- Volunteering Policy

Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understood this Child Protection Summary, the required section of KCSIE 2025, and The Swanage School's Volunteering Policy. I agree to follow all safeguarding expectations while working with students.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____