



TEALBY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Aspire, Believe, Achieve

Volunteer Policy

Updated: August 2026

Review date: September 2027

Reviewed and updated to align with: Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and the Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2026-27

Named personnel with responsibility for safeguarding in our school

Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Zoe Humberstone

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL): Chloe Brown & Christa Haslam

Chair of Governors: Rebecca Blackwood

Safeguarding Governor: Rebecca Blackwood

These roles are as set out in the LCC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2026-27 and are reviewed whenever personnel change.

Introduction and aims

We believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the school's work, and that they enrich the school through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the school's strategic aims and vision, as well as its development plan.

The aim of the Tealby School Volunteer Policy is to:

- 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 (KCSIE) 2026, and should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy (including its Low-Level Concerns procedure), all of which apply to volunteers as they do to staff. Where any conflict arises between this policy and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy takes precedence.

Definition of a volunteer

Volunteers can be divided into two groups, either 'occasional' or 'regular':

- Occasional volunteers are those who only accompany staff and children on one-off outings or trips that do not involve overnight stays, or who only help at specific one-off events, e.g. a sports day, school fete or educational activity. Occasional volunteers are supervised by a member of staff at all times and are never left alone with children, so that their activity does not amount to 'regulated activity' with children within the meaning of KCSIE 2026 and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) framework.
- Regular volunteers are those who help three or more times in a 30-day period, once a month or more, or on an overnight stay. Where a regular volunteer's activity is unsupervised, or otherwise meets the statutory definition of 'regulated activity', the school will require an enhanced DBS certificate with a barred list check (see Appendix 2).

How we use volunteers

At Tealby School, volunteers may:

- Hear children read.
- Accompany school visits.
- Work with individual children.
- Work with small groups of children.

- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or art.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Volunteers may be:

- Parents.
- Former pupils.
- Students on work experience.
- Local residents.
- Friends of the school/members of the PTA.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Members of the governing board working at the school in their capacity as governors (for instance, conducting school monitoring visits or attending meetings) are not covered by this policy. They are covered by our Governor Code of Conduct and have already been subject to a screening process.

Recruitment of volunteers

Occasional volunteers would usually be parents or carers who come in to help on a one-off outing or occasion and are not recruited to the position of volunteer. They are not required to go through a recruitment process, including the taking up of DBS checks. This is at the Headteacher's discretion, and where there are known concerns about a parent or other occasional volunteer, it is at the Headteacher's discretion not to engage this person as an occasional volunteer.

Regular volunteers would be in a position of trust within the school and, even where they are not left unsupervised with children, should always go through a recruitment process. The school will also take into consideration any knowledge it has of the person in their relationship with the school, for example as a parent, grandparent, previous employee, governor or committee member, when deciding whether this person will be trustworthy and make a valuable contribution to the school as a volunteer.

The recruitment process should include:

- A DBS check for all regular volunteers, and a barred list check where volunteers will have unsupervised access to children and young people or will otherwise be engaged in regulated activity.
- An informal interview with the Headteacher or a nominated senior member of staff, to include discussion about previous work or contact with children, safeguarding, the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, confidentiality, being in a position of trust, and any transferable risk.
- Two references appropriate to the role. These should relate to recent paid work or volunteering and, wherever possible, include the last known employer. If a volunteer's circumstances mean they are unable to provide such references, they should contact the Headteacher to discuss their situation; it may be possible to undertake some supervised activity which could be scaled up once staff are confident in their suitability.
- Completion of a volunteer recruitment form (see Appendix 1), which includes personal details, background, skills, the types of activities the volunteer would like to help with, and their availability.

Recruitment and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

DBS checks identify whether individuals working in an unsupervised activity with children are suitable to do so. This is because a small minority of people use this route to gain the confidence of children before causing them harm.

See Appendix 2 for the recruitment process.

Having a criminal record does not automatically prevent an individual from being a volunteer. The Headteacher and Governing Body will consider the details of the criminal record and balance this against the activities the individual is to undertake. Advice may be sought from HR in order to make this decision.

If a volunteer commits a criminal offence during their time as a volunteer, they must disclose this to the Headteacher in the same way that any employed member of staff should. The Headteacher will assess whether it is acceptable to continue with the volunteering role, whether the activities should be changed, or whether it is in the best interests of all concerned for the person to no longer act as a volunteer. HR advice may be required.

Information for volunteers

As part of an induction process, volunteers should be given verbal and written information about the school. This would include:

- A volunteer agreement with terms and conditions to sign, which includes confidentiality (see Appendix 3).
- School expectations of volunteers.
- What a volunteer can expect from the school.
- The school's vision, aims and values.
- Health and safety issues, e.g. what to do if there is a fire, lockdown procedures, site/premises security, access to the staff room and other staff areas, hot drinks on site, and the Code of Conduct (including staff behaviour expectations), e.g. being polite, courteous, self-disciplined and respectful, being an appropriate role model, and the school's expectations around language, dress, smoking, mobile phone use, alcohol and illegal substances.
- The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, practices and responsibilities, including the Prevent duty and the school's Low-Level Concerns procedure; this may be 'signed up to' as evidence that the policy has been read and will be complied with.
- The school's Behaviour Policy.
- The school's Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy (where appropriate).
- Any other policies the school sees as relevant to the role at any given time.

Safeguarding issues

- Volunteers should be supervised by a designated member of staff. Even where DBS checks have been undertaken, volunteers should not be left unsupervised for long periods.
- Occasional volunteers should never be left unsupervised, and would not take children to the toilet or be left in charge of a small group of children on an outing away from teacher/teaching assistant/staff member supervision, unless they hold a relevant school DBS check.
- Volunteers must be advised about physical contact with children in the same way as employed staff, in line with the DfE Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those who Work with Children and Young People.
- Volunteers should use the staff toilets and staff room for any breaks rather than using the children's toilets or play areas, unless separate toilets are not available.
- Volunteers must be advised that if a child discloses any information relating to potential abuse, they must bring this to the attention of the teacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately, and must never promise a child confidentiality.
- All volunteers should be given a basic safeguarding briefing by the DSL, including an explanation of low-level concerns (see below) and how to raise them. It may also be appropriate for volunteers to attend staff training sessions on safeguarding.

Low-level concerns

In line with KCSIE 2026 and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the school fosters a culture of openness in which any concern about the behaviour of a volunteer, however small, can be raised without fear of it being seen as a breach of trust. A low-level concern is behaviour that is inconsistent with this policy and the Code of Conduct for Volunteers (Appendix 3), but which does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Examples include, but are not limited to, being overly friendly with a child, showing favouritism, taking photographs of children on a personal device, or spending unnecessary one-to-one

time with a child in a secluded area. Any such concern should be raised with the volunteer's supervisor or the Headteacher, recorded, and reviewed to identify any emerging pattern.

Managing the behaviour of children

- Volunteers should be made aware of the behaviour management policy of the school.
- Volunteers must be advised that it is not their role to discipline children.
- If a potential discipline situation occurs, even where this involves their own child, they must bring this to the attention of the teacher/staff member to resolve, or, if it has been dealt with at the time, as soon as possible afterwards.
- Volunteers must be advised that they must maintain their composure at all times and, if things become difficult, they must immediately inform another member of staff.
- Volunteers should bring any situations of conflict, bullying or prejudice to the attention of the teacher/staff member.

Confidentiality

- Volunteers must be advised that all information about the children and the school in which they are volunteering is confidential and must not be discussed outside of the school or with children, parents or other visitors to the school.
- Volunteers are asked to sign to say they have understood and agree to abide by the school's Code of Conduct for Volunteers.
- Volunteers should not have access to the school's records or children's personal details.
- Any information should be shared on a 'need to know' basis, e.g. a child's medical condition, where this may affect their behaviour or wellbeing.
- Volunteers would not usually attend staff meetings, but there may be exceptions on a 'need to know' basis.
- Volunteers must not take any notes or files about children outside of the school.
- At no time should volunteers be permitted to take photographs, films or recordings of children unless on school equipment and requested to do so by a member of staff. This equipment must not be taken home by the volunteer.
- Volunteers should be referred to the relevant school policy on the taking, storage and disposal of images of children, and should be aware that shared images of children can, in rare cases, be misused by others to create digitally altered or AI-generated abusive imagery, which is why images must only ever be taken on school equipment and shared through school-approved channels.
- Volunteers should abide by the school's Online Safety/mobile phone policy.
- Personal mobile phones and other personal handheld electronic devices should not be used around children or in the classroom.

Health and safety issues

- Volunteers must be aware of health and safety policies and procedures that are relevant, and be advised how to act in an emergency situation, the same as for any other staff member.
- The school must ensure that appropriate insurances are in place for the volunteer.
- Volunteers should be made aware of which staff are first-aid trained and of the process to follow when first aid is required, rather than undertake any procedure themselves.
- Volunteers should be made aware of any medical conditions of the children they are working with which may require immediate intervention, e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, allergies, and how to respond.
- Volunteers must sign in and out of the school and must also wear an ID/security badge.

- If a school is considering involving a volunteer in an activity where there could be a level of risk to themselves or to a child, a risk assessment must be undertaken as for any other member of staff, and health and safety advice sought.

Supervision, mentoring and allegations

- A volunteer should know who their 'contact' person is in the school. This person would usually be the class teacher (or appropriate staff member).
- The contact person should be available during the volunteer's sessions to provide direct support/supervision. There should also be an opportunity for a regular volunteer to discuss any concerns, their contribution, and any training needs.
- If there are any concerns about the behaviour of the volunteer, there should be a discussion between the volunteer and their supervisor. This may need to involve advice from a manager, depending on the concern. This discussion must be recorded together with any actions regarding expected changes in behaviour, and reviewed. If the unacceptable behaviour continues, the volunteer placement will be withdrawn.
- A volunteer should know who to go to if they have a complaint or grievance, for example where there is a conflict with another member of staff or volunteer. They should also know who to talk to if they have a concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or another volunteer, including how to raise this as a whistleblowing concern, and that they may also contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line if they feel unable to raise a concern internally.
- If a complaint or allegation is made against a volunteer, they must be made aware of how this will be dealt with and offered appropriate support. Any allegation that meets the harm threshold must be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and treated in the same way as for any other member of staff. Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold will be managed as a low-level concern (see above).
- If a volunteer is involved in an incident outside of school which did not involve children, e.g. domestic abuse, but which could have an impact on their suitability to work with children, this is known as 'transferable risk' (as set out in KCSIE 2026). The school will need to consider what triggered these actions and whether a child in the school could trigger the same reaction, putting them at risk. This may need to include a referral to the LADO.
- If specialist skills are being offered by a volunteer, appropriate qualifications should be checked where necessary, and these activities may need to be supervised by a person who also holds the relevant specialist skills.
- Any necessary training should be made available to the volunteer through negotiation with their contact person, e.g. safeguarding training.
- For longer-term volunteers, a review process would be appropriate. However, any safeguarding concerns in relation to the behaviour of the volunteer must be dealt with immediately and must not wait for a review period.

Transport

- Volunteers must not transport children in their own vehicles.
- A volunteer would not be expected to take children on school transport or public transport unless accompanied by a member of staff and where a risk assessment has been made that meets health and safety regulations.

Contact with children outside of school

- Volunteers must be reminded that they are in a position of trust, and that what they see, hear or are involved in whilst at school must be considered confidential to the school.
- Where people are recruited from the local community and know some of the children, the impact of this should be talked through with the volunteer as part of their supervision.

- If a volunteer becomes aware of a situation of concern about a child from information received in the community, this should be discussed with their contact person or the Headteacher.

Outings and off-site visits

- These may include occasional volunteers as well as regular volunteers.
- Occasional volunteers, or others who have not had DBS checks, must not be left unsupervised or alone with children at any time.
- There should be a briefing meeting at the start of the outing to ensure that volunteers are clear about the plan for the day, who the team leader is, the children who are their responsibility, any special needs of these children, who to ask for advice, who has the first aid kit, and basic road safety advice.

Appendix 1: Volunteer application form

Complete the application form in full. Please note that the school may not be able to accommodate all preferences.

Data protection notice

Throughout this form, we ask for some personal data about you. We'll only use this data in line with data protection legislation and process your data for one or more of the following reasons permitted in law:

- You've given us your consent.
- We must process it to comply with our legal obligations.

You'll find more information on how we use your personal data in our privacy notice.

Personal details

- Name:
- Date of birth:
- Gender:
- Telephone number:
- Email address:
- Home address:

Availability

Please indicate your availability (AM / PM / before school / after school / lunchtimes) for Monday to Friday.

- How many hours per week/month can you volunteer?
- Can you commit to at least one term?

Experience and qualifications

Do you have any particular skills, employment experience or hobbies you would like to share with the school? (For example, languages spoken, sports, scouting, etc.)

Preferences

- What age group would you prefer to work with?
- Would you prefer to work one-on-one or with a small group?

Disability and accessibility

Tealby School is committed to ensuring that applicants with disabilities or impairments receive equal opportunities and treatment. If you have a disability or impairment, and would like us to make adjustments or arrangements to assist you, please state the arrangements you require:

Appendix 2: Volunteer recruitment process

The following process will be followed when recruiting volunteers:

- 1.** Somebody declares an interest in becoming a volunteer.
- 2.** Initial details are taken and a volunteer recruitment form is given to them to complete. If the potential candidate decides not to proceed, the process ends here.
- 3.** The potential candidate returns the necessary information to process.
- 4.** The volunteer is invited to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for an informal discussion.
- 5.** References are sought. If the references identify the candidate as not suitable for the role, the process ends here.
- 6.** If the potential volunteer is deemed suitable, they provide documents for DBS checks.
- 7.** Where the DBS check clears, the person is invited for induction and can start volunteering. Where the DBS check identifies a criminal history, the Headteacher and governors will decide whether to allow the person to volunteer, taking HR advice where needed, and will only proceed to induction if they decide to allow this.

Appendix 3: Code of Conduct for volunteers

By signing this form, volunteers agree to the following:

1. School rules and policies

- Volunteers will follow all school rules and policies.
- Copies of the school policies are available online or from the school office.

2. Professional conduct

- Volunteers must accept and follow instructions provided by supervisors and ask for guidance or clarification if required. Questions can be directed to the supervising member of staff, or to the Headteacher.
- Behaviour management is the responsibility of school staff. If volunteers witness behaviour that is in breach of the school's behaviour policy, or are struggling to manage the behaviour of pupils with whom they're working, they should alert the class teacher immediately. Volunteers should not attempt to reprimand pupils or issue sanctions.
- Volunteers must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This includes: dressing in a way that is professional and appropriate to the work they are doing; refraining from using inappropriate language; setting an example for pupils by acting in a way that reflects the school's ethos and values; behaving in a way that is appropriate for the role they are undertaking; and ensuring that comments, including those made on social media or generated using AI tools, do not bring the school into disrepute.
- Volunteers must not accept gifts from, or give gifts to, pupils. The exception is small tokens, such as those exchanged at the end of term or as a way of saying 'thank you'.
- Volunteers must not transport pupils in their own cars unless specific arrangements have been made with the school and the pupil's parents have consented.
- Parent volunteers with children at the school must not act in a way that favours their own child and should not approach their child unnecessarily during the school day (for instance, during break times). They may not use their time as a volunteer to discuss their child's education with school staff.
- If a volunteer is unable to come to school when they are expected/scheduled to be in, they must contact their supervisor or the school office as soon as possible. Inconsistent attendance may result in the placement being reviewed or terminated.

3. Safeguarding

- Volunteers must be familiar with, and adhere to, the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- If volunteers have concerns about the welfare of a child, or if a child makes a disclosure, they should speak directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL. The DSL is Zoe Humberstone and the Deputy DSLs are Chloe Brown and Christa Haslam.
- Volunteers should refrain from physical contact with pupils and should use their judgement to determine when physical contact is appropriate. If physical contact with pupils is required, volunteers should ask for a pupil's consent before touching them, and should be aware that any such contact should be brief, appropriate, never secretive, and reported to their supervisor if there is any possibility it could be misunderstood.
- Volunteers must alert the DSL if a pupil develops an infatuation with them, and must not form personal relationships with pupils, either inside or outside of school, with whom they do not already have a personal relationship. This includes: exchanging contact information; making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media; and arranging to meet pupils outside of school.
- Volunteers should not take or share photos of pupils unless instructed to do so by their supervisor, and must never use a personal device to do so.

- Volunteers who have any concern, however small, about their own or another adult's behaviour towards a child should raise it with their supervisor or the Headteacher without delay, in line with the school's low-level concerns culture (see the Safeguarding issues section of this policy).

4. Health and safety

- Volunteers must abide by the school's health and safety and first aid policies. Volunteers are not to administer first aid, except in an emergency where none of the designated first aiders are available.
- Volunteers must be familiar with the school's fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures.
- Volunteers must sign in and sign out at the beginning and end of every visit, and must wear a visitor badge at all times.

5. Confidentiality

- Information about pupils, parents and staff at the school is confidential, and should not be shared with anyone else. Volunteers shouldn't discuss pupils with parents or other children. If parents approach volunteers for information, they should be directed to speak to a class teacher or the Headteacher.

Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct may result in the termination of the placement.

I declare that I have read the Code of Conduct and Volunteer Policy and agree to abide by the terms and conditions described.

Please sign and date below:

X _____

Date