



Howard Park Community School

Volunteer Guidelines

Date Current Policy Ratified: January 2017

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Date:	Date:
Chair of Governors	Head Teacher

Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship and fundamental to democracy. It is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, and can take many forms. Generally, volunteering is described as an unpaid activity where someone gives their time to help an organisation or an individual who they are not related to. The UK does not actually have one common national definition of volunteering, although you can find definitions set out in government legislation and reports, as well in research on volunteering. The DBS definition of a volunteer is defined in the Police Act 1997 (criminal records) Regulations 2002 as “Any person engaged in an activity which involves spending unpaid time (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party and not a close relative.”

To qualify for a free-of-charge criminal record check, the applicant must not:

- benefit directly from the position for which the DBS application is being submitted
- receive any payment (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses)
- be on a work placement
- be on a course that requires them to do this job role
- be in a trainee position that will lead to a full time role/qualification

Safer recruitment does not start and finish with applying for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Remember that a Disclosure will only provide you with information that is known to the police or other authorities. Relying on disclosures may also lead you to discriminate against people who would be suitable to volunteer even if they have previous convictions. Instead Schools need to look thoroughly at their working and volunteer involvement practices, to create a safer environment for all.

Recruitment

When working with volunteers, it is important to have a thorough recruitment procedure in place. Face to face interviews and the taking up of references help give a feel for the prospective volunteer. An introductory period can be useful for the same reason. It also allows volunteers to gain a taste of the role,

and an opportunity to leave without embarrassment if they do not enjoy it or are not suited to it.

Induction and training

A thorough induction program and adequate training are equally important for ensuring a good start to volunteering. Induction sessions should help to make volunteers aware of their roles and understand what they are and aren't expected to do. Training should also address where volunteers' boundaries lie and what to do in any unexpected or difficult situations.