



# **STOKE DAMEREL COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

## **VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOLS POLICY**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The value of well-deployed volunteers in Schools is now widely recognised. At Stoke Damerel Community College volunteers are a welcome resource for helping to raise pupil achievement, complementing the work of teachers and support staff. The Principal and Local Governing Body have no doubt that the School will benefit greatly from developing well-planned, active parental and community links through participation by adults in the activities of the College on a voluntary basis. It should be emphasised that the role of volunteers in Colleges provides for the enrichment of the pupil's learning experiences, but must not encroach on or restrict professional teaching duties.
- 1.2. The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or for a number of sessions over a longer period, must be managed with care; in particular taking account of the needs of the pupils and the staff to whom they are assigned.
- 1.3. The Principal and Governors are mindful of deploying volunteers appropriately. Volunteers should not be asked to replace paid staff or be given responsibility within the School that would normally be associated with paid employees.

## **2. Policy**

- 2.1. The Governing Body of Stoke Damerel Community College intends that this policy gives a clear statement on the engagement and deployment of volunteers and that this document be included in the staff handbook for the information of everyone.
- 2.2. This policy document should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children and Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Policies.
- 2.3. The policy will be reviewed regularly by the Governing Body and be revised in response to changing legislation, guidance or practice as necessary.

## **3. Deployment**

- 3.1. Volunteers should not be asked to carry out duties which:
  - a.) fall normally within a teacher's responsibility under *loco parentis*
  - b.) fall normally within the job description of a teacher or member of support staff, ie they must not be asked to cover the absence of staff from College
  - c.) would normally be performed by a contractor engaged by the College
  - d.) require them to have unsupervised access to children

- e. it should be noted that the Class Teacher remains responsible for the organisation of the class and methods of work
  - f. expose them to dangerous or hazardous substances or situations.
- 3.2. During a visit to the College each volunteer should be designated to a specific member of staff to whom he or she will be directly responsible. Whilst there should be no significant addition to the workload of the staff member taking responsibility for the volunteer, it would be expected that time is taken to ensure the volunteer is adequately inducted into the role and that there is mutual agreement and understanding. This additional responsibility is not compulsory for staff and should only be delegated with the agreement of the employee concerned. It is however essential that the volunteer is clear as to which member of staff has this responsibility.
- 3.3. All volunteers need to be made to feel welcome. It is important that the parameters of their role within the College are clearly defined from the outset in order to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding.
- 3.4. The Governing Body requires the use of volunteer application forms. All successful applicants will be required to sign that they have read, understood and will observe this policy, and will complete a DBS disclosure form (where necessary) and/or a Staff Declaration Form. Volunteers will also need to read and sign part I of Keeping Children safe in Education. This will then be recorded.
- 3.5. It is important to match the talents and skills of volunteers to the needs of the College. Volunteers who do not feel valued will not stay.
- 3.6. Where a volunteer's particular skills or knowledge do not match the current needs of the College, the offer of help should be declined.

#### **4. College Regulations and Other Information**

- 4.1. In fairness to all concerned, volunteers must be made aware of the rules governing behaviour at the College; the key 'dos' and 'don'ts' for children and adults. This should include procedures designed to avoid hazards or risks associated with the tasks that they are being asked to carry out and, importantly, details of first aid and emergency arrangements such as procedures to follow in case of fire. Volunteers will be given a booklet explaining College procedures ie safeguarding, fire drills etc.
- 4.2. As part of their induction to life at the College, volunteers should also be provided with basic information such as a plan of the site and details of those facilities available to them eg staff room, toilets etc.

If the staffroom is not available to volunteers for relaxation then an alternative room

needs to be made available for all the volunteers. Volunteers should not use the children's toilets.

- 4.3. It is important that volunteers are made aware of the following procedures:
- expectations with regard to confidentiality;
  - the College's *Data Protection Policy* – especially access to information related to pupils and/or staff;
  - expected level of behaviour and an awareness of Professional Codes of Conduct;
  - the College's Equality & Diversity Policy – especially focussing on issues relating to discrimination and the use of appropriate language;
  - the College's Complaints procedure;
  - the College's Disciplinary procedures.

## 5. Child Protection/Safeguarding

- 5.1. The law requires check to be made on anyone with responsibility in a College which *can* give them regular unsupervised access to pupils under the age of 19. In 2002, the Richard Inquiry was commissioned and its recommendations led to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which recognised the need for a single agency to vet all individuals who want to work or volunteer with vulnerable people. The Disclosure and Barring Service will carry out relevant checks to support safer recruitment of staff, including volunteers to work with our young people.

This now includes volunteers who regularly help:

- In the classroom
- In extracurricular activities
- Supervise pupils on College organised holidays or residential visits

Volunteers who fall into the above categories are required to complete a DBS Application Form which will be checked against the Barring List and the Secretary of State's Prohibition List.

Volunteers that have access which is ongoing, substantial and unsupervised, also fall under this category.

- 5.2. These regulations do not apply to volunteers such as those who help organise or run fetes or may assist the College activities on an irregular basis or adhoc basis but should apply to volunteers that drive children in cars or minibuses. However, if the Principal is unclear about the position in respect of a volunteer, further advice is available from the LA

Safeguarding Business Manager (LADO).

- 5.3. Volunteers are also seen by pupils as safe and trustworthy adults, and if the College is actively seeking volunteers and is considering candidates about whom it has little or no recent knowledge, it should adopt the same recruitment measures as it would for paid staff. In other circumstances, for example where the College approaches a parent who is well known to the College to take a particular role, a streamlined procedure can be adopted; seeking references, checking to ensure others in the College community know of no concerns and can make a positive recommendation, conducting an informal interview to gauge the person's aptitude and suitability, and undertaking a DBS disclosure. In other circumstances, eg where a volunteer's roles will be one off, such as accompanying teachers and pupils on a day outing or helping at a concert or College fete, those kind of measures would be unnecessary provided that the person is not to be left alone and unsupervised in charge of children. Where volunteers recruited by another organisation work in a College, eg sports coaches from a local club, the College should obtain written assurance from that organisation that the person has been properly vetted.
- 5.4. Whilst having limited direct contact with children in their role, the Local Governing Body have directed that all governors should be DBS checked (Agreed 29th March 2007).
- 5.5. **IMPORTANT: It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that volunteers do not have unsupervised access to children.**
- 5.6. <sup>1</sup>The Principal should take all reasonable steps to confirm the identity of the person volunteering. It is recommended that the HR department view, and take a copy of, at least two original documents. At least one document must show a current address and at least one document must show the volunteers date of birth.
- Birth Certificate – plus Marriage Certificate or Copy of Deed Poll or License if their name as changed;
  - Passport;
  - Driver's License (A photo card is only valid if the individual presents it with the counterpart license)

A full list of acceptable Valid Identity Documents can be found on the leaflet, '*An Applicants Guide to Completing the DBS Application Form*' or alternatively visit the website, <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

- 5.7. As part of the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance, the School will undertake safer

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<sup>1</sup> Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 3

recruitment training. This will provide valuable information on a safer College culture and advice and guidance to strengthen safeguards against employing unsuitable people in Colleges. The training will help Colleges demonstrate that they have effective recruitment and selection processes in place that ensure learners are both well taught and protected. Further information on this can be found at:

[http://www.ncsl.org.uk/managing\\_your\\_College/safer-recruitment/index.cfm](http://www.ncsl.org.uk/managing_your_College/safer-recruitment/index.cfm)

5.8. The Independent Safeguarding Authority vetting service is a tool to help recruitment take place safely but it does not replace correct recruitment processes.

## **6. Insurance**

6.1. Volunteers should be informed about the extent of the insurance cover available. Whilst volunteering for the College they are covered by the College for third party liability only and the limitations of this insurance should be explained carefully to volunteers. They may wish to make their own arrangements for insuring against theft, personal injury or damage to their own property.

6.2. Volunteers using their own car to transport children other than their own children to College events, (sport, music etc) should be made aware of the College's policy and advised to check with their car insurance company to ensure that they do not contravene their insurance policy conditions.

6.3. The College should carefully consider all aspects of insurance and safety before deploying volunteers to drive a minibus. All parties should be made fully aware of the regulations and drivers should be offered appropriate training and instruction before taking children on journeys in such vehicles.

## **7. Allowances**

7.1. Although there is no obligation to make financial reimbursement to volunteers, it would be appropriate to consider paying out-of-pocket expenses connected with the tasks they undertake for the College. If College funds will not allow a policy of general reimbursement, consideration could be given to such payments in exceptional circumstances.

7.2. State benefits claimed by volunteers can be affected by voluntary work. Schools are strongly advised to refer volunteers to the leaflet from DWP "*A guide to volunteering while on benefits*" (<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D1C7064B-561C-4057-84ED-77AF8CEEDA93/VG12006.pdf>) and discuss any voluntary work with their Personnel Advisor to see how this may affect any possible benefits if they are in any doubt about work they may undertake voluntarily.

The main points for consideration are that volunteers should remain available for work if claiming unemployment benefits and that disabled volunteers should not undertake voluntary work of a nature similar to that for which they are receiving disability benefit.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **Volunteer Declaration**

I have received, read, and will observe the requirements of this policy.

I agree to complete a DBS disclosure form and understand that my role as a College volunteer is conditional upon background-checks being successful.

Signed .....

Name (in capitals) .....

Date .....