Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST)

Volunteers in School Policy

Person(s) responsible for updating the template policy:	Director of Safeguarding
Date Approved:	23/06/2026 for use from 30/09/28
Date of next review:	October 2028
Person(s) responsible for local adaptation of the policy (in consultation with WeST Community Council):	Marc Cooper Headteacher

WeST Vision, Mission and Values

Westcountry Schools Trust - Our Vision, Mission and Values

Providing Accessible Formats

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Version History

Date	Substantive Changes in Version
Oct 2022	• New policy
Oct 2025	• Addition of Appendix 3 (Visiting Speaker checks as per Visiting Speaker Policy) • Additional information around checks on volunteers in regulated and non-regulated activity • Added reference to WeST Complaints Policy
June 2026	• Updated section on DBS checks for volunteers to include children's barred list check, as per new statutory requirements from 1/9/26

The Volunteer in School Policy is part of the school's safeguarding systems. It must be read in conjunction with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct, Health and Safety Policy, Low-Level Concern Policy, Whistle Blowing Policy and the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

Other policies (such as our Online Safety Policy or Educational Visits Policy) may apply depending on the nature of the volunteering role.

Introduction

Volunteers at Sir James Smith's bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of children at our school/business unit. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community. Our volunteers include:

- Those in governance
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Friends of the school
- Aspirational experts

The types of activities that volunteers are engaged may include:

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children
- Accompanying school visits
- Sharing their skills/knowledge by talking to the class
- Working in non-pupil facing roles e.g. administration

Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one-off event or on a more regular basis, e.g. hearing children read, should contact the Sir James Smith's School Office staff. School visits will be dealt with directly through the school office.

Volunteers should complete the Volunteer Information Sheet (Appendix 1) with their contact details, type of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help.

Before starting to help in Sir James Smith's School, volunteers should complete the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2), which sets out the expectations of volunteers and asks volunteers to confirm they have received a copy of this policy.

The school will seek enhanced DBS clearance and a children's barred list check for any regular volunteers[1] before they come into the setting to protect the staff and children. Volunteers without prior DBS checks will not be left alone with children and will be supervised by a member of staff, as per KCSIE requirements.

Volunteers will be given a copy of the latest version KCSIE (Part 1) to read before starting and sign to confirm they have read and understood KCSIE, the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and the WeST Code of Conduct.

[1] Regular in this context is the definition of regulated activity (in brief, on more than 3 days in a 30-day period or overnight)

Expectations
All adults who work in our school are expected to work and behave in such a way as to actively promote positive behaviours and attitudes towards children's learning. This is achieved through role modelling and building strong relationships with children and staff.

These expectations are set out more clearly in the staff Code of Conduct which serves as the benchmark for the conduct of all adults working in WeST schools and business units, whether in paid or voluntary positions.

Confidentiality
Volunteers in schools are bound by a code of confidentiality. They are in a position of trust and as such, information that they pick up whilst in the setting must not be shared outside of school, including on social media.

Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with/come into contact with, should be reported to either the class teacher, or the designated safeguarding lead depending on the context of the concern. Volunteers should not raise any concerns with the parents of the child or persons outside school.

Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Headteacher (or CEO in the case of the WeST core team) in accordance with the WeST Low-Level Concern Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.

WeST also has a Whistle Blowing Policy.

Supervision
All volunteers in class work under the supervision of the class teacher of the class to which they are assigned. Teachers always retain responsibility for children, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. Volunteers should have clear guidance from the teacher as to how an activity is carried out/what the expected outcome of an activity is. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice/guidance from the teacher in the event of any query/problem regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

All volunteers working outside of the classroom will work under the supervision of a nominated member of staff, who will provide clear guidance on activities carried out and associated outcomes.

Following the removal of the 'supervision exemption' all volunteers[2] working in regulated activity will be subject to a separate children's barred list check as well as an enhanced DBS check, irrespective of the level of supervision under which they are working

[2] Working or volunteering in regulated activity with children

Health and Safety

The school/business unit has a Health and Safety Policy. This is made available to all volunteers. Class teachers or nominated members of staff must ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire alarm evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (e.g. using equipment/accompanying children on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher/Headteacher/senior leader.

Child Protection

The welfare of our children is paramount. To ensure the safety of our children, we adopt the following procedures:

- All volunteers are given a copy of this Volunteers in School Policy and asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2).
- They will also be asked to read and understand our KCSIE (Part 1), the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the WeST Code of Conduct.
- They will be made aware of our designated safeguarding members of staff and how to report concerns about a pupil.
- To always ensure the safety of our pupils, all our regular volunteers[3] must have an enhanced DBS check, separate children's barred list check and will be named on the school's/business unit's Single Central Record.
- Where a volunteer is engaged in a 'one off' activity e.g. sharing their skills/knowledge by talking to the class, no formal checks are carried out on these volunteers. These volunteers will be under constant supervision of school staff and at no point unsupervised or alone with children, i.e. they will be supervised as per other visitors to the school.
- Where volunteers are presenting materials to pupils (e.g. in an assembly or through delivering part of a lesson) they should read the Visiting Speaker Policy and complete the form in the appendix of that policy and repeated in this policy as appendix.
- Where volunteers work in a school/business unit on a long-term basis they should receive appropriate annual safeguarding refresher training from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Complaints

Should a volunteer be dissatisfied with an aspect of their volunteering role, or another matter in the school this should be addressed as per the WeST Complaints policy.

[3] Regular in this context is the definition of regulated activity (in brief, on more than 3 days in a 30-day period or overnight)

Appendix 1
Volunteer Information Sheet for new volunteers

Name of volunteer:

Date of Birth:

Other names known by (including maiden names):

Address:

Telephone Number:

What skills/areas would you like to help with in school?

Are there any particular age groups/classes you would like to work with?

Do you require any reasonable adjustments to be made? (Please provide details)

Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Information Sheet. Please hand it to the School Office. Your offer of help is appreciated and we will be in touch shortly

Appendix 2 - Volunteer Agreement

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at Sir James Smith's School. Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope that you will gain much from your experience here.

Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement and return it to Sir James Smith's School Office.

You will receive a copy of it for your records.

- I have received a copy of the school's Volunteers in School policy
- I have read and understood KCSIE part 1
- I have read and understood the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- I have read and understood the WeST Code of Conduct
- I know who the designated safeguarding member of staff is in school and how to report concerns about a child or adult in the school
- I agree to support the values in school and those of Westcountry Schools Trust
- I agree to treat information I learn from being a volunteer in school as confidential
- I understand that I am required to undergo an enhanced DBS check to advise the school of my suitability as a volunteer.

Signed ……

Name ……

Date ……

Appendix 3 - Checks on Visiting Speakers (as per the WeST Visiting Speakers Policy)

Name(s) of visitors			
Organisation:			
Date(s) of visit			
Description of planned activity			
Description of online checks completed:			
Checks completed by:		Date:	
Note anything to discuss ahead of visit:			
Prevent Duty Declaration:	I agree that the school has discussed with me the content I plan to deliver and that: • I will not incite hatred, violence or call for the breaking of the law. • I will not encourage, glorify or promote any acts of terrorism including individuals, groups or organisations that support such acts. • I will not spread hatred and intolerance in the community and thus aid in disrupting social and community harmony. • I will avoid insulting other faiths or groups, within a framework of positive debate and challenge. • I will adhere to the relevant school's policies, e.g. safeguarding and equality • I will not raise or gather funds for any external organisation or cause without the express and written permission of the Headteacher		
Signed:		Date:	
Counter-signed:		Date:	
Staff Member:			
Role:			