



USE OF VOLUNTEERS POLICY

REFERENCE:	V01 – 09/2025
OWNERSHIP:	AP Lead
AUTHORISED BY:	Emma Draper (Director)
REVIEW:	Annually – September 2026

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Encourage the wider community to engage with the provision, thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion
- Ensure that volunteers support the provision'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

SCOPE

This policy applies to The Churchwood Forest School AP (TBS), this includes all employees who work within The Churchwood Forest School AP as well as contractors, volunteers and visitors.

SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

As an organisation that prioritises the safeguarding of children and all vulnerable people, The Churchwood Forest School AP is committed to providing a safe environment across all we do by actively adopting strategies that embed a culture of zero tolerance for abuse of any kind.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Provision Lead - ultimately responsible for the safe and effective deployment of volunteers, ensuring all appropriate safeguarding checks, including enhanced DBS disclosures where required, are completed before a volunteer commences their role.

Staff members - responsible for providing clear guidance, ongoing support, and ensuring volunteers understand and adhere to all relevant policies, particularly those related to safeguarding, confidentiality, and health and safety.

Volunteers - are responsible for acting in accordance with the provision's ethos, policies, and instructions, immediately reporting any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and performing their duties to the best of their ability to support the learning and well-being of pupils.



DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, a **volunteer** is defined as any individual who provides their time, skills, or experience to the provision freely, without expectation of financial payment or formal employment. This includes, but is not limited to, parents, community members, former pupils, or students on work experience placements. Volunteers may support a range of activities, such as assisting in classrooms, accompanying educational visits, or contributing to enrichment programmes, always working under the supervision and direction of a designated staff member to enhance the learning and well-being of pupils.

POLICY

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

This policy has been developed in line with in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 (DfE) — used as benchmark guidance for volunteers in an non-school AP.

How we use volunteers

At Churchwood Forest School AP volunteers may:

- Accompany provision visits
- Work with individual children
- Work with small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or art
- Support careers and employability work

This isn't an exhaustive list. Volunteers are supervised unless their role meets regulated activity thresholds (see 'Safeguarding').

Volunteers may be:

- Parents
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Friends of the provision

This is not an exhaustive list.

How to apply to volunteer

- Email the provision through our website



- Approaching senior leaders, teachers or support staff
- Completing an application form

Appointment of volunteers

Volunteers are appointed by the Provision Lead. Identity is verified on arrival; we maintain a central vetting record (SCR-equivalent) to evidence checks to commissioners.

Appointment and induction of new volunteers can take up to 6 weeks, and is dependent on the candidate and available spaces within the provision. Unchecked volunteers do not start unsupervised work. Roles meeting regulated activity require the appropriate DBS before unsupervised contact.

All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check (if appropriate) and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training. We do not retain DBS certificate copies; we record date, level, unique reference and decision only (≤ 6 months if a copy is ever held).

The Provision Lead reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.

Enhanced DBS checks for volunteers working in the provision through other organisations will be conducted by the relevant organisation, if needed. The provision will ask for written confirmation that enhanced DBS checks have been carried out before a volunteer is allowed to start work at the provision.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, and our volunteers must share our commitment to child protection.

To ensure we're upholding our responsibility to keep our pupils safe, we will:

- Conduct enhanced DBS checks with a barred list check on volunteers who:
 - Work 1-on-1 with pupils unsupervised
 - Work with groups of pupils unsupervised
 - Supervise or accompany groups of pupils on overnight residential visits (where these duties meet the legal definition of regulated activity).
 - We will not request barred list information for volunteers who are not in regulated



activity.

- Consider the results of any DBS checks that return with unspent and spent listed convictions, and assess these on a case-by-case basis, with regard given to the nature of the conviction and the nature of the work the volunteer will be involved in
- Provide safeguarding training to all volunteers **prior** to them beginning work at the provision, including appropriate KCSIE content: volunteers who work directly with children read Part 1 (or Annex A where determined appropriate by the Provision Lead/DSL); others receive role-relevant safeguarding induction
- Require volunteers to agree and adhere to our code of conduct and to read, and adhere to, the provision's policies on:
 - Safeguarding
 - Use of mobile phones
 - ICT and internet acceptable use
 - Online safety
 - Behaviour
- Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised, and are never left alone with pupils and are not placed into regulated activity
- Conduct a risk assessment to determine whether a volunteer who isn't working in regulated activity needs an enhanced DBS check. The risk assessment will consider:
 - The nature of the work they will be doing
 - What we know about them
 - References from employers or other voluntary roles
 - Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check

We record the volunteer risk assessment and supervision plan and retain them with the central vetting record.

We legally cannot carry out a DBS check on a child under the age of 16 who is volunteering at our provision. We will ensure that children who are volunteering are always under an appropriate level of supervision, and conduct a risk assessment to consider any potential safeguarding issues.

Induction and training

Volunteers must complete appropriate training prior to beginning work at the provision.



Training requirements will be determined by the Provision Lead, or the appropriate member of staff.

All volunteers must have safeguarding training. Other training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing. Induction includes the Staff Code of Conduct, Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety and how to contact the DSL.

Confidentiality

Information about pupils, parents and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues related to pupils, parents or staff with those outside of the organisation.

If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff. They shouldn't discuss them with pupils or parents.

This doesn't prevent volunteers from adhering to the provision's safeguarding policy (with regard to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures).

If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in our child protection and safeguarding policy, and inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

If concerns are related to whistle-blowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our whistle-blowing policy. Volunteers are covered by the Managing Allegations and low-level concerns processes (KCSIE Part 4); concerns can also be raised via whistleblowing (incl. NSPCC advice line).

Conduct of volunteers

Volunteers must comply with the staff code of conduct.

Insurance

The provision's insurance policy does cover volunteers in the event of an accident or emergency.

If a volunteer is working at the provision through another organisation, we will also check that organisation's insurance arrangements.

Data protection and record keeping

Our privacy notice for volunteers explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it.

We will:

- Retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule
- Remove details of volunteers from the Churchwood Forest School AP central vetting record



(SCR-equivalent) once they no longer work at our provision

- Retain vetting/RA records only as long as necessary per our retention schedule; do not keep DBS certificate images/copies (record date/level/unique ref/decision only).



POLICY CONTEXT

AP context (non-school AP): Churchwood Forest School AP operates as a non-school Alternative Provision (AP). We adopt KCSIE 2025 as benchmark safeguarding practice for volunteers.

Volunteers are supervised unless their role meets the legal definition of regulated activity, in which case the appropriate DBS level applies (see 'Safeguarding').

This policy relates to the following legislative requirements, standards and internal documents:

Legislation & Standards	● Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
Related Forms & Documents	● Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy ● Safer Recruitment Policy ● Managing Allegations Policy ● Whistleblowing Policy ● Online Safety Policy (filtering & monitoring) ● Data Protection Policy (DBS data handling).

VERSION CONTROL

We will review our documentation regularly and we reserve the right to amend our policies and procedures at any time.

Version	Date	Change Summary	Author/ Reviewer	Approved by:
1	29/9/2025	Initial Version	Mark Wrangles	
2				
3				