



ELSENHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy, Advice and Guidelines for Voluntary Helpers

Updated:

Summer 2025

Review due:

Summer 2028

(subject to tri-annual review)

Everyone is someone in our church school community, becoming learners for life, ready to make a difference.

‘So encourage each other and build each other up’: 1Thessalonians 5:11

POLICY

The aim of this 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](#).

How we use volunteers

At Elsenham C of E primary School volunteers may:

- Hear children read
- Accompany school visits, including swimming
- Work with individual or small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or art

(This isn't an exhaustive list).

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the governing board
- Parents or grandparents
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Members of FOES
- Local clergy or members of the church

(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.

Applying to volunteer regularly in school

The school will usually invite volunteers through the school newsletter, however, other enquiries can be made by contacting the school office.

Those wishing to volunteer at the school should contact the school office in the first instance.

Interested volunteers will be asked to complete an application form (see appendix 1)

Appointment of regular volunteers

Long term Volunteers are appointed by the Headteacher or a member of SLT

Intake of new volunteers is dependent on the candidate and available spaces within the school.

All agreements are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks.

Volunteers will usually be asked to undertake an induction during which expectations, code of conduct and safeguarding will be explained. Volunteers will be asked to sign to confirm understanding.

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

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 on volunteers who work regularly with our children. For those who are volunteering as a one off e.g.: to support a school trip, a risk assessment will be carried out instead. We will accept DBS carried out by another organisation: e.g.: scouts, the Football Association, providing it has been processed through Essex within the last 2 years
- 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 long term volunteers **prior** to them beginning work at the school, as part of an induction. This will be carried out by a DSL
- Require volunteers to read our safeguarding leaflet
- Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised, and are never left alone with pupils
- Volunteers will be added to the single central register

Induction and training

Volunteers must complete appropriate induction / training prior to beginning work at the school.

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

All volunteers must have safeguarding training and will be made aware of health and safety procedures. Other training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing. All volunteers will be given a hard copy of appendix 1.

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 should not discuss them with pupils or parents.

This does not prevent volunteers from adhering to the school'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.

Insurance

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

If a volunteer is working at the school 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. Privacy notices are posted on our web site.

We will retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule.

Monitoring and review

This policy has been approved by governors and will be reviewed every three years.

Appendix 1

ELSENHAM C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL Volunteer Application Form

Personal Details

Last name and Title:	First name (s):
Previous names:	Date of birth:
Home telephone no:	Mobile:
Email Address:	
Address:	
Other Information and relevant skills, training, qualifications or job history if applicable:	
The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The school requires all volunteers to complete a self-declaration of criminal record. A signed DBS consent form and a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure will be required if they will be undertaking Regulated Activity. Volunteers not undertaking Regulated Activity may be required have a satisfactory DBS disclosure. Individuals applying to volunteer in a role covered by the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 will be asked to complete a Disqualification Declaration Form. A disqualified person may only be engaged in a relevant voluntary role if they obtain a waiver from Ofsted. By signing this application form you acknowledge and consent to completing the Disqualification Declaration Form if relevant to the role. It is illegal for anyone who is barred from working with children to apply for, or work/volunteer to undertake Regulated Activity. Data Protection Act 1998 I hereby give my consent for personal information (including recruitment monitoring data) provided as part of this application to be held on computer or other relevant filing systems and to be shared with other accredited organisations or agencies in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.	
Signature:	Date:

Appendix 2:

ELSENHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy, Advice and Guidelines for Voluntary Helpers

WELCOME

Thank you for volunteering to help at Elsenham School. We greatly value our volunteer helpers, without whom we could not cover all the aspects of learning that we wish to provide for the children.

We are committed to providing a safe environment and expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. All schools have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in their care. Safeguarding is about protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances that enable children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

It is illegal for anyone who is barred from working with children to apply for, or work/volunteer, in a school. The school will carry out safeguard checks on volunteers. You will be asked to supply the school with proof of identification and to complete a self-declaration form (SD2) pending a full Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

The role of a voluntary helper is to assist with all children in the class and not their own child in particular (if they are a parent/carer). Indeed it may be that a child might find it unsettling to have their own parent/carer the classroom and it may be decided that in these circumstances it is more beneficial for the adult to work in another class for a while.

The teacher of the class with which you are working will direct you on a daily basis. Sometimes you might do the same activity each week. Sometimes the teacher will ask you to undertake different tasks. All support is of course very valuable as it allows the teacher more time to concentrate upon the children's learning.

SIGNING IN AND OUT

When you arrive we ask you to sign yourself in and then out again when you leave, using the electronic system in the foyer. This ensures that we know exactly who is on the premises at any time. This is necessary for insurance and security purposes.

We ask you to wear a badge identifying you as a voluntary helper. They are kept in the office and should be asked for when you arrive and returned there when you sign out. This is also part of our security measures. It means that all adults and children in the school know who you are.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As stated above we value very highly the assistance of voluntary helpers in the school environment. You should be aware that the school has a strict confidentiality policy that you are expected to abide by. For example, it may be that you are part of, or overhear, conversations about specific children, or are asked to help with a child with a particular area of learning that they are finding challenging. It is imperative that this knowledge is kept within the confines of the classroom and is not discussed in any way at all with others inside or outside of school. This is necessary to protect all of our children and to ensure that the education they receive is positive, fair and sensitive to their individual needs.

We would also like to point out that there is an expectation of confidentiality from all of our staff, including Learning Support Assistants. Therefore, they are not able to discuss pupils and school matters with you.

If during your time in the classroom you have any concerns then please share them at the earliest opportunity with the teacher, a member of the senior leadership team or a Designated safeguarding Lead. This should be done outside of lesson time and in a suitable place within the school.

ASSISTING WITH READING

One of the main areas of support within the classroom fulfilled by voluntary helpers is that of assisting with reading. This may be achieved in two ways, either a small group or on a 1 to 1 basis. You may be asked to take an individual or group into another area outside the classroom in order to give the children an opportunity for quiet concentration. Hearing children read on a frequent basis helps them to grow in confidence, and they enjoy the individual attention and interest that they are shown. Indeed voluntary helpers who hear children read regularly in school will notice their improvement over time.

It is important to show an interest in the story, and to ask questions to ensure that the children comprehend what they are reading. Particularly in the Foundation and Key Stage 1 classes, try to encourage them to understand the link between the words and the pictures. Praise correct reading frequently, and give clues to help with problem words, encouraging the children to sound out the letters and syllables. We teach the children the phonetic sound of the letters and syllables, so it is what the letter “says” that has to be known, not what its name is.

If a child has to work out lots of words and the flow of the reading is being lost, give words quietly to them and encourage them to read on so that the meaning is not lost. You could note down any words that the child has found really difficult on a scrap of paper to be given to the teacher afterwards.

You may be asked to record that you have heard the child read in the classroom record and also in the child’s Reading Diary. This is very important as it records the frequency with which the children are heard and what they are currently reading. It is only necessary to record a short, positive comment, the words “voluntary helper”, the date and your own initials. It is not appropriate to comment on any other aspects of the child’s progress. If you have a concern please raise this at the earliest appropriate opportunity with the teacher.

The children must always feel that reading with an adult is a positive experience. As a voluntary helper you can boost their confidence and sense of achievement.

FIRE PROCEDURES

A fire alarm is signified by a continuous ringing of the bell.

If the fire bell rings while you are in school, you will need to evacuate the premises with the class you are working with. If you are just outside of the classroom return immediately to that room, taking with you any children under your care. They should observe all our fire rules:

- leave all possessions behind
- walk at all times
- keep as quiet as possible so that instructions can be heard
- close doors if it is safe to do so
- line up in class order on the far side of the main playground/ netball court
- answer names when register is called
- only re-enter school when told to do so by Headteacher or Deputy/ Assistant
- Headteacher

If you are working with a group a long way away from the class base, then please take the children immediately to the playground using the nearest exit. Join up with the class for answering the register.

When you first begin work in school, please look at our fire regulations, which are on the wall in every classroom.

Some of the children can become overexcited at the sound of the fire bell. Adults should set the pattern of behaviour for the children; calm bodies and voices and clear instructions.

If you are not working with children and you hear the fire alarm, please leave the school immediately through the nearest exit and join with everyone else on the far side of the main playground. The administrative staff will check that everyone present on the premises is accounted for.

FIRST AID

If a child hurts themselves, either in the classroom or on the playground, the First Aid procedures we use are mainly those of normal care for children, and common sense. These will routinely be dealt with by the member of staff present. If a member of staff is unavailable and you are in any doubt as to the extent of injuries, keep the child immobilised and send for help to the office. A qualified First Aider will then deal with the child and take responsibility for any treatment required.

If it is a very minor injury you can wash children's hands etc. in any sink. We use little in the way of medical intervention; only washing the wound, or if there is a lot of dirt we use approved wipes. All First Aid equipment is kept in First Aid boxes with green crosses on them. These are located at:

- Main Office
- Library
- School Kitchen
- Class First Aid rucksack

In each classroom there is a medical box containing photographs of a few children who might have significant medical needs. Should their presentation concern you then please summon help immediately. (You will have been alerted to any children you need to be aware of).

Most teaching and non-teaching staff have had basic First Aid training. If in any doubt about how to treat a child please consult the office

When dealing with any situation where body fluids have been spilled (blood, vomit etc.), plastic gloves should be worn and then disposed of carefully in the office waste paper bins, as should any used wipes.

CHILD PROTECTION

You must have an awareness of this area. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Elsenham is Mrs Todd, or in her absence **the Deputy Designated Leads are: Deputy Head Mrs McCraith, Pastoral Lead Alix Coole** or SENDCo Mrs Doone. If you observe or hear anything in your time at school that makes you feel concerned about the welfare of any child you should report this to one of them immediately. You should not ask additional questions or speak to anyone else about it.

If you have to administer First Aid or take a child to the toilet, please make sure that you are not secluded from the view of others. Special measures are not required, just an awareness and sensitivity.

Should a child need extensive cleaning or treatment then make sure that another adult is present.

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

As with all other adults working in the school, should you see anything which you feel is unsafe then please let either the teacher, the Business Manager or the Headteacher know immediately.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

This is another part of school life which we could not undertake without additional voluntary support. All the information in this booklet will apply to regular volunteers, and you will be given particular guidance by the teacher in charge. Usually you will be given a small group of children to care for and to keep a close watch on at all times. You will normally be provided with a list of their names. At primary age, children on educational visits will require supervision at all times. Sometimes they may be given into the care and supervision of other professional adults at a particular venue. On these occasions all accompanying adults act in a general supervisory capacity, still maintaining discipline and control of our pupils.

PROTOCOL FOR ADULTS HELPING WITH SWIMMING

The aim of this protocol is to ensure the safety and peace of mind of both children and adults during the process of:

- the children going to and from the classroom for swimming
- the children travelling by coach
- the children changing in the changing rooms
- the swimming lesson itself

We have borne in mind the need for help for any child with particular needs, the need to follow Child Protection Procedures and the need for the children to be guided towards independence and taking self-responsibility.

SAFETY BESIDE THE POOL

Lessons are conducted by qualified members of staff from the pool. Staff and adults accompanying the children are routinely asked to remain in an observation area beside the pool. In some cases however, pool staff may request that an adult accompanies a particular child or group of children more closely on pool side or even in the water. This will routinely be a member of staff.

For all classes there should be at least one voluntary helper who accompanies the children to the swimming pool. Their responsibility is to provide additional support for their children, for example putting on swimming hats.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTSLIP

Please sign and return the slip below and return it to the school office, so that we know that you have received all of this information.

**ELSENHAM C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL
VOLUNTARY HELPER RETURN SLIP**

Name of Voluntary Helper

I have received, read and understood appendix 2 'Advice and Guidelines for Voluntary Helpers'. I agree to abide by the guidelines and requirements that it sets out.

Signed: _____ Date: _____