

# HCAT WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS POLICY 2021



Revised 09.02.21

# HCAT WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS POLICY 2021

## **Introduction**

As a Trust, it is our aim to involve parents in their children's education and to develop and maintain links with the local community. In order to enrich the lives of the children in our academies, and to enable us to deliver the curriculum more effectively, we actively encourage the involvement of parents and volunteers from the community in the work of the academies both during normal hours and in extra-curricular activities.

Volunteers at our academies bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. The academy therefore welcomes and encourages volunteers from the local community.

Our volunteers include:

- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- University students
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the School

## **Status of volunteers**

A volunteer will not be an employee of the academy. He or she will not be engaged on a contract of employment nor on any type of contract for services. The engagement will be binding in honour only, there being no legal agreement between the organisation and the volunteer.

Volunteers are unpaid. The academy is under no obligation to offer or to continue to offer any volunteering opportunity to any person, irrespective of their carrying out volunteering work currently or in the past. Similarly, the volunteer is under no obligation to accept any opportunity offered and may withdraw from the agreement at any time.

Before accepting the role of volunteer, the individual concerned will agree with the academy that they can fulfil the expectations of the role of volunteer. The academy may withdraw the offer at any time, including after the volunteer has started their engagement. The volunteer may also withdraw from the agreement at any time. Both parties are encouraged to give the other as much notice as possible, should the agreement be terminated.

## **Recruitment & Selection**

The applicant for volunteer work must complete a simple application form which gives permission to obtain a character reference and a Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) application form (criminal records check). The volunteer should not commence work in the academy until all the recruitment checks have been completed to a satisfactory standard.

The experience, qualities, skills and needs of any volunteer will be considered when recruiting volunteers. Please note, there is no guarantee that a volunteer will be found an immediate placement but may need to wait until a suitable opportunity is identified.

The placement should be mutually beneficial to the academy and the volunteer.

An informal interview will take place with a view to ascertaining the suitability of any applicant, along with their skills, experience, and qualifications. If the volunteer is accepted for a role within the academy both parties should meet to agree a suitable role, timetable, support, dress code etc. The academy will outline relevant policies at the interview.

We recruit volunteers from all communities without regard to gender, disability, age, race, or sexuality, in accordance with the Trust's Equality Policy.

The sole qualification for recruitment is the individual's suitability and ability to perform the designated role as set out in the role description, and the availability of opportunities at any given time. However, the academy will only make an opportunity available if there is a vacancy and they are able to support the opportunity adequately. Some opportunities are also time limited (e.g. project based).

Any placement may be terminated by the academy at any time without notice if the Principal/Head of School/Headteacher deems this to be in the best interest of the academy, pupils, or staff. Such termination need not involve any fault, shortcoming, or wrongdoing attributable to the volunteer.

### **Management of Volunteers**

The academy will ensure that volunteers are given suitable induction training at the beginning of their placement.

The volunteer will be given a named contact person who will supervise the work they have undertaken and act as a central point of contact particularly in the event of any problems occurring.

Regular supervision of the volunteer will be provided as appropriate to the task undertaken and the needs of the volunteer.

The volunteer's role within the academy will be made clear. This will include their responsibilities, status with pupils and access to records or confidential information.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity to contribute their ideas and opinions about the work that they are engaged in.

HCAT is committed to safeguarding pupils, young people and vulnerable adults and expects its volunteers to show that commitment.

Volunteers will be given guidelines/training regarding Child Protection issues/procedures, especially pupils disclosing possible abuse. Volunteers will be asked to read the relevant 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' document and sign to confirm they have understood the content.

### **Support to Volunteers**

As a Trust, we value the work of volunteers and to demonstrate this we aim to:

- Show appreciation for the volunteer's work.
- Ensure volunteers have appropriate and up-to-date information they need to do their work.
- Ensure that they are introduced to staff and other volunteers and have access to a support network.
- Ensure that they are issued with a staff handbook and any relevant policies.

### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers will be informed during their induction that information relating to pupils, parents and staff is confidential and therefore must be treated in accordance with GDPR. It will be made clear to volunteers that

they must not discuss any confidential matters outside the academy and any issues must be reported to the supervisor immediately.

Information about volunteers must be treated in the same way as employment information. Application forms and personal details must be kept securely and not divulged to others except on a need-to-know basis.

**Health & Safety Policies**

The Trust's policies including the Health and Safety Policy and Equality Policy will be explained to volunteers during the induction process.

**Insurance**

All volunteers should be made aware of the cover provided.

**Expenses**

Out-of-pocket expenses will be paid to volunteers and the procedure for claiming these will be explained at induction, if applicable.

**The Volunteer**

The Volunteer agrees to carry out all reasonable tasks assigned to him/her to the best of their ability and to generally promote the interests of the college/school and to abide by the terms and conditions set out in this policy and agreement.

The Trust are committed to protecting the rights of any child in their care, the child's safety and emotional wellbeing and the protection of the child from all forms of abuse. In view of this, the Trust reserves the right to refuse voluntary help and to terminate or vary a placement at any time without prior notice.

Signed on behalf of the Trust/Academy:

Dated .....

Print name .....

**Volunteer**

Signed .....

Dated .....

Print name .....

At HCAT we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all School activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at the Academy/School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

Appendix 1

**Volunteer Application Form**

First Name :		Surname :		
Home Address :				
Telephone No. (Day) :		Telephone Number (Evening) :		
Email Address :				
Next of Kin: Name:		Telephone number:		
Why would you like to volunteer?				
What qualifications do you have?				
Previous experience/skills that would be relevant to volunteering at our College / School?				
Any other relevant information				
Do you have any connections to pupils or staff? If yes, please give details				
Days/Hours available :				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Please note that not all volunteer applications will be successful. We value all help and support from the wider community if you are not successful at the time please feel free to apply again in the future.

**References**

Please supply the names and addresses of two referees who know you well. This may be a previous or current employer, neighbour, head teacher or a previous volunteering project. Please note that a referee cannot be a relative.

Name	Relationship To Referee	Position	Address	Telephone Number	Email

**Agreement**

Please sign to confirm that the details contained in this form are a true reflection of the discussion.

Signed by Volunteer :

Date :