



# Volunteers in School Policy and Procedure

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**Author/owner: Operations, Audit and Risk Committee (subcommittee of the Board of Trustees)**

**Review: Triennial**

**NB.** 'Trustees' means the Directors referred to in the Trust's Articles of Association

## History of most recent policy changes

Version	Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation
V1.0	April 2021		New policy introduced for the Tarka Learning Partnership Central Trust Team and Schools within the Trust	Requirement for central policy to set guidance for engaging volunteers within schools ensuring safer recruitment practices are followed.
V2.0	April 2023		General update – no significant changes. Removal of references to specific guidance regarding safe working practices issued during the Coronavirus pandemic. Removal of appendices (confidentiality agreements to prevent out of date versions from being used)	

## Contents

History of most recent policy changes .....	2
1. Introduction.....	4
2. Use of volunteers.....	5
3. Safer recruitment, child protection and safeguarding .....	5
4. Training.....	6
5. Confidentiality.....	6
6. Insurance and provisions relating to driving.....	8
7. Out of pocket expenses.....	8
8. Allegations/complaints.....	8
9. Head Teacher’s responsibilities in relation to volunteers .....	9
APPENDIX 1 – Flowchart to become a volunteer in Tarka Learning Partnership School.....	10
APPENDIX 2 – Volunteer application form.....	11
APPENDIX 3 – Volunteering agreement.....	14

## 1. Introduction

The Tarka Learning Partnership recognises the value of well-deployed volunteers in schools.

Volunteers can be a welcome resource for helping to raise the children's achievement and enrich the pupils' learning experience, complementing the work of teachers and support staff. Schools can benefit greatly from developing well-planned, active parental and community links through participation by adults in the activities of the school on a voluntary basis.

Volunteers must not be asked to replace paid staff or be given equal responsibility within the school that would normally be associated with paid employees. Equally, volunteers must not encroach on or restrict professional teaching duties.

Volunteers are individuals who undertake "regulated activity" (as defined in the Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education) in the school. Broadly, "regulated activity" is defined as having contact once a week or more often, or on four or more days in a 30 day period or overnight, including relevant personal care, health care and advice or guidance relating to children's physical, emotional or educational wellbeing.

Volunteers representing an organisation, charitable or otherwise, such as a pastoral, religious or care workers are not classed as volunteers within this policy. However schools must ensure letters of assurance and relevant checks are obtained from the organisation in line with the Trust's Safeguarding policy.

Volunteers may include:

- Parents of pupils
- Students on work experience/placements
- Members of our community\*
- University students or those exploring the possibility of working with children
- Research students

ITT trainees – pre-course\* School Community Board representatives have a separate application form and confidentiality agreement and are covered through the Tarka Learning Partnership Confidentiality Policy and Representative Code of Conduct.

Volunteers not undertaking regulated activity ("ad hoc" volunteers) for example a parent helper on a school trip, are not covered by this policy. These volunteers must be supervised at all times by a member of staff.

This policy also applies to volunteers using their own car to transport children other than their own children to school events, whether this is ad hoc or a regular activity.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Tarka Learning Partnership Staff Code of Conduct
- Volunteering Agreement
- 
- Department of Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance

## 2. Use of volunteers

The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or a number of sessions over a longer period, must take account of the needs of the school, the pupils and the staff to ensure the arrangement is of benefit to the pupils or the school.

The deployment of any volunteer will be at the discretion of the Head Teacher and for an agreed period, subject to review no less than annually with the Head Teacher.

Volunteers should not be asked to carry out duties which:

- fall normally within a Teacher's responsibility under *loco parentis*;
- fall normally within the job description of a Teacher or member of support staff, i.e. they must not be asked to cover the absence of staff from school;
- would normally be performed by a contractor engaged by the Trust.

The class teacher remains responsible at all times for the organisation of the class and methods of work.

Volunteers must be designated to a specific member of staff to whom they will be directly responsible. The staff member taking responsibility for the volunteer must ensure the volunteer is adequately inducted into the role. This additional responsibility is not compulsory for staff and should only be delegated with the agreement of the employee concerned. It is essential that the volunteer is clear which member of staff has this responsibility.

The types of roles that people will volunteer for are:

- Listening to children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children
- Undertaking art and craft activities with children
- Helping in after-school clubs
- Accompanying school visits
- Conducting educational/pedagogical research
- Providing positive role models and one-to-one mentoring/support

## 3. Safer recruitment, child protection and safeguarding

All schools will use the Tarka Learning Partnership Application for Voluntary Work for the recruitment of volunteers. The form provides a framework for structuring the discussion with the individual about the school's needs and the potential contribution of the volunteer, and the expectations of the volunteering arrangement. Schools will consider the suitability of volunteers for the specific activity for which they are engaged.

An enhanced level Disclosure and Barring Service check will be undertaken, along with a Barred List check, for volunteers who meet the regulated activity threshold.

Two satisfactory references must be obtained before volunteers can work in the school.

Child protection and safeguarding procedures must be undertaken with volunteers in the same way as with employees in accordance with the following policies and guidance:

- Tarka Learning Partnership Safer Recruitment Policy
- Tarka Learning Partnership Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Tarka Learning Partnership Whistleblowing Policy
- Tarka Learning Partnership Staff Code of Conduct
- Department for Education Keeping Children Safe in Education (part 1)

In line with best practice, the Tarka Learning Partnership also requires Enhanced DBS checks for all volunteers using their own car (or a school minibus) to transport children other than their own children to school events, whether this is an ad hoc or regulated activity.

Volunteers who only accompany staff and children on one-off outings or trips or who help at one-off events, such as sports days, school fetes etc, do not need to be DBS checked.

#### 4. Training

Volunteers may be required to undertake training, provided by the school or a third party, to support the activity they undertake where relevant. This may include on-line training.

The school is responsible for ensuring the volunteer is made aware of any relevant procedures designed to avoid hazards or risks associated with the tasks that they are being asked to carry out as well as details of first aid and emergency arrangements including fire procedures. Volunteers must also be provided with information which may include a tour of the school and details of the facilities available to them e.g. the staff room, staff toilets etc. The school will ensure an appropriate induction is carried out with the volunteer using the TLP induction checklist for volunteers.

Volunteers will be made aware of the following procedures in addition to those referenced in section 3;

- Expectations with regard to confidentiality;
- Access to information related to pupils and/or staff;
- Expected level of pupil behaviour;
- The Tarka Learning Partnership's stance in respect of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, especially focusing on issues relating to discrimination and the use of appropriate language;

#### 5. Confidentiality

Volunteers in schools are bound by a code of confidentiality; they are required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to commencing the voluntary work. Confidentiality Agreements for all volunteers (members of the School Community Board, work experience/students and voluntary helpers) can be found in the TLP Confidentiality Policy and Agreement ([Policies - Tarka Trust](#)).

Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the class teacher and **not** with the parents of the child, or any other persons outside of school. Comments regarding pupil's behaviours

or learning can be highly sensitive, and taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of the child of they hear through a third party rather than directly from school staff.

Volunteers who are concerned about another adult in the school should raise the matter with the Head Teacher.

## 6. Insurance and provisions relating to driving

Whilst volunteering for any school within the Tarka Learning Partnership, volunteers are covered by the Trust RPA third party liability policy only. The RPA cover applies to volunteers in the same way as for employees and the definition includes voluntary workers. Any claims for personal effects should in the first instance be notified by the individual to their insurer. Volunteers must make their own arrangements for insuring against theft, personal injury or damage to their own property.

Volunteers using their own car to transport children other than their own children to school events (sports, music etc) must provide documentary evidence that their car insurance covers this.

Volunteers (and employees) driving a school minibus must be covered under the individual school's insurance arrangements.

Anyone driving a minibus must have a D1 category on their driving licence. These conditions apply whether the driver is a volunteer or employee and whether they are driving a school owned minibus or a minibus that has been hired through a third party.

## 7. Out of pocket expenses

Where approved in advance with the Head Teacher, the Tarka Learning Partnership will pay out-of-pocket expenses connected with the tasks volunteers undertake for the school in line with the Trust's Expenses policy.

State benefits claimed by volunteers can be affected by voluntary work. Volunteers who this applies to should visit – <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/volunteering-and-claiming-benefits>

## 8. Allegations/complaints

Any complaints made about a volunteer must be referred to the Head Teacher for investigation.

Any complaints made by a volunteer should be referred to the Head Teacher for investigation.

Any allegation about a volunteer, who in the course of their work with children, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children will be investigated following the Tarka Learning Partnership's Managing Allegations of Abuse Made Against Staff Policy and Procedure.

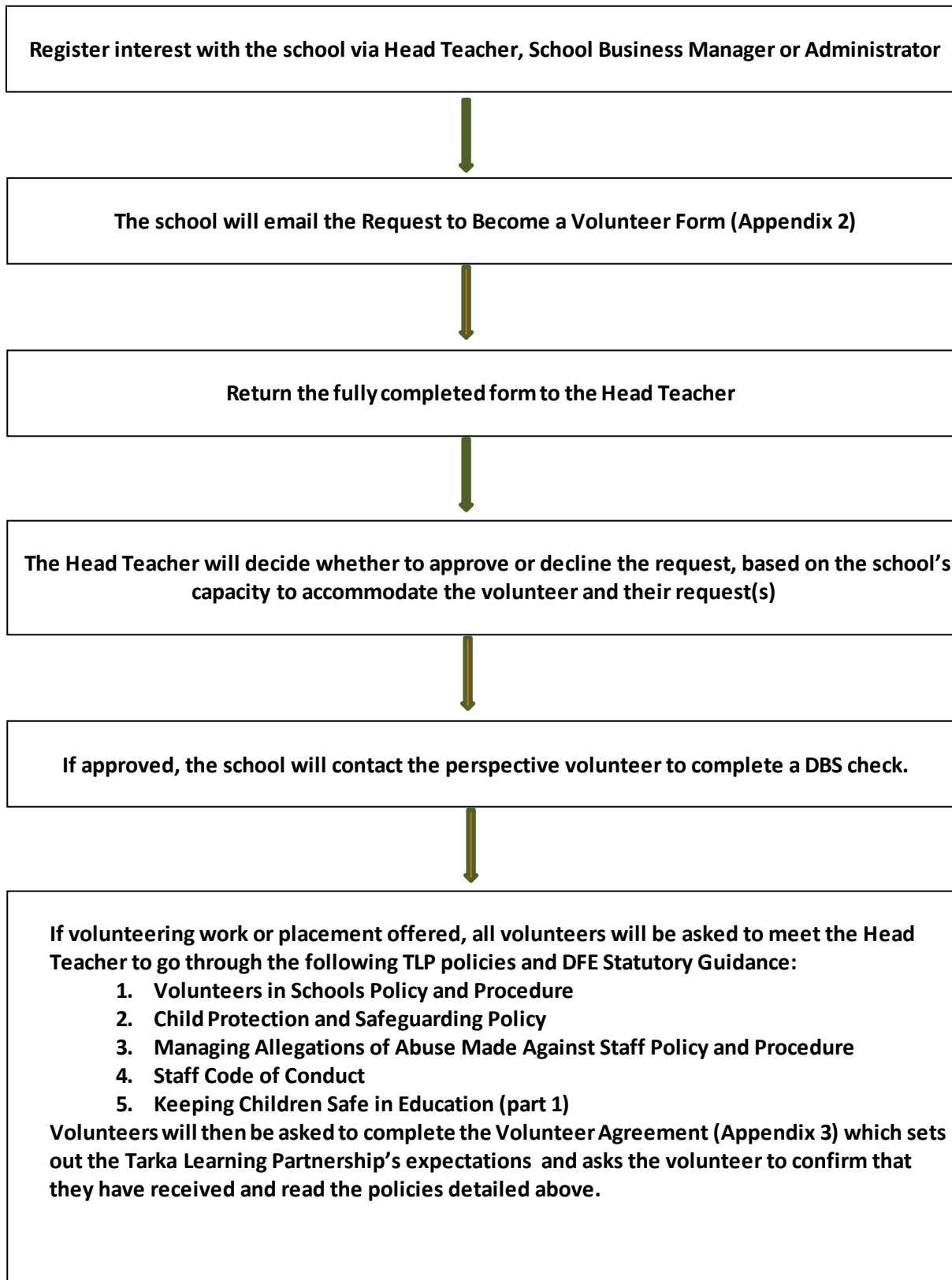


## 9. Head Teacher's responsibilities in relation to volunteers

The Head Teacher reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak with a volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again
- Offer an alternative placement for a volunteer e.g. helping with another activity or in another class
- Inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them

**APPENDIX 1 – Flowchart to become a volunteer in Tarka Learning Partnership School**



APPENDIX 2 – Volunteer application form

**APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTARY WORK  
OR A VOLUNTEERING PLACEMENT**



**PLEASE NOTE THIS IS NOT AN APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT**

<b>PERSONAL DETAILS</b>	
<b>First name(s):</b>	<b>Last Name:</b>
<b>Previous name(s) or known as name(s):</b>	<b>Email address:</b>
<b>Address including postcode:</b>	<b>Contact telephone number(s):</b>
<b>Students, please give the details of your course, including the accrediting body and name of your tutor:</b>	
<b>Emergency Contact Details:</b>	

<b>YOUR ROLE AS A VOLUNTEER</b>
<b>Please use this space to talk about the voluntary work that you would like to undertake and why, including age groups/particular classes you would like to work with.</b>

**Please provide details of any children you are related to in the school in which you are applying to volunteer and state your relationship with them.**

**Please use this space to talk about any volunteering work you have done before and any relevant skills you have**

**AVAILABILITY**

**Please provide details below of your availability:**

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Other (please specify)

**CHECKS FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN**

The Tarka Learning Partnership has an absolute commitment to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We expect all staff, worker and volunteers to share this commitment. As part of our commitment we need to ensure all potential volunteers satisfy our safer recruitment checks. Please note that where appropriate, potential volunteers will be required to undertake further checks, including references and will be required to provide an Enhanced DBS Disclosure certificate:

Volunteering work in this setting is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as "spent" must be declared.

Please use the space below to give details of any convictions, cautions and bind-overs including those regarded as spent. If there are none, please write "none".

**SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS**

We welcome volunteer applications with all ranges of abilities for the skills they bring. We aim to create a positive environment that enables all volunteers to realise their full potential. So that we can consider any appropriate adjustments in the school to better support you in your role, please give details below of any disabilities, health or other relevant issues.

**REFERENCES**

Please give details of two referees, one of whom should be your current or most recent employer (if applicable). If you are in, or have just completed full-time education, one referee should be from your school, college or university. Referees must not be related to you, or writing solely in the capacity of a friend, and must be able to comment on your skills and abilities in relation to being a volunteer.

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>Telephone no:</b>	<b>Telephone no:</b>
<b>Email address:</b>	<b>Email address:</b>
<b>Occupation/Relationship:</b>	<b>Occupation/Relationship:</b>
<b>How long have they known you?</b>	<b>How long have they known you?</b>

**DECLARATION**

I declare that the information given in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and accurate and that it may be used for purposes registered by the Tarka Learning Partnership under the General Data Protection Regulations

Signed: ..... Date: .....

## APPENDIX 3 – Volunteering agreement



Dear Volunteer

Thank you for offering your time and services as volunteer with the Tarka Learning Partnership. Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope you will gain much from your experience.

Please complete the Volunteering Agreement below and return it to the school in which you will be undertaking voluntary work. Before completing the agreement please read carefully the Tarka Learning Partnership's Volunteering in Schools Policy and Procedure.

The Tarka Learning Partnership has an absolute commitment to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and as a volunteer in a school, we would like to draw your attention to the Tarka Learning Partnership's staff Code of Conduct and the Department of Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education – statutory guidance for schools and colleges. If you have any questions regarding the content of any of these documents, please do not hesitate to ask.

### **VOLUNTEERING AGREEMENT**

- I have received the Government guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education – statutory guidance for schools and colleges (part 1). I have read and understood the guidance and understand that any breaches may lead to the school taking action against me.
- I have received and read a copy of the Tarka Learning Partnership Safer Recruitment Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.
- I have received and read a copy of the Tarka Learning Partnership's Volunteers in Schools Policy and Procedure.
- I agree to treat information, including pupil information I learn from being a volunteer in the school, as confidential (see the Tarka Learning Partnership Confidentiality Policy and sign the relevant agreement [Policies - Tarka Trust](#))
- I understand that I am required to undergo a DBS check to advise the school of my suitability as a volunteer.

SIGNED: .....

DATE: .....

PRINT NAME: .....

