Townlands C of E Primary Academy

Volunteer Policy

Approved by: Rachael Johnson (Chair of Governors)

Date: December 2026

Next review due by: December 2029

1. Introduction and Aims

Townlands appreciate the invaluable role that volunteers provide in supporting our school.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure that volunteers support our vision and values, and adhere to our policies;
- Provide staff, volunteers and parents/carers with clear expectations and guidelines;
- Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers;
- Ensure that all volunteers have a positive and rewarding experience.

2. How we use our Volunteers at Townlands

The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or for 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, the school and the person(s) volunteering.

The deployment of any volunteer will be at the discretion of the Headteacher and for an agreed period, subject to review no less than annually with the Headteacher. The class teacher remains responsible at all times for the organisation of the class and methods of work.

Volunteers should not be asked to carry out duties which:

- fall 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 be performed by a supply agency.

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, by liaising with key people in school. It is essential that the volunteer is clear which member of staff they are responsible to.

At Townlands, volunteers may:

- Listen to children read;
- Accompany school visits;
- Work with small groups of children;
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or art.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the governing board;
- Parents;
- Former pupils;
- Students on work experience;
- Local residents.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Volunteers must not be asked to replace paid staff. Volunteers must not carry out any activities which might cause conflict or restrict professional teaching duties.

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.

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 Governors Code of Conduct.

3. How to Apply to Volunteer

Any person interested in volunteering at Townlands, should, in the first instance contact the school office to see if any opportunities are available.

All prospective volunteers should then complete the Volunteer Application form which can be found in appendix 1.

4. Appointment of Volunteers

For a volunteer to be appointed, this must be agreed with the Headteacher.

All volunteer appointments are conditional upon the completion of the appropriate safeguarding and vetting checks, including an Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List information where the role constitutes regulated activity, as well as any other required recruitment checks (including two satisfactory references) and relevant training, in line with KCSIE requirements.

The Headteacher reserves the right to withdraw or end a volunteer opportunity at any time.

5. Safeguarding

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

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

- Conduct volunteer enhanced DBS checks;
- Obtain satisfactory references;
- Conduct risk assessments where necessary.

We will also 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.

We will provide safeguarding training to all volunteers prior to them beginning work at the school, including ensuring that they have read and understood part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

In accordance with KSCIE, should a low-level concern be raised against a volunteer, Townlands Low Level Concern policy and the Safeguarding Allegations policy will be followed.

We require volunteers to read, agree and adhere to our Code of Conduct and to read, and adhere to, the school's policies on:

- Safeguarding
- Health & Safety
- Social Media Policy

- Use of mobile phones
- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Online safety
- Behaviour
- Any other appropriate policies deemed necessary to the role undertaken

6. Induction

Volunteers will be made aware of the following procedures in addition to those referenced in the safeguarding section:

- expectations with regard to confidentiality;
- access to information related to pupils and/or staff;
- expected level of pupil behaviour;
- Townlands Equalities Statement, especially focusing on issues relating to discrimination and the use of appropriate language;

All volunteers will receive support and guidance from their direct report. This will be in the form of regular feedback when necessary.

If anyone volunteering requires any additional support or guidance they should request this.

7. Confidentiality

Information about pupils, parents and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues relating 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 doesn't 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 the appropriate safeguarding policy and inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

If concerns are related to whistleblowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our Whistleblowing policy.

Any school materials or resources used by a volunteer are the property of Townlands.

8. Conduct

As a volunteer, you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner which upholds the reputation of Townlands. The following points should be adhered to at all times and if you are unsure what is expected of you then you should raise this immediately with your direct report or the Headteacher.

- The Academy expects all volunteers to deal with one another, the public, pupils and parents in a courteous and civil manner. Relationships between colleagues should be supportive, cooperative and respectful.
- You should notify the Headteacher if you are in any doubt about the effect of your conduct outside work.
- If you are subject to criminal proceedings, you must disclose this to the Headteacher immediately. If any aspect of the information that forms your DBS check changes whilst you

are volunteering at Townlands, then you are obligated to inform the Head Teacher immediately.

- Whilst we appreciate that a person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression, we request that volunteers are dressed appropriately for a primary school setting.
- Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines, DVDs or such material on any electronic media must not be brought into Townlands or stored on Academy equipment.
- Social networking sites and blogging are extremely popular. However, volunteers must not post material about the school, pupils, parents, staff etc. The Academy prohibits the involvement of volunteers from any form of social networking with pupils. If there is, any doubt about whether communication with pupils is appropriate, advice should be sought from a member of senior member of staff or the direct report.
- Volunteers must not vape, smoke, drink alcohol or take drugs whilst on the school premises, see Substance Misuse Policy.

9. Expenses

Townlands will only reimburse expenses if these have been agreed in advance by the Headteacher. Any expenses must be supported by receipts.

10. Insurance

Townlands hold Risk Protection Arrangements with third party liability. Any person volunteering at Townlands would be covered under this arrangement.

11. Data Protection and Record Keeping

Everyone has rights with regard to how their personal information about them is handled. During the course of our activities we will collect, store and otherwise process personal information about our pupils, pupils' families, staff, volunteers, contractors, suppliers, and other third parties. Townlands are committed to meeting their legal obligations concerning data protection and confidentiality and to seeking to achieve best practice in relation to information governance. See our Data Protection Policy.

12. Complaints or Concerns

Townlands undertakes to promote positive working relationships and is committed to providing a working environment where employees and volunteers are treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

We recognise that occasionally an individual may have a concern or complaint regarding their working environment or another volunteer or employee.

Where a complaint or concern is raised, it is preferable for this to be resolved informally between the individual and the direct report or the person who the complaint is made against, as close to the point of origin, wherever possible.

If a complaint or concern cannot be resolved informally, the volunteer should raise the issue formally with the Headteacher. All complaints and concerns will be handled fairly and a level of due diligence will be undertaken before coming to a decision regarding how the complaint or concern may be dealt with.

Responsibilities of Townlands

- To ensure volunteers are given the opportunity to explain their concern and the outcome sought.
- To seek a means to resolve the complaint/concern wherever possible whilst taking into account Townlands policies, procedures and rules.
- Achieve an early resolution where possible and allow volunteers to take their concerns to a further level of management if appropriate.
- To ensure consistency and fairness of treatment.

Responsibilities of the Volunteer

- To raise complaints only in relation to legitimate concerns and not of a malicious /vexatious nature.
- To engage with their direct report in seeking to resolve any complaint that has been raised – by attending meetings and /or participating in any investigation and providing evidence to support the complaint.
- To make every effort to raise and resolve matters informally at an early stage and to consider mediation as a means of resolving concerns.
- To act in a respectful and professional manner towards all parties.
- To maintain confidentiality and never to discuss school issues outside of school.
- To advise Townlands of any particular needs that we should be made aware of, so as best to support your volunteering role.

13. Links to Other Policies

- Data Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Use of mobile phones Policy
- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Online safety
- Behaviour Policy
- Equalities Statement

Appendix 1: Volunteer Application Form

Townlands is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment.

Title:	First Name:	Last Name:
Address:		
Postcode:		
Mobile Number:		Home Landline:
Email:		
Please explain why you wish to volunteer at Townlands and include any relevant skills and experience that you can bring.		
Have you volunteered previously? (please give details)		
Please provide details of employment and/or work experience and other volunteering roles that you have undertaken.		
Do you have any particular needs that Townlands should be made aware of, so as best to support your volunteering role.		

References

Please provide two references one from a current/previous employer and/or character reference. Please let your referees know that we may contact them

Referee	
Name	
Address	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Relationship to volunteer	
Referee	
Name	
Address	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Relationship to volunteer	
We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check. Please note that it is a criminal offence for a person that has been barred from working with children and young people for work or volunteer in school.	
Declaration	
By signing below, I confirm that I have read and agree to the conditions set out in Townlands Volunteer Policy and that the information that I have given is correct.	
Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	