



| Policy Name: Volunteers | |
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| Policy Code: | ED18 |
| Approved in: | October 2013 |
| Next Review in: | October 2016 |
| Cross References: | |
| This policy should be cross-referenced with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles (DES)• Field Trip Policy (DES) | |

INTRODUCTION:

This policy applies to volunteers involved in both school-based and off-site activities. A volunteer is defined as any adult or resource person who agrees to undertake, without pay, a designated task which supports a classroom, school or a system wide programme.

Aims:

This policy aims to:

- State the Ministry's commitment to volunteering within education
- State the Ministry's commitment to ensuring the safety of all learners

Policy Statement:

1. The Ministry of Education recognizes that volunteers bring with them a range of skills and experiences that can enhance the learning opportunities of students and make valuable contributions to all Cayman Islands' schools.
2. The Ministry acknowledges that whilst volunteer participation is an essential complement to school programmes. The Ministry's primary commitment is to safeguarding students, young people and vulnerable adults. The Ministry expects its volunteers to share that commitment.
3. The Ministry requires that:
 - a) All volunteers must undertake a formal application process (see Appendix 2) and must have been cleared by the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS).
 - b) All volunteers must work under the supervision of a teacher or full time member of staff and adhere to their guidance (see Appendix 1) and to any supporting documents provided by the school.
 - c) All volunteers must receive appropriate training, and in particular training relating to Health and Safety and Child Protection matters, prior to commencing any voluntary work.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Ministry of Education will:

- Establish educational policy;
- Ensure that all Ministry staff and other relevant stakeholders are aware of this policy, related guidance documents and procedures;

The Education Standards and Assessment Unit will

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the use of volunteers within education, using the criteria set out in the *Handbook for the Evaluation of Educational Provision*.
- Make recommendations for improvement.
- Provide accurate and timely information to the Ministry on the effectiveness and quality of use of volunteers within education in order to inform policy decisions.

The Department of Education Services (Senior School Improvement Officers) will

- Monitor the use of volunteers within their Learning Community
- Ensure compliance with the procedure for recruiting volunteers, including police checks

School leaders will

- Facilitate the development of the school policy on volunteers
- Implement the school policy on volunteers.
- Monitor and review provision and practice in their schools
- Ensure that volunteers receive orientation and training

School staff will

- Implement the school policy on volunteers.
- Use the supporting guidance documents supported by the Ministry and the *Handbook for Evaluation of Educational Provision* to assist their planning and practice.

SCHOOL POLICIES ON VOLUNTEERS

Must

- Be based on the National Policy and the Ministry's supporting guidance documents.
- Be developed collaboratively.
- Take into account the indicators of good practice within the ESAU Handbook and the Ministry's supporting guidance documents.
- Be approved by the Department of Education Services /Senior School Improvement Officers before implementation



GUIDANCE

APPENDIX I: MODEL VOLUNTEER POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

Introduction

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experiences that can enhance the learning opportunities of students. The school therefore, welcomes and encourages volunteers from the local community.

Our volunteers include:

- Parents of students
- Ex-students, who have completed high school
- Students on work experience
- University students referred to us by the Ministry
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the school

The types of activities that volunteers engage in, on behalf of the school, include:

- Hearing students read
- Working with small groups of students to assist them in their learning
- Working alongside individual students, as an additional tutor
- Accompanying school visits

Safeguarding

The Ministry of Education and this school are committed to safeguarding students, young people and vulnerable adults and expect its volunteers to share that commitment.

Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one-off event such as a school visit or on a more regular basis, e.g. hearing students read, usually approaches the Principal, a Senior member of Staff or Class Teacher directly.

Volunteers should complete the *Volunteer Application Form* (Appendix 2) with their contact details, types of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help. These forms are sent to the Department of Education Services (DES) for central processing and filing.



Definitions

A volunteer is defined as any adult or resource person who agrees to undertake, without pay, a designated activity which supports a classroom, school or a system wide program.

An activity might be described as 'frequent' or 'intensive' as follows:

- 'frequent' – once a week or more often on an ongoing basis;
- 'intensive' – five or more occasions in a 30 day period, or overnight (between 11pm – 6am).

The process for recruiting a Volunteer for a school

1. The school or system will identify the need and role for a volunteer
2. Candidates will be identified by means of a local advert/school communications system or through the central register of volunteers at the DES. The *Volunteer Application Form* (Appendix 2) will be completed at this time.
3. The prospective candidate/s is/are invited to attend the school for an orientation session to ensure the applicant(s) is/are suitable for the role. At the meeting:
 - a. The Principal or a designated senior staff member ensures that any volunteer provides written consent for an RCIP criminal record check is then undertaken
 - b. The volunteer is made aware of the role and responsibilities they will be undertaking
4. Provided the volunteer and school are mutually agreed the volunteers(s) undertake induction where the school and corporate policies and documentation explained and issued. These include Health and Safety, Behaviour Management Policies and Code of Conduct
5. Before starting to help in a school, a volunteer should complete the *Volunteer Agreement* (Appendix 3), which sets out the school's expectations of its volunteer and to confirm they have received a copy of this Agreement.

Please note: The school will seek RCIPS clearance for a volunteer **before** they come into school, to make an informed decision when accepting volunteers to work with children.

School Aims

All adults / Young People who work in our school, whether a paid member of staff, or a volunteer are expected to work and behave in such a way as to actively promote our school aims and educational purpose, as identified below-

(Aims)



Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the students they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the designated supervisor and NOT with the parents of the child/persons.

Volunteers who are concerned about anything in the school, which may affect their work should raise the matter with the Principal or appropriate senior member of staff. Any information gained at the school about a child or adult should remain confidential.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of a teacher or full time member of staff. Teachers retain ultimate responsibility for students at all times, including the students' behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the designated supervisor as to how an activity is carried out/what the expected outcome of an activity is. In the event of any query/problem regarding the student's understanding of a task, behaviour or their welfare, volunteers must seek further advice/guidance from their designated supervisor.

Health & Safety

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available to volunteers working in the school. An appropriate member of staff will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. Fire Alarm Evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks (e.g. using specialist equipment/accompanying students on visits).

Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the designated Supervisor/Principal. Volunteers are covered by Cayman Islands Government Health & Safety Policies, indemnity and Public Liability Insurance.

Child Protection

The welfare of our students is paramount. To ensure the safety of our students, we adopt the following procedures:

- All volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy and asked to sign a *Volunteer Agreement* (Appendix 3)
- All of our volunteers must have been cleared by the RCIPS.
- Where a volunteer is engaged in a 'one-off' activity e.g. helping supervise a group of students as part of a class visit, no formal checks are required. However, such volunteers, **who will be under the constant supervision of school staff**, must read and sign our *Off-Site Visit Agreement* (Appendix 4).
- Any concerns a volunteer has, about child protection issues, should be referred to the designated supervisor or Principal.



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Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Principal or appropriate senior member of staff, for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be dealt with in the same way.

The principal or designated member of staff 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
- Based upon the facts identified in the investigation it may be necessary for the School to inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them
- Provide the volunteer with a copy of the school's full Complaints Procedure



APPENDIX 2

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM – FOR NEW VOLUNTEER

First Name

Surname

Date of Birth :.....

Address:
.....

Phone: Home..... Mobile

Useful to know the occupation of the volunteer would help if schools build up their own data base

What activities/ areas of the school’s work would you like to help with?

Are there any particular age groups/classes you would like to work with?

Do you have any disabilities/other needs we need to take into account or adjustments we need to make to allow you to work as a Volunteer in School? (please give details)

Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Application Form

Please hand it to the School Office, marked for the attention of the Principal

Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we will be in touch as soon as possible.



APPENDIX 3

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at school.

Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope that you will gain much from your experience.

Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement Sheet and hand it in at school.
You will receive a copy of it for your records.

Please tick

- I have received a copy of the School's Volunteer Policy
- I agree to support the School's Aims
- I agree to conform to the School's Code of Conduct for Staff
- I agree to treat information obtained from being a Volunteer in School as **Strictly Confidential**
- I understand that a RCIPS check will be undertaken
- I have been made aware of who is my designated supervisor e.g. Class Teacher, Year Teacher, Head of Department

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____



APPENDIX 4

Off-Site Visits Volunteer Agreement

School trips are an integral part of learning at our school and afford many students opportunities which are outside their usual experiences. We are pleased that you have come forward as a volunteer helper; you will have an important role to play in the success and safety of this school trip.

Please read and return this appendix, and sign and return the helper's slip.

This is part of our school's risk assessment planning and safeguarding arrangements.

Role of the Volunteer Helper

- To be responsible and look after, in equal measure, all of the students in your group under the instruction of the Leader of the school trip
- To stay with your allocated group of students, ensuring that their wellbeing and safety is maintained for the total duration of the school trip
- To promote polite, respectful and courteous behaviour towards each other and members of the general public. We all go as ambassadors of our school!
- To ensure that your group keep up with the body of the school visit party, be it walking, entering or exiting from transportation or following speakers for the trip
- To contact your child's class teacher/member of staff if there are issues with first aid, safety and/or behaviour

Working alongside school staff

School staff expect volunteer helpers to:

- Comply with all of the above whilst being under the direct supervision of school staff
- Show a commitment to their group, an interest in the focus of the visit and assist students in their learning by helping them to read signs/labels/information, asking questions that encourage students to think about the task and help to explain the areas of interest
- Follow guidance from the school staff

What is not permitted

- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to bring additional children e.g. siblings or children in the care of the volunteer on the school trip
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to smoke, drink alcohol or engage in any illegal practices whilst undertaking their volunteer duties
- Volunteer helpers are not permitted to take photographs of students
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to give/buy their group treats e.g. ice creams, biscuits, sweets – before, during or after the school trip



First Aid

You will be informed if any child in your group has medication/needs. If medicine needs to be administered, this will be done by a member of staff unless you are the Parent/ Carer of the child who requires medicine, in which case you will be asked to administer this and be responsible for carrying the medicine.

All other medicines and first aid box(es) will be carried by staff.

Emergencies

You are expected to inform a member of staff as soon as possible.

If you have become separated from the rest of the school party, please telephone one of the members of staff on your contact list or telephone the school.

Please check

- I have read the Volunteer Policy
- I agree to the terms and conditions as stated in the policy
- I will support the young people in enjoying the trip and actively contribute to the smooth running of the event.
- I will treat any information I may hear about students as confidential and will not discuss or disclose it out of school.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name (Please print): -----