Wittersham Church of England Primary School Volunteer Policy

We strive to cooperate and work alongside all members of our community to feel valued, nurtured, and empowered as they embark upon their journey to become the very best that God intended. Throughout their voyage of discovery with us, we ensure all children are provided with a rich curriculum and experiences that promote courage and a strong moral purpose underpinned by our Christian values, preparing them to become compassionate citizens within our rural community and the wider world.

Revision History

Version	Date	By	Description
V01	May 2025	Stella Coulson	New Policy
V02	September 2026	Stella Coulson	Updates in line with KCSIE 2026

1. Introduction and aims

At Wittersham Church of England Primary School, we value the contribution volunteers make to school life. Volunteers enrich our community by sharing their time, knowledge, skills and experiences.

We welcome volunteers who support our Christian vision and our values of courage, compassion and cooperation.

The aims of this policy are to:

- encourage members of the wider community to contribute to school life, support learning and promote community cohesion;
- ensure that volunteers support the school's Christian vision and values;
- establish clear expectations for volunteers and the staff who support them;
- provide a fair and consistent process for recruiting, checking, inducting and supervising volunteers;
- ensure that safeguarding and the welfare of pupils remain paramount;
- ensure that volunteers understand and follow the school's policies and procedures; and
- make clear how concerns about a volunteer's conduct will be managed.

This policy has regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and relevant Disclosure and Barring Service requirements.

2. Scope

This policy applies to adults and young people who undertake unpaid work or volunteering activities within the school.

Volunteers may include:

- parents and carers;
- former pupils;
- students undertaking work experience or volunteering placements;
- local residents;
- members of the church community;
- members of the Wittersham School Association;
- individuals volunteering through an external organisation; and
- other friends and supporters of the school.

Governors carrying out their responsibilities as members of the Governing Board are

covered by the Governors' Code of Conduct and relevant safeguarding requirements. Where a governor undertakes a separate volunteering role in school, this policy will apply to that role.

3. How volunteers may support the school

Subject to appropriate checks, risk assessment, induction and supervision, volunteers may:

- hear pupils read;
- support classroom activities;
- assist with art, music, computing, sport or other curriculum activities;
- support individual pupils or small groups under the direction of a member of staff;
- help with school events;
- accompany pupils on educational visits;
- assist with clubs or enrichment activities; or
- provide other appropriate support agreed by the Headteacher.

Volunteers must not:

- take responsibility for a class;
- be responsible for behaviour management or impose sanctions;
- administer first aid unless appropriately trained, authorised and required to act;
- provide intimate or personal care unless this has been specifically authorised and appropriate arrangements are in place;
- access confidential records unless this is necessary for their role and expressly authorised;
- make decisions about pupils' education, behaviour, safeguarding or welfare;
- work beyond the duties agreed as part of their placement; or
- undertake any activity for which the required safeguarding checks have not been completed.

4. Applying to volunteer

Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact Mrs Caroline Penn in the school office by emailing office@wittersham.kent.sch.uk or speaking to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Prospective volunteers may be asked to:

- complete an application or volunteer information form;
- explain their reasons for wishing to volunteer;

- provide details of relevant experience, skills or qualifications;
- provide proof of identity and address;
- provide references;
- complete a self-declaration relating to their suitability to work with children;
- undertake appropriate safeguarding checks;
- attend a discussion with the Headteacher or another senior leader; and
- agree to follow this policy and the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Applications from former pupils and requests for work-experience placements will be considered individually, taking account of the proposed activities, the age and needs of pupils, staffing capacity and the school's ability to provide appropriate supervision.

A request to volunteer does not guarantee that a placement will be offered.

5. Appointment of volunteers

Volunteers are appointed by the Headteacher or a senior leader acting on the Headteacher's behalf.

The school will consider:

- the needs of the school and its pupils;
- the suitability of the applicant;
- the duties the individual would undertake;
- the frequency and duration of the proposed volunteering;
- the level of access to pupils and school information;
- the checks required for the particular role;
- the supervision and support available; and
- any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

The recruitment and checking process may take several weeks. A volunteer must not begin a placement until the school confirms that all required checks and arrangements have been completed.

The Headteacher may decline an application or bring a volunteer placement to an end at any time. The school is not required to provide or continue a volunteering opportunity where this would not be in the best interests of the school or its pupils.

Volunteering does not create an employment relationship or an entitlement to paid work.

6. Safeguarding and safer recruitment

Safeguarding is central to everything we do. All volunteers must share the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Before a placement begins, the school will determine:

- the activities the volunteer will undertake;
- how frequently the activities will take place;
- whether the role amounts to regulated activity;
- the level of Disclosure and Barring Service check legally permitted and required;
- whether a children's barred-list check is required;
- whether any additional checks are necessary;
- the level of supervision required; and
- any other measures necessary to manage safeguarding risks.

From 1 September 2026, the previous supervision exemption from regulated activity no longer applies. A volunteer who teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children frequently, or who meets the relevant period condition, may therefore be undertaking regulated activity even when supervised.

Any volunteer undertaking regulated activity must have an enhanced DBS check, including a check of the children's barred list, before beginning that activity.

The frequency condition normally applies when the activity takes place:

- more than three times in a 30-day period; or
- overnight in circumstances covered by the statutory definition.

The school will assess each role individually. Supervision alone will not be treated as removing a role from regulated activity.

A one-off or occasional volunteer, such as a parent assisting with a single event or educational visit, may not be undertaking regulated activity. The school will complete an appropriate risk assessment and put suitable supervision arrangements in place.

The school will not permit a person who is barred from working with children to undertake regulated activity. It is a criminal offence for a barred person to undertake regulated activity and for an organisation knowingly to allow a barred person to do so.

Where a volunteer is not undertaking regulated activity, the school will decide whether an enhanced DBS check without barred-list information is appropriate and legally available for the role.

The school may also undertake:

- identity checks;
- reference checks;
- checks relating to a person's right to work or volunteer in the United Kingdom, where applicable;
- overseas checks where a person has lived or worked outside the United Kingdom;
- checks required under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations, where applicable; and
- any other checks considered necessary and lawful.

Any information disclosed through recruitment or safeguarding checks will be considered by the Headteacher in accordance with safer-recruitment procedures and relevant guidance. A criminal record will not automatically prevent a person from volunteering, unless the person is barred from the activity or the information makes the placement unsuitable.

7. Existing DBS certificates and the Update Service

The school will not automatically accept a DBS certificate obtained for another organisation.

An existing certificate may only be considered where:

- the applicant has subscribed to the DBS Update Service;
- the school is legally entitled to undertake a status check;
- the certificate is at the correct level and covers the appropriate workforce;
- the original certificate is presented to the school;
- the volunteer's identity is verified;
- the type of role and any barred-list information required are compatible with the proposed placement; and
- the school is satisfied that no additional check is necessary.

The age of a certificate alone will not determine whether it can be accepted.

Where the school is not satisfied that an existing certificate is appropriate, a new DBS application will be required.

8. Volunteers provided by another organisation

Where a volunteer is supplied by an external organisation, charity, church, college or other body, the school will obtain written confirmation that the organisation has completed the necessary recruitment and safeguarding checks.

The confirmation must specify, where relevant:

- the person's identity;
- the level and date of the DBS check;
- whether the check included children's barred-list information;
- whether any information was disclosed;
- whether appropriate references and other checks were completed; and
- whether the organisation considers the person suitable for the proposed role.

The school will verify the volunteer's identity on arrival.

The school remains responsible for ensuring that the proposed activities, checks and supervision arrangements are appropriate.

9. Volunteers under the age of 18

A DBS check cannot normally be obtained for a child under the age of 16.

Young people undertaking work experience or volunteering placements will:

- be appropriately supervised;
- not be left solely responsible for pupils;
- not undertake regulated activity independently;
- receive an age-appropriate induction;
- be given clear boundaries and expectations; and
- be included within an appropriate risk assessment.

The school will liaise with the young person's school, college, parent or carer and placement provider where appropriate.

10. Single Central Record and record keeping

The school will record volunteers on the Single Central Record where required by Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The school will maintain appropriate records of:

- the volunteer's identity;
- application and appointment information;
- references and recruitment checks;
- DBS and barred-list checks, where applicable;
- risk assessments;

- induction and training;
- the agreed role and supervision arrangements;
- signed acknowledgements and codes of conduct; and
- any concerns arising during the placement.

Records will be retained securely and in accordance with the school's Records Retention Schedule and data-protection responsibilities.

11. Induction and training

Every volunteer must complete an appropriate induction before beginning their placement.

Induction will include, as appropriate:

- a tour of the school;
- safeguarding and child-protection procedures;
- how to report a concern about a child;
- how to report a concern about an adult;
- the identities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads;
- expectations regarding professional boundaries;
- confidentiality and data protection;
- behaviour expectations and the Wittersham Way;
- online safety, mobile phones, photography and social media;
- health and safety procedures;
- fire and emergency arrangements;
- first-aid arrangements;
- signing-in and signing-out procedures;
- the volunteer's agreed duties;
- the name of the supervising member of staff; and
- the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Volunteers will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role and will be required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and any other relevant school guidance identified by the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Volunteers must confirm that they have read and understood the documents provided to them.

Additional training may be required depending on the volunteer's role.

12. Safeguarding concerns about a child

Any concern about a child's safety or welfare must be reported immediately to a member of the Designated Safeguarding Lead team.

The school's safeguarding team is:

- Mrs Stella Coulson – Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Mrs Lynsey Scott – Assistant Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Mrs Carly Catt – SENCO and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead; and
- Mrs Claire Sterriker-Rhodes – FLO and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Volunteers must:

- listen carefully if a child shares a concern;
- remain calm;
- not promise confidentiality;
- not ask leading questions or investigate;
- reassure the child that they were right to speak;
- record the child's own words as accurately as possible; and
- pass the information to a member of the safeguarding team immediately.

A volunteer must never delay reporting a concern because information appears incomplete or because they are unsure whether it is significant.

If no member of the safeguarding team is available and a child is in immediate danger, the volunteer must speak to the most senior member of staff available without delay.

13. Concerns about the conduct of an adult

Any concern about the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer, contractor or other adult must be reported promptly.

Concerns about an adult who may have:

- harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm;
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children; or
- failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries

must be reported immediately to the Headteacher.

If the concern relates to the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors, Mr John Collins.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold, including low-level concerns, must also be reported to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Volunteers must not investigate concerns themselves or discuss them with other volunteers, staff, parents or members of the community.

The school will manage allegations and low-level concerns in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Low-Level Concerns procedures.

14. Whistleblowing

Volunteers are expected to raise any concern about unsafe, unlawful or inappropriate practice.

Concerns should normally be raised with the Headteacher. If the concern relates to the Headteacher, it should be raised with the Chair of Governors.

A volunteer who feels unable to raise a safeguarding concern internally, or believes that a genuine concern has not been addressed, may seek advice through the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line or follow the external routes set out in the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

No volunteer will be treated unfairly for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

15. Confidentiality and data protection

Volunteers may become aware of confidential information relating to pupils, families, staff or school business. This information must not be discussed or shared outside school.

Volunteers must:

- only access information necessary for their agreed role;
- keep written and electronic information secure;
- not remove documents or records from school without permission;
- not discuss pupils or staff in public places or on social media;
- not share information with other parents or carers;
- refer enquiries from parents and carers to the relevant member of staff;

- report any accidental disclosure or loss of information immediately; and
- continue to maintain confidentiality after their placement ends.

Confidentiality does not prevent a volunteer from reporting a safeguarding concern, allegation, low-level concern or whistleblowing matter through the correct procedures.

The school's Privacy Notice for Volunteers explains how personal information about volunteers is collected, stored and used.

16. Professional conduct and boundaries

Volunteers must maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries with pupils.

Volunteers must not:

- exchange personal telephone numbers, email addresses or social-media details with pupils;
- contact pupils outside school;
- arrange to meet pupils outside school;
- accept pupils as friends or followers on social media;
- communicate privately with pupils through messaging or gaming platforms;
- form relationships with pupils that are secretive, exclusive or could be regarded as favouritism;
- encourage a child to keep secrets;
- give personal gifts to an individual pupil without prior approval;
- invite pupils to their home;
- transport pupils in a private vehicle unless this has been formally authorised by the Headteacher and all necessary arrangements are in place; or
- share personal information with pupils that is inappropriate to the volunteer's role.

Any indication that a pupil may have developed an infatuation with a volunteer must be reported promptly to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Parent volunteers must not use their placement to seek information about their own child or other children. Questions about their own child's progress, behaviour or provision must be raised through the school's usual communication arrangements.

17. Physical contact

Volunteers should avoid unnecessary physical contact with pupils.

Any physical contact must:

- be appropriate to the circumstances;
- meet the needs of the child rather than the adult;
- be proportionate;
- be open and observable by others; and
- follow school policy and staff direction.

Volunteers must never use physical punishment or make physical contact that could be considered indecent, threatening, secretive or inappropriate.

If a child seeks comfort, the volunteer should respond sensitively and, wherever possible, involve a member of staff.

Any physical contact that causes concern, whether initiated by an adult or a child, must be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

18. Behaviour management

The management of pupil behaviour is the responsibility of school staff.

Volunteers should:

- model calm, respectful and positive behaviour;
- reinforce the Wittersham Way;
- follow the directions of school staff;
- praise and encourage pupils appropriately; and
- seek support from a member of staff if behaviour becomes difficult.

Volunteers must not:

- shout at, threaten or humiliate a pupil;
- use sarcasm or degrading language;
- issue sanctions independently;
- physically intervene unless required to prevent immediate harm and acting in accordance with school guidance; or
- discuss a pupil's behaviour with parents or carers.

Any behaviour concern must be passed to the supervising member of staff.

19. Mobile phones, photography and social media

Personal mobile phones and smart devices must be switched off or kept securely away while volunteers are working with pupils, unless their use has been expressly authorised.

Volunteers must not:

- photograph, film or record pupils using a personal device;
- store images or information about pupils on a personal device;
- post images, information or comments about pupils, staff or school activities on social media;
- identify pupils or their families online;
- use personal social-media accounts during volunteering activities; or
- make comments online that could bring the school into disrepute.

A volunteer may only take photographs or recordings when specifically directed by an authorised member of staff and using school equipment in accordance with school policy.

20. Health, safety and emergencies

Volunteers must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.

Volunteers must:

- follow staff instructions and school health-and-safety procedures;
- report hazards, accidents, injuries and near misses promptly;
- become familiar with fire and evacuation arrangements;
- sign in and out through the school office;
- wear the identification provided by the school;
- remain within agreed areas;
- use equipment only when authorised and competent to do so; and
- disclose any relevant health or access needs so that appropriate arrangements can be considered.

Volunteers must not administer first aid or medication unless they are appropriately trained, authorised and acting within school procedures. In an emergency, volunteers should summon a member of staff or qualified first aider immediately.

21. Attendance and absence

Volunteers should attend at the agreed times and notify the school as soon as possible if they are unable to attend.

Repeated absence, lateness or unreliability may lead to a review or ending of the placement.

Volunteers should not attend school if they are unwell with an illness that may be infectious

or if they have been advised to remain away from work or school settings.

22. Educational visits

Volunteers accompanying an educational visit must:

- follow the instructions of the visit leader;
- attend any required briefing;
- understand which pupils they are supporting;
- follow the visit risk assessment and emergency arrangements;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- avoid making unauthorised changes to the planned arrangements; and
- report concerns immediately to the visit leader.

The school will determine whether a volunteer may be included within staffing ratios and what checks and supervision are required.

A volunteer must never be left in sole charge of a visit unless this has been expressly agreed and all relevant legal and safeguarding requirements have been satisfied.

23. Insurance

Volunteers acting within the duties authorised by the school are normally covered by the school's insurance arrangements.

Insurance may not cover a volunteer who:

- acts outside the agreed role;
- disregards school instructions;
- behaves negligently or unlawfully; or
- uses a personal vehicle without formal authorisation and suitable insurance.

Where a volunteer is provided by another organisation, the school may require confirmation of that organisation's insurance arrangements.

24. Concerns, breaches and ending a placement

Where a concern arises about a volunteer's conduct, suitability, attendance or ability to follow school procedures, the school may:

- provide advice, clarification or additional training;
- review the volunteer's duties or supervision;

- temporarily suspend the placement while concerns are considered; or
- end the placement with immediate effect.

A volunteer may be asked to leave the premises immediately where this is necessary to protect pupils, staff or the school community.

Safeguarding concerns will be referred to the appropriate agencies where required. This may include the Local Authority Designated Officer, children's social care, the police or the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The school will consider whether it has a legal duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service when a volunteer is removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left, because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child.

The Headteacher's decision about whether to offer, continue or end a voluntary placement is final.

A volunteer may end their placement at any time by notifying the school.

25. Monitoring and review

The Governing Board has responsibility for approving and monitoring this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for its day-to-day implementation.

The policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if there is a change to legislation, statutory guidance or school procedures.

Contact information

For further information or to apply to volunteer, please contact:

Mrs Caroline Penn
School Office
Email: office@wittersham.kent.sch.uk

Appendix 1: Volunteer Code of Conduct

Wittersham Church of England Primary School

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards expected of all volunteers.

By signing this document, I agree that I will:

1. Follow school policies and instructions

I will:

- follow the school's policies, procedures and Code of Conduct;
- follow reasonable instructions given by members of staff;
- remain within the duties agreed for my placement;
- ask for guidance whenever I am unsure;
- support the Christian vision and the values of courage, compassion and cooperation; and
- conduct myself in a way that supports the reputation and ethos of the school.

2. Maintain professional conduct

I will:

- behave professionally, respectfully and appropriately;
- use suitable language;
- dress in clothing and footwear that are professional, practical, safe and appropriate for a primary school;
- treat pupils, staff, families and other volunteers fairly and with dignity;
- comply with the school's equality responsibilities;
- arrive at the agreed time and inform the school if I cannot attend;
- avoid any behaviour that could bring the school into disrepute; and
- tell the supervising member of staff if I feel unable to carry out an activity safely or appropriately.

3. Safeguard pupils

I will:

- complete the safeguarding induction and training required by the school;
- read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- report any concern about a child immediately to a member of the safeguarding team;

- report concerns about the conduct of an adult to the Headteacher;
- report concerns about the Headteacher to the Chair of Governors;
- report low-level concerns as well as allegations that may meet the harm threshold;
- never promise a child that I will keep a disclosure secret;
- never investigate a safeguarding concern myself; and
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.

The safeguarding team is:

- Mrs Stella Coulson – Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Mrs Lynsey Scott – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Mrs Carly Catt – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead; and
- Mrs Claire Sterriker-Rhodes – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Chair of Governors is Mr John Collins.

4. Maintain appropriate relationships and boundaries

I will not:

- exchange personal contact details with pupils;
- contact or meet pupils outside school;
- communicate privately with pupils online;
- accept pupils as friends or followers on social media;
- encourage pupils to keep secrets;
- develop exclusive or inappropriate relationships with pupils;
- show favouritism;
- give an individual pupil a gift without prior approval;
- transport pupils without formal authorisation; or
- seek confidential information about my own child or another pupil through my volunteering role.

I will report any concern about a pupil's attachment to or relationship with me to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. Follow behaviour procedures

I understand that behaviour management is the responsibility of school staff.

I will:

- model positive and respectful behaviour;

- support the Wittersham Way;
- follow the direction of staff; and
- seek help from a member of staff when required.

I will not:

- reprimand, threaten, humiliate or shout at a pupil;
- impose sanctions independently;
- use physical punishment;
- discuss a child's behaviour with their parent or carer; or
- use physical intervention unless it is immediately necessary to prevent harm.

6. Protect confidentiality

I will:

- keep information about pupils, families, staff and school business confidential;
- access information only when authorised and necessary for my role;
- keep records and documents secure;
- refer enquiries from parents and carers to a member of staff;
- report any accidental disclosure or loss of information immediately; and
- continue to maintain confidentiality after my placement ends.

I understand that confidentiality does not prevent me from reporting a safeguarding, low-level or whistleblowing concern through the correct procedure.

7. Use mobile phones and social media appropriately

I will not:

- use my personal mobile phone while working with pupils unless authorised;
- photograph, film or record pupils using a personal device;
- store information about pupils on a personal device;
- post information, images or comments about the school, its pupils or staff online;
- identify pupils or families on social media; or
- make online comments that could bring the school into disrepute.

8. Follow health-and-safety procedures

I will:

- sign in and out through the school office;

- wear the identification provided by the school;
- follow fire, emergency and health-and-safety procedures;
- report hazards, accidents and injuries promptly;
- use equipment only when authorised and competent to do so; and
- follow the instructions of staff during emergencies.

I will not administer medication or first aid unless I am appropriately trained and authorised to do so.

9. Declare relevant changes

I will inform the Headteacher promptly if:

- I become subject to a police investigation, caution, charge or conviction;
- I become barred from working with children;
- children's social care or another relevant agency becomes involved with me in circumstances that may affect my suitability;
- my circumstances change in a way that could affect my suitability to volunteer; or
- a conflict of interest arises.

10. Breaches of the Code of Conduct

I understand that a failure to follow this Code of Conduct may result in my placement being suspended or ended.

I understand that safeguarding concerns may be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer, children's social care, the police, the Disclosure and Barring Service or another relevant agency.

Volunteer agreement

I confirm that:

- I have read and understood the Volunteers Policy and this Code of Conduct;
- I have received an appropriate induction;
- I understand how to report safeguarding concerns;
- I agree to follow the school's policies, procedures and instructions; and
- I understand that the school may end my volunteering placement at any time.

Name of volunteer: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Agreed volunteering role: _____

Supervising member of staff: _____

School representative's name: _____

School representative's signature: _____

Date: _____

The revised DBS section reflects the removal of the supervision exemption from 1 September 2026 and the requirement for volunteers undertaking regulated activity to receive an enhanced DBS check with children's barred-list information.