

Volunteer Policy

This policy was ratified by the Board of Directors on :	Summer 2024
This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Directors on :	Summer 2026

GLC Mission Statement

The GLC's mission is to develop active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community.

This will be achieved through:

- High quality teaching that deliberately develops competencies of curiosity, creativity, communication and critical-thinking;
- An inspiring and meaningful curriculum;
- The development of productive relationships by instilling the values of compassion, resilience, responsibility and aspiration to prepare our young people for learning and life;
- A commitment to the wellbeing of our staff;
- A culture of professional generosity, collaboration, challenge and support throughout the GLC;
- The development of effective external partnerships for the benefit and wellbeing of our community.

Equalities Statement

The GLC's commitment to equality is enshrined in our mission statement to develop 'active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community'.

We are a vibrant, innovative and successful organisation: we work hard to be the place of choice to work and to learn. Across the 5 academies of the GLC, we pledge that everyone enjoys an equality of opportunity. We work tirelessly to ensure that individual characteristics including age, ethnicity, socio-economic background, academic ability, disability, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation are not discriminated against in any way. We create inclusive environments characterised by mutual respect where difference is celebrated.

Gateway Learning Community Volunteer Policy

Introduction and aims

Volunteers at the GLC bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of the children.

We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the GLC strategic vision, as well as its development plan.

The aim of the GLC Volunteer policy is to:

- Encourage the wider community to engage with the GLC schools, thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion;
- Ensure that the volunteers support the school's vision and values, and adhere to our policies;
- Provide staff, volunteers and parents with clear expectations and guidelines;
- Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers.

This policy has been developed in line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education [KCISE] from the Department for Education [DfE].

The GLC welcomes and encourages volunteers from the local community.

Volunteers include:

- Members of the GLC local governing bodies and the GLC Board;
- Parents of pupils;
- Former pupils;
- Ex-pupils;
- Students on work experience;
- University students;
- Local residents;
- Relatives of staff;
- Charity workers.

Members of the governing body 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 governor code of conduct.

The types of activities that volunteers are engaged in under supervision include:

- Hearing children read;
- Working with small groups of children;
- Working alongside individual children in the classroom;
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or art;
- Supporting with Forest School;
- Accompanying school visits;
- Maintaining gardens/grounds;
- Supporting with trips and visits.

Becoming a volunteer

- Anyone wishing to become a volunteer should go to any GLC academy reception office and request a Volunteer Application form or email the individual school admin email inboxes.
- Volunteers will be advised that completion of the legal requirements / application process can vary, but may take up to 2 months.
- Volunteers will be required to complete the Volunteer Application form [Appendix 1] which includes their contact details, type of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help.

- All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check [if appropriate] and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training.
- The Head of School reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.
- Enhanced DBS checks for volunteers working in the school through other organisations will be conducted by the relevant organisation, if needed. The school will ask for written confirmation that enhanced DBS checks have been carried out before a volunteer is allowed to start work at the school.
- Where a volunteer is engaged in a “one-off” [normally a parent] activity e.g. a class trip, no formal checks are carried out on these volunteers. However, these volunteers will be under the constant supervision of school staff and must sign the Off Sites Visits Agreement [Appendix 4] as part of the school’s risk assessment procedures.
- As part of the application process, the GLC will request the name and contact details of 2 previous referees.
- Prior to placement, volunteers / students will be required to attend a short informal interview / induction session with a member of the leadership team. This induction will be an opportunity for volunteers to raise any questions they may have and will also provide a further opportunity for the volunteer coordinator to confirm the clear guidelines set out in this policy and the school’s expectations.
- Before starting to help in the GLC, volunteers should complete the Volunteer Confidentiality Contract [Appendix 3], which sets out the GLC’s expectations of volunteers and asks volunteers to confirm they have received a copy of this policy.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of the class teacher or member of staff they have been assigned to support e.g Academic Mentor of the class to which they are assigned. Teachers/staff members retain responsibility for children at all times, including the children’s behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the teacher or member of staff as to how an activity is carried out/ what the expected outcome of an activity is. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice / guidance from the teacher in the event of any query / problem regarding children’s understanding of a task or behaviour.

All volunteers will have a termly supervision meeting with the volunteer coordinator.

Volunteer Procedures

Volunteers are expected to sign in and out each time they are on the school premises, using the school’s electronic signing in system, and wear the academy lanyard at all times whilst on site along with the photographic Visitor badge produced by the signing in system

If a volunteer is unable to come to school for some reason then he/she is expected to call the school office by 8.30 am or, if volunteering in the afternoon, by 1.00 pm to inform the school that they are unable to attend on that day.

If a pattern of non-attendance emerges then the Head of School will meet with the volunteer to discuss the reasons for absence. Attendance will be monitored and if the pattern continues then the school will terminate the placement.

Volunteer Dress Code

The GLC expects staff and volunteers to present themselves professionally and for parents and visitors to perceive them in this way.

Generally, clothes should be smart, casual smart clothes are permissible. Clothes should be suitable for day wear and not overly decorative. Skirts should be knee- length or worn over thick leggings.

Footwear should be smart, safe, in good condition and suitable for the individual's daily activities. Please ensure footwear is robust for safety reasons.

Jewellery is up to the individual's discretion but should be safe and appropriate for the activity in which the member of staff is engaged.

Confidentiality

Volunteers at the GLC are bound by a confidentiality contract [Appendix 3]. Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with / come into contact with should be voiced with the appropriate member of staff and not with the parents of the child / persons outside school. Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school. If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in our Child protection and Safeguarding policy and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead [DSL].

Health & Safety

The GLC has a Health & Safety Policy that volunteers should read. The SSM will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures [e.g. fire alarm evacuation – displayed in each classroom] and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task [e.g. using DT equipment / PE lessons / accompanying children on visits]. Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the Class teacher.

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 enhanced DBS checks with a barred list check on volunteers who:
 - Work 1-on-1 with pupils unsupervised;
 - Work with groups of pupils unsupervised;
 - Supervise or accompany groups of pupils on overnight residential visits.
- 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.
- 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.
- Require volunteers to agree and adhere to our code of conduct [see appendix 5] and to read, and adhere to, the school's policies on:
 - Safeguarding;
 - Use of mobile phones;
 - ICT and internet acceptable use;
 - Online safety;
 - Behaviour;
 - Health and Safety;
- Ensure that volunteers without an enhanced DBS check are always supervised, and are never left alone with pupils.
- Conduct a risk assessment to determine whether a volunteer who isn't working in regulated activity needs an enhanced DBS check. The risk assessment will consider:
 - The nature of the work they will be doing
 - What we know about them
 - References from employers or other voluntary roles
 - Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check

We legally cannot carry out a DBS check on a child under the age of 16 who is volunteering at our school. We will ensure that children who are volunteering are always under an appropriate level of supervision, and conduct a risk assessment to consider any potential safeguarding issues.

Child Protection / Safeguarding

The Children's Act 2004 [Section 11] places a duty on key people and bodies to make arrangements to ensure that when carrying out their functions they take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The GLC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The welfare of our children is paramount as such, we have embraced the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

To ensure the safety of our children, we adopt the following procedures:

- At all times, all of our volunteers must have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service [DBS]. All applicants will be asked to sign an agreement form which means that when a certificate is issued to the individual they agree to bring the original certificate upon receipt into school for evidencing. If the DBS has been applied for through the College / University, the school will need to receive / evidence of recent clearance.
- All volunteers will be provided with the laminated sheet [available at reception] outlining fire and safety details;
- Volunteers will receive a safeguarding briefing as part of their induction so they know who to report any concerns to;
- All volunteers will have been expected to read and sign for reading the first part of the current Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- All volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteers Policy and asked to sign a Confidentiality Contract.
- Where a volunteer is engaged in a "one-off" [normally a parent] activity e.g. a class trip, no formal checks are carried out on these volunteers. However these volunteers will be requested to sign the Off Site Visits Agreement before going on the trip.

Induction and Training

Volunteers must complete appropriate training prior to beginning work at the school. Training requirements will be determined by the Head of School, or the appropriate member of staff.

All volunteers must have safeguarding training. Other training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing.

Conduct of Volunteers

Volunteers must comply with the Volunteer Code of Conduct set out in appendix 5 of this policy.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Head of School for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be referred to the Head of School.

The Head of School reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak with the volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Confidentiality Contract and seek reassurance that this will not happen again;
- Inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to support the placement.

Insurance

The school's insurance policy does cover volunteers in the event of an accident or emergency. If a volunteer is working at the school through another organisation, we will also check that organisation's insurance arrangements.

Data Protection and Record Keeping

Our Privacy notice explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it.

We will:

- Retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule;
- Remove details of volunteers from the single central record [SCR] once they no longer work at our school.

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been approved by the GLC Board of Directors and will be reviewed every two years and updated in the light of new guidance from either the DfE.

Appendix 1: GLC VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

DATA PROTECTION NOTICE
<p>Throughout this form, we ask for some personal data about you. We'll only use this data in line with data protection legislation and process your data for 1 or more of the following reasons permitted in law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You've given us your consent; - We must process it to comply with our legal obligations.

Name:	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
Date of Birth:	Home Address:
Tel:	
Email:	

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE [DBS] INFORMATION
<p>The GLC is legally obligated to process an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service [DBS] check before making appointments to relevant posts.</p> <p>The enhanced DBS check will reveal both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings, and any other information held by local police that's considered relevant to the role. Any information that is "protected" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 [Exceptions] Order 1975 will not appear on the DBS Certificate.</p> <p>Volunteers working in a regulated activity will also require a barred list check.</p> <p>Any data processed as part of the DBS check will be processed in accordance with data protection regulations and the GLC privacy notice.</p>

Do you have a DBS check? (please circle)	Yes/No
If yes, what type of check do you have? (please circle)	Basic DBS / Standard DBS / Enhanced DBS / Enhanced DBS with barred list information

Date of check:	
Certificate number:	

<p>Have you any experience of working as a volunteer and / or with children Yes / No</p>
<p>If yes, where and when did you gain this experience?</p>

<p>Are you available to commit yourself to this voluntary work for at least one term (average, 13 weeks)? Yes / No</p>

<p>Why would you like to be a volunteer at The Gateway Learning Community?</p>

<p>How much time each week do you feel able to volunteer for?</p>
--

When can you volunteer?

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM					
PM					

What age – group would you prefer to work with? Please tick your preference/s.

Nursery (3-4 Years)

KS1 (5-7 Years)

KS2 (7-11 Years)

Would you feel able to help with any of the following in a classroom setting?

Please tick your preference/s

Literacy (Reading, Writing, Phonics)

Geography / History

Numeracy (Maths)

Art / Design & Technology

Early Years

All-round Support

Are there any particular activities you enjoy and would like to share with the children?

(For example: sports, arts and crafts, languages spoken)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Gateway Learning Community is committed to Equal Opportunities. To help us, please describe your ethnic origin by circling the appropriate code below. This information is optional, confidential and will only be used for monitoring purposes.

I would describe my ethnic origin as:					
WB	British	MB	White and Black African	OA	Other Asian background
WI	Irish	MA	White and Asian	BC	Caribbean
GK	Greek / Greek Cypriot	MO	Other mixed background	BA	African
TK	Turkish / Turkish Cypriot	IN	Indian	OB	Other Black background
OW	Other White background	PK	Pakistani	CH	Chinese
MC	White and Black Caribbean	BN	Bangladeshi	GO	Other background

Disability and Accessibility
<p>The GLC is committed to ensuring that applicants with disabilities or impairments receive equal opportunities and treatment.</p> <p>if you have a disability or impairment, and would like us to make adjustments or arrangements to assist you, please state the arrangements that you require:</p>

It is desirable that you have one satisfactory reference to start a placement at The Gateway Learning Community. Please give the name, address, phone number and email address of one reference who has known you for a **minimum of two years** in a professional capacity if possible (e.g. employer, tutor, colleague, etc.) who can vouch for your integrity and reliability.

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Tel:	Tel:
Email:	Email:

In what capacity do you know these referees?

.....
.....

The Children’s Act 2004 (Section 11) places a duty on key people and bodies to make arrangements to ensure that when carrying out their functions they take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

“The Gateway Learning Community is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.”

CONSENT

Please note that your consent will be required for a DBS police check (your signature below confirms this consent). I confirm that the information I have given above is correct. I give permission for my referees to be contacted and understand that The Gateway Learning Community reserves the right to reject a volunteer application at any stage of the recruitment process and remove a volunteer from this programme.

Signed: ...

Date:

Thank you for filling out this application form.

Please return this form to:

The school office marked FAO Katie Creighton – H.R, The Gateway Academy, Marshfoot Road, Grays RM16 4LU.

Appendix 2: GLC VOLUNTEER REFERENCE REQUEST

Volunteer Name:

Dear Sir / Madam,

The person named above has given your name as a referee to support their application to be a volunteer in one of our schools. I would be grateful if you could complete the form and return to me as soon as possible, as we are keen to place this volunteer. Thank you in advance for your help.

Referee Name:

Tel:	Email:
Address:	

1. In what capacity do you know the applicant?

2. How many years have you known the applicant? (Employers please give start/end dates of employment)

3. How reliable and trustworthy is the applicant?

4. Are you aware of any reason why it would not be appropriate for the applicant to work with children?

5. Please give your comments on the applicant's suitability and positive qualities, and add any other information you think we should have:

6. Are you aware of any reason why it would not be appropriate for the applicant to work with children?

If YES, please say why:

7. Would you recommend them for volunteering in our school?

If NO, please say why:

8. If he/she has left your employment/volunteering role, please give his/her reasons for doing so:

Signed: ...

Date: ...

Please return this form to:

Katie Creighton

HR

The Gateway Academy

Marshfoot Road

Grays

RM16 4LU

Email: katie.creighton@theglc.org.uk

Thank you

Appendix 3: CONFIDENTIALITY CONTRACT

As a Volunteer at The Gateway Learning Community I understand that class, pupil and parent details, staff room conversations or school matters are confidential and not to be shared or discussed with parents or members of the general public.

If I have any concerns I will initially raise them with the class teacher and then the Head of School if necessary.

I understand that the class teacher is in charge of all activities and the behaviour management in the classroom, I should follow the school behaviour policy which is on display in every classroom. I will not under any circumstances use physical force.

I understand that before I start working in school, the school will initiate an enhanced DBS check on me in the interest of the safety of children in the school in accordance with the Children’s Act 2004 (section 11).

Should a situation arise that indicates that I have divulged any confidential information to a parent of members of the public the matter will be investigated and my placement may be withdrawn.

I understand that my personal details and details of the CRB check will be held on the school’s single central record for inspection by authorised personnel only.

Name:

Date:

Signed.....

Volunteers Coordinator

Appendix 4: OFF – SITE VISITS VOLUNTEER / PARENT AGREEMENT

School trips are an integral part of learning at The Gateway Learning Community and afford many children 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 the school trip.

Please read the below and return this signed along with the helper's return slip. This is part of our school's risk assessment planning.

Role of the volunteer helper

- To be responsible and look after, in equal measure in conjunction with school staff, all of the children in your group.
- To stay with you allocated staff member / group of children, ensuring that their well-being 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 the group you are with keeps 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 / school member of staff if there are issues with the 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 line management of school staff. Show commitment to their group, an interest in the focus of the visit and assist children in their learning by helping them to read signs / labels / information, asking questions that encourage children to think. Follow guidance from the school staff.

What is not permitted

- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to bring additional siblings on the school trip.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to re-organise school visit groups.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to smoke, drink alcohol or engage in any illegal practices.
- Volunteer helpers are not permitted to take photographs of children.
- 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

All first aid bags will be carried by staff, who will also have a list of children with any medical needs. You will be informed if any child in your group has medication / medical needs. If medication needs to be administered, this will be done by a trained member of staff. Asthma inhalers will be brought for children who have asthma along with the emergency asthma inhaler in case of an emergency.

Emergencies

You are expected to inform a member of staff as soon as possible if you become separated from the rest of the school party, please telephone the school directly and they will contact the staff member.

Parent Volunteer:

I will support the young people in enjoying the trip and actively contribute to the smooth running of the occasion.

Trip Venue: _____

Signed: _____

Appendix 5: Code of Conduct for Volunteers

By signing this form, volunteers agree to the following:

1. School rules and policies

1.1. Volunteers will follow all school rules and policies, including those on:

- 1.1.1. Child protection;
- 1.1.2. ICT and internet acceptable use;
- 1.1.3. Online safety;
- 1.1.4. Mobile phones;
- 1.1.5. Data protection;
- 1.1.6. Health and safety;
- 1.1.7. Equality;
- 1.1.8. Whistle-blowing;
- 1.1.9. Behaviour.

1.2. Copies of the school policies are available from the school office.

2. Professional conduct

2.1. Volunteers must accept and follow instructions provided by supervisors, and ask for guidance or clarification if required. Questions can be directed to the supervising member of staff, or to the school's volunteer co-ordinator.

2.2. Behaviour management is the responsibility of school staff. If volunteers witness behaviour that is in breach of the school's behaviour policy, or are struggling to manage the behaviour of pupils with whom they're working, they should alert the class teacher immediately. Volunteers should not attempt to reprimand pupils or issue sanctions.

2.3. Volunteers must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This includes:

- 2.3.1. Dressing in a way that is professional and appropriate to the work they are doing;
- 2.3.2. Refraining from using inappropriate language;
- 2.3.3. Setting an example for pupils by acting in a way that reflects the school's ethos and values;
- 2.3.4. Behaving in a way that is appropriate for the role they are undertaking;
- 2.3.5. Ensuring that comments, including those made on social media, do not bring the school into disrepute.

2.4. Volunteers must not accept gifts from, or give gifts to, pupils. The exception is small tokens, such as those exchanged at the end of term or as a way of saying "thank you".

2.5. Volunteers must not transport pupils in their own cars unless specific arrangements have been made with the school, and the pupil's parents have consented.

2.6. Parent volunteers with children at the school must not act in a way that favours their own child, and should not approach their child unnecessarily during the school day (for instance, during break times). They may not use their time as a volunteer to discuss their child's education with school staff.

2.7. If a volunteer is unable to come to school when they are expected/scheduled to be in, they must contact their supervisor or the school office as soon as possible. Inconsistent attendance may result in the placement being reviewed or terminated.

3. Safeguarding

- 3.1. Volunteers must be familiar with, and adhere to, the school's safeguarding and child protection policy. Safeguarding training will be provided to all volunteers before they begin their placement.
- 3.2. If volunteers have concerns about the welfare of a child, or if a child makes a disclosure, they should speak directly to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL.
- 3.3. Volunteers should refrain from physical contact with pupils, and should use their judgement to determine when physical contact is appropriate. If physical contact with pupils is required, volunteers should ask for a pupil's consent before touching them.
- 3.4. Volunteers must alert the DSL if a pupil develops an infatuation with them, and must not form personal relationships with pupils, either inside or outside of school, with whom they do not already have a personal relationship. This includes:
 - 3.4.1. Exchanging contact information;
 - 3.4.2. Making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media;
 - 3.4.3. Arranging to meet pupils outside of school.
- 3.5. Volunteers should not take or share photos of pupils unless instructed to do so by their supervisor.

4. Health and safety

- 4.1. Volunteers must abide by the school's health and safety and first aid policies. Volunteers are not to administer first aid, except in an emergency where none of the designated first aiders are available.
- 4.2. Volunteers must be familiar with the school's fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures.
- 4.3. Volunteers must sign in and sign out at the beginning and end of every visit, and must wear a visitor badge at all times.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1. Information about pupils, parents and staff at the school is confidential, and should not be shared with anyone else. Volunteers shouldn't discuss pupils with parents or other children. If parents approach volunteers for information, they should be directed to speak to a class teacher or the Head of School.

Failure to adhere to this code of conduct may result in the termination of the placement. In more serious cases, misconduct will be treated in line with the school's staff disciplinary procedures.

Please sign and date below:

Volunteer Name [Please print] _____

Volunteer Signature _____

Date _____