



Codsall High Federation of Schools

External Volunteers & Guests Policy

The purpose of the policy

The purpose of the policy is to:

- develop a co-coordinated approach to using volunteers and guests;
- monitor and evaluate how we use volunteers and guests to support student learning;
- ensure that volunteers and guests know how their input is supporting learning and how their contribution fits with the school curriculum;
- ensure that volunteers and guests comply with relevant health and safety legislation and safeguarding and develop good practice.

Why we use outside volunteers and guests in school

The use of volunteers and guests to support young people's learning has the potential to be very effective. Volunteers and guests bring into the classroom a wealth of experiences, expertise, different approaches or viewpoints to complement the work of the teaching staff. However, teachers need to manage the involvement of volunteers and guests to make sure that their input will support the achievement of learning objectives and that young people are offered balanced views about a particular subject, for example; the proposed development of an area near to school or abortion. For contributions to be successful for all involved there needs to be a clear shared understanding of the learning objectives for the session and the needs of the young people taking part. The different roles that people have and the contributions they make to learning need to be clearly identified.

Volunteers and guests can enhance learning because they are able to:

- Bring a depth of experience and subject knowledge that would not otherwise be possible;
- Put across an argument or point of view that teachers may not be able to articulate;

- Talk more openly or comfortably around certain issues;
- Be more open about personal experiences;
- Be seen as neutral and not part of the school organisation or authoritarian framework;
- Act as positive role models and counter stereotypical images;
- On some subjects, carry more credibility than teaching staff;
- Provide a varied and alternative learning experience for young people
- Raise young people's awareness of the community in which they live;
- Give local services and agencies a "human face" and a higher profile.

Volunteers and Guests who work within Codsall High Federation of Schools.

A wide range of volunteers and guests are invited into school to contribute in a variety of ways. These include:

- health professionals;
- artists/poets in residence;
- people with particular expertise, experience or knowledge;
- Theatre in Education groups;
- craftspeople;
- local historians;
- careers advisers/Young Peoples Careers Personal Advisers;
- police officers;
- Youth workers
- Parents/volunteers
- Sports professionals

How we use volunteers and guests in Codsall High Federation of Schools Visitors contribute to learning in a variety of settings, such as:

- curriculum extension activities,
- assemblies;
- extracurricular event or club;
- community projects;
- "Insight to Industry" days;
- in lessons;
- at school-based conferences;
- as "expert witnesses;"
- to support in welfare issues
- to support in emotional health and wellbeing

Links to relevant school policies

The relevant school policies should be shared with the outside volunteers and guests. These are likely to include:

- Assessment;

- Safeguarding;
- Confidentiality;
- Drugs Education;
- Single Equality;
- Health and Safety;
- Sex Education
- Behaviour (including rewards and sanctions)

Issues when using visitors in school Sensitivity

Care is needed when handling sensitive and/or controversial issues that may arise. Staff and learners must be involved in the establishment of "classroom rules" which set the climate for the lesson and make clear how all involved in the lesson are expected to behave towards each other during the session. This should enable everyone involved to feel safe and secure.

Part of that discussion must include consideration of what kind of information is for sharing beyond the classroom, e.g. how young people would feel if something they have contributed to the lesson were gossiped about during break or in the staffroom. These rules apply equally to pupils, staff, volunteers and guests.

Confidentiality

Where volunteers and guests support the curriculum, they must be made aware of and abide by the school's policy regarding disclosures and confidentiality. The boundary between providing individual advice and providing learning opportunities for groups of young people must be made clear to everyone. Guests from outside agencies may well have a role in providing confidential advice and support to individual young people as part of their regular work. This circumstance is very different from discussing issues in an educational setting and both the guest and the young person need to be clear about the distinction. If the guest, such as a health professional is bound by a different confidentiality code then this must be made clear to staff and the young person. However, it must be clear that there is no confidentiality where safeguarding issues are concerned.

Teacher involvement in the session

It is vital that the teacher is present during any session with an outside volunteer or guest but his/her degree of involvement will vary and should be negotiated with the volunteer or guest beforehand. Clearly, volunteers and guests should not be used as cover to help reduce staffing pressures. The teacher needs to be present so that she/he knows exactly what has happened during the session. This will ensure continuity with the rest of the programme as well as understanding any issues relating to the volunteer or guest's session that may arise later. Issues may be raised during the session that the volunteer or guest may not be able to deal with or may not be the appropriate person to deal with the issue.

A Checklist for Teachers

This checklist will be used by staff in school to support them through the stages of involving a volunteer or guest in the classroom.

Before the visit

- Why is this volunteer/guest being asked into school?
- Does the volunteer/guest come with any recommendations?
- Has the school used this volunteer/guest before?
- What experience has this volunteer/guest of working with this age group?
- Have parents been informed of the session (if appropriate)?
- How will you ensure that learners are hearing a balance of opinions about the topic/issue?
- Has a risk assessment been performed?
- Has the volunteer/guest had a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check?
- Is the DBS check with Staffordshire? If not, it is imperative that a member of staff remains in the room at all times.

Preparing the Volunteer/Guest

- The volunteer or guest must sign in at main reception and must wear a visitor's lanyard.
- Is the volunteer or guest aware of the context of the contributions they have been asked to make?
- Has the volunteer or guest identified the intended learning outcomes for their input?
- Have the resources and materials been reviewed for appropriateness and the maturity of the pupils?
- Is the volunteer or guest aware of the aims of their visit?
- Has the volunteer or guest been made aware of the school ethos?
- Is the volunteer or guest aware of the ability and maturity level of the young people they will be working with?
- Will the volunteer or guest make a pre visit to the school?
- Are safeguarding responsibilities to the young people being met?
- Has the volunteer or guest been supplied with copies of the relevant school policies?
- Is the volunteer or guest aware of any risks to health and safety?
- Is the volunteer or guest aware of fire procedures?
- Has the visitor undertaken a Risk Assessment

Preparing the visit

- What arrangements will be made to welcome the volunteer or guest to the school and introduce them to the class?
- Is the size of the group appropriate to the activity and learning purpose?
- Is this visit part of a planned programme with preparation beforehand and follow up afterwards?
- How will the group be prepared for the volunteer or guest?
- What resources will be needed for the session?

During the visit

- Will the school be able to respond appropriately to questions or incidents that may arise after the volunteer or guest has left?
- How will the teacher support the volunteer or guest in this work?
- Provision must be made for a member of the teaching staff be present during the session if the volunteer or guest is not a teacher and or is not DBS checked by Staffordshire.

After the visit

- How will the outcome of the evaluation inform future work?
- Is there opportunity for feedback and discussion about the impact of the volunteer or guest's session?

Evaluation

The teacher and volunteer or guest will ensure that time has been agreed to jointly evaluate the session. The following questions can be used as prompts:

- What was the young people's response to the session(s)?
- Have the learning outcomes been achieved?
- What went particularly well in the session(s)?
- Which parts (if any) of the session were not successful?
- Were the resources and materials used appropriate?
- In what ways do you think that the session(s) could be improved?
- Are there any issues from this session that you think need addressing further?

Learners evaluations should be carried out to inform future planning and will focus upon:

- What young people have learnt in the sessions;
- What they like about the sessions;
- What they didn't like about the sessions;
- What else they would like to know about.

Conclusion

Adults from all walks of life can impact on the lives of young people. It is important that our young people have access to adults from a whole range of specialisms and experiences.