

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Volunteering Policy

Hindle's School of Excellence Limited

Policy owner	Director	Approved by	Director
Version	2.0	Approval date	5 September 2026
Review cycle	Annually	Next review	September 2027
Applies to	All volunteers and supervisors	Site	115 Rochdale Road, Bury, BL9 7BA
Safeguarding priority Volunteers enhance provision but do not replace employed staff. No volunteer may begin learner-facing duties until the role, safer-recruitment checks, supervision and safeguarding requirements have been assessed and authorised.			

1. Purpose and scope

Hindle's School of Excellence Limited welcomes the contribution that appropriately recruited, trained and supported volunteers can make to learners and the wider community. This policy establishes consistent arrangements for recruiting, checking, inducting, supervising, supporting and ending volunteer involvement safely and fairly.

It applies to unpaid volunteers carrying out agreed activities on behalf of Hindle's. It does not automatically apply to employees, agency workers, self-employed contractors, apprentices, formal trainee-teacher placements, commissioned professionals or learners completing a school-arranged work-experience placement; those arrangements require their own agreements, checks and responsibilities. Where a person has more than one status, this must be clarified in writing before they begin.

2. Our principles

- learner safety, welfare and dignity are paramount;
- volunteer roles will add value and will not be designed to replace paid posts;
- recruitment and access to opportunities will be fair, inclusive and role-related;
- each volunteer will have a written role outline, named supervisor, induction and appropriate training;
- duties, checks and supervision will be proportionate to the role and its risks;
- volunteers will be listened to, supported and able to raise concerns without disadvantage;
- reasonable authorised expenses may be reimbursed so that cost is not an unnecessary barrier; and
- volunteering is freely undertaken and does not create a contract of employment or guarantee future work.

3. Who may volunteer and suitable activities

Volunteers may include parents/carers, former learners, community members, former staff, students and others with relevant interests or experience. Acceptance is not automatic and depends on organisational need, suitability, capacity to supervise, safer-recruitment outcomes, insurance and risk assessment.

Subject to authorisation, activities may include:

- supporting reading, literacy, numeracy, creative, practical or enrichment activities;
- supporting a staff-led small group or individual task within the agreed plan;
- helping with resources, administration, events, workshops or the learning environment;
- supporting an educational visit under the visit leader's arrangements;
- mentoring or sharing specialist skills where competence and boundaries have been confirmed; and
- other activities described in the agreed role outline and risk assessment.

Volunteers must not independently teach, assess, diagnose, provide therapy, administer medication, use physical intervention, transport learners, access safeguarding records or supervise learners alone unless the activity is lawful, specifically authorised, appropriately checked, insured, risk assessed and within demonstrated competence.

4. Age and young volunteers

The minimum age will be determined for each role. A volunteer under 18 requires an enhanced role risk assessment, age-appropriate duties and supervision, and written parent/carers consent where appropriate. A young volunteer is also a child for safeguarding purposes and must not be placed in sole charge of learners or used to meet adult staffing or supervision requirements.

The minimum age for a DBS application is 16. Where a person under 16 is involved, Hindle's will not request a DBS check and will ensure that the activity does not require one; close and effective supervision and other safeguarding controls will apply.

5. Role planning and risk assessment

Before recruitment, the Director or delegated lead will define the purpose, tasks, location, times, supervisor, contact with learners, access to information/equipment, required skills, training, expenses, checks and risks. The role will be reviewed whenever duties or circumstances change.

The organisation may decide not to offer, delay or withdraw a role where safe or effective supervision cannot be provided, checks are incomplete, insurance does not cover the activity or the risks cannot be adequately controlled.

6. Recruitment and selection

1. expression of interest and an informal discussion about motivation, availability and role expectations;
2. completion of an application/registration and consent form appropriate to the role;
3. identity and address checks and, where relevant, confirmation of qualifications or experience;
4. two suitable references where the role involves regular learner contact or another position of trust;
5. exploration of relevant gaps, concerns or inconsistencies and a suitability decision recorded by the Director;
6. criminal-record and barred-list checks only at the legally permitted level for the assessed role;
7. confirmation of any health, accessibility or reasonable-adjustment needs relevant to safe participation; and
8. written authorisation before duties commence.

Hindle's will apply its Equal Opportunities, Recruitment of Ex-Offenders and safeguarding arrangements. Information disclosed will be considered fairly, confidentially and in relation to the role; it will not necessarily prevent volunteering.

7. DBS and barred-list arrangements

Hindle's will determine DBS eligibility from the actual activities and legal definition of regulated activity, not from job title, age alone or a blanket rule. The appropriate check will be obtained before regulated activity begins. From September 2026, supervision does not remove a role from regulated activity where the statutory activity and frequency conditions are met; relevant volunteer roles must therefore be reviewed against current law and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Where a volunteer is not in regulated activity, Hindle's may obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred-list information only where the role is eligible and a risk assessment supports this. No barred-list information will be requested unlawfully. A barred person must never be permitted to engage in regulated activity. DBS information will be handled under the DBS Code of Practice and data-protection arrangements.

Important A DBS certificate is only one part of safer recruitment. Identity, references, suitability, boundaries, induction, ongoing supervision and prompt response to concerns remain essential.

8. Volunteer agreement and role outline

Each volunteer will receive a written role outline and volunteer agreement covering duties, boundaries, supervisor, attendance/contact arrangements, confidentiality, safeguarding, conduct, health and safety, expenses, information handling, ending arrangements and how to raise concerns. These documents express mutual expectations in good faith and are not contracts of employment.

9. Induction, training and supervision

Before or at the start of the role, volunteers will receive role-appropriate induction covering safeguarding and the DSL, professional boundaries, conduct, health and safety, fire/emergency procedures, confidentiality, data protection, equality, SEND awareness, online safety, reporting routes and the relevant risk assessments. Required reading and training will be recorded.

Every volunteer will have a named supervisor. The level and proximity of supervision will reflect age, experience, checks, competence, learner needs and the activity risk. Volunteers must remain within authorised duties, follow staff direction and ask for help whenever unsure. Hindle's may observe practice, provide feedback, increase supervision or restrict duties.

10. Safeguarding and professional boundaries

- act in the best interests of learners and follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- report any concern immediately to the DSL or deputy and never promise confidentiality to a learner;
- report low-level concerns, allegations or conduct concerns about adults through the correct procedure;

- avoid favouritism, gifts, personal relationships, unauthorised one-to-one situations and unnecessary physical contact;
- not exchange personal contact details, connect through personal social media or arrange contact outside the role;
- not photograph, film, transport or meet a learner away from Hindle's unless formally authorised; and
- not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

11. Attendance, conduct and confidentiality

Volunteers are asked to be reliable and to notify their supervisor as soon as possible if unavailable. They must sign in and out, display identification where required, follow the Staff/Volunteer Code of Conduct and maintain confidentiality. Personal, educational, medical and safeguarding information may be accessed only where necessary for the authorised role and must not be discussed outside appropriate professional channels.

12. Health, safety and welfare

Hindle's will take reasonably practicable steps to protect volunteers and others affected by their activities. Volunteers must follow risk assessments, fire and emergency procedures, report hazards, accidents and near misses, use equipment only when authorised and trained, and disclose relevant support needs or changes so that risks and reasonable adjustments can be considered. Volunteers are not expected to place themselves at risk or manage unsafe behaviour beyond their role.

13. Equality, inclusion and accessibility

Hindle's aims to make volunteering opportunities accessible and will not unlawfully discriminate. Selection decisions will be based on the role and safeguarding requirements. Reasonable adjustments and accessible information will be considered. Volunteers must support respectful, inclusive practice and report discrimination, harassment or bullying.

14. Expenses

Reasonable, actual out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed where they have been agreed in advance, supported by receipts and claimed under the current expenses procedure. Examples may include authorised travel, admission or subsistence connected with an agreed activity. Flat-rate allowances, rewards or payments that could affect volunteer status will not be made without appropriate advice and written approval.

15. Insurance

Hindle's will check that agreed volunteer activities fall within relevant insurance cover. Cover applies only while a volunteer is carrying out authorised duties and following instructions. Volunteers must not use a personal vehicle, provide professional advice or undertake excluded/high-risk activities unless this has been specifically approved and the necessary insurance is confirmed. Personal belongings are normally the volunteer's responsibility.

16. Records, privacy and images

Hindle's will keep proportionate records such as application details, identity/check outcomes, references, risk assessment, role agreement, emergency contact, training, supervision, incidents and ending information. Records will be secured, accessed only for legitimate purposes, retained under the retention schedule and handled in accordance with UK data-protection law and privacy information.

Consent for photographs, video, audio, trips or publicity will be requested separately and specifically. Refusing optional image consent will not disadvantage a volunteer. Volunteers must not take or publish images of learners on personal devices or accounts.

17. Volunteer voice, support and recognition

Volunteers will have opportunities to discuss their experience, suggest improvements and contribute to decisions that directly affect their role. Supervisors will provide feedback and appropriate recognition. Emotional support or debriefing will be offered following difficult situations, within the organisation's competence; professional support will be signposted where needed.

18. Concerns, complaints and whistleblowing

A volunteer should normally raise a role or relationship concern with their named supervisor or the Director. Safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately through the safeguarding procedure. Complaints and whistleblowing concerns will be handled under the relevant policies. Hindle's will seek a fair, timely response, but employment grievance and disciplinary procedures do not apply unless the individual separately has employee/worker status.

19. Ending or pausing volunteering

Either the volunteer or Hindle's may end the arrangement. Wherever appropriate, reasonable notice and a discussion will be offered, but Hindle's may pause or end volunteering immediately to protect learners, staff, the volunteer, confidential information or the organisation. Reasons may include completion of the role, capacity changes, repeated unreliability, boundary or conduct concerns, failure to follow procedures, unsafe practice or an adverse suitability decision.

Property, keys, passes, records and access credentials must be returned or disabled. An exit discussion may be offered. A factual reference may be provided at the Director's discretion, based on accurate records and the organisation's reference procedure.

20. Monitoring and review

The Director will monitor recruitment outcomes, training, supervision, volunteer feedback, expenses, incidents, complaints, safeguarding concerns and endings to assess safety, inclusion and effectiveness. This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner following a legal or statutory-guidance change, significant incident, audit finding or material change in provision.

21. Related documents

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Safer Recruitment Policy and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders arrangements;
- Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct;

- Volunteer Consent Form and Volunteer Agreement;
- Volunteer Training and Development Policy;
- Health and Safety, Educational Visits, Equality, Data Protection and Confidentiality Policies;
- Complaints, Whistleblowing, Low-Level Concerns and Allegations procedures.

Approval

Approved by	Joanne C. Hindle, Director
Signature	_____
Approval date	5 September 2026
Next review	September 2027

Volunteer acknowledgement

I confirm that I have received or can access this policy and the documents relevant to my role. I understand that I must follow safeguarding, professional-boundary, confidentiality and safety requirements and must remain within my authorised duties.

Volunteer name	
Volunteer signature	
Parent/carer signature (if required)	
Date	