

GATEHOUSE SCHOOL

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES BY VOLUNTEERS ETC (DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY GUIDANCE NOTES)

As schools increasingly involve themselves in their wider community and vice-versa, it is to be expected that there will be a growth in the number and range of individuals engaged in supporting pupil activities. As well as school staff (teaching and non-teaching) these may be other Council staff (e.g. Social Services/Fire Service), the staff of other agencies (Health Board); representatives of outside organisations contracted to provide a service (e.g. Arts Groups); or volunteers (e.g. parents/friends) and their involvement may be in curricular or extra-curricular activities.

The Schools Service unequivocally welcomes the contribution of these individuals for the value which they can add to the diversity and richness of pupil experience.

In the context of this expanded pupil support network we must, however, recognise the increased obligation on all of us in relation to pupil safety and well-being. The guidance provided below should be strictly adhered to in order to ensure that the protection of young people is not compromised.

1. Employees

All prospective employees who are likely to have direct access to children are subject to a Disclosure Scotland check as a condition of their employment. There is not therefore any requirement for a teacher to be present in a supervisory capacity when such staff are working in school or leading extra-curricular activities. (There may, of course, be other reasons for a teacher being present on such occasions but these would not relate to child protection).

In certain (highly exceptional) cases where approval is given for an individual to be employed before the Disclosure Scotland check is complete (eg where a delay in employing the person could **increase** the risk to child safety - for example, a vacancy for a crossing patrol), it is the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that this employee is closely supervised and does not have one to one access to children until the check has been satisfactorily completed.

2. Representatives of Outside Organisations

Many organisations, aware of the importance of Child Protection issues, will arrange for their members to be Disclosure Scotland checked but this will not be the case in all instances. The Council is not in a position to insist that this must be done. Headteachers are therefore advised that, when representatives of such agencies are working with pupils, a member of staff should be present at all times.

3. Volunteers

It would not be practicable for the Council to undertake a Disclosure Scotland check on each and every volunteer offering to assist in schools. Normal practice will be for schools to ask all potential volunteers to complete a "Volunteer's Declaration" pro-forma (copies of the attached sample should be used) and this should be retained on file as long as the individual continues to act as a volunteer in the school. Since this is a self-declaration only, these volunteers **may not work with pupils in an unsupervised capacity at any time.**

There are four sets of circumstances in which **Disclosure Scotland checks on volunteers** should be requested:

- (i) Where the volunteer has declared that he/she has one or more previous conviction(s)/is currently the subject of an investigation/has charges pending. The person in question should not operate as a volunteer until such time as a satisfactory Disclosure Scotland check has been received.
- (ii) Where no previous convictions etc have been declared but the Headteacher has reason to be concerned about the background/fitness of the person to act as a volunteer. The person in question may only operate in a supervised capacity until such time as a satisfactory Disclosure Scotland check is received.
- (iii) Where the purpose in engaging the assistance of the volunteer is to have him/her engage with pupils in an unsupervised capacity (e.g. transporting to sports events/sports coaching).
- (iv) Where the volunteer will be involved in an overnight stay with pupils.

In these cases, a request for a Disclosure Scotland check to be undertaken should be forwarded to Jane Ramsay, Principal Personnel Officer, based in Woodbank. (The costs of these checks (£13.60 per head) will be charged to the school's devolved budget.)

Summary

The Council is anxious to continue to involve as wide a range of people in schools as possible, but child protection must at all times remain our top priority. Where Headteachers have any doubts about how to proceed they should, in the first instance, seek the advice of their link Education Officer or, if necessary, the Operations Manager for their sector.

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CONFIDENTIAL

To be completed by **all** individuals working with children and young people.

Registration form for voluntary workers with children and young people

The school is responsible for the acceptance, and, where applicable, the accreditation of all individuals working with children and young people. Every individual should fill in a copy of this form which should be retained by the Head Teacher. This form is confidential.

School

Full Name

Former Name

Home Address

Please give details of previous experience of looking after or working with children and/or young people

Date of Birth

Telephone: Day
Evening

How long have you lived at the above address?

If less than 12 months please give the following information:

Previous Address

How long there?

I understand that a police check may be made on the suitability as to my presence in school.

Signed

Date

NOTE: Volunteers should be aware that, whilst they are covered by the Council's Public Liability Insurance Policy when engaging in authorised voluntary activities, they are not covered by the Council's Personal Accident Policy.

Copy to be retained by Head Teacher and Volunteer