



## SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

Hope Valley Climate Action (HVCA) school volunteers<sup>1</sup> are expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct. HVCA will expect each volunteer to sign an acknowledgement that they have read and understood this Code of Conduct.

HVCA will ensure that each of its school volunteers has been appropriately vetted and is suitable for volunteering work in schools prior to the commencement of their role.

It is recommended that school volunteers should receive a clear DBS check in accordance with current DBS guidelines before attending any school as part of their work as an HVCA school volunteer. HVCA will check with each school whether or not this is a requirement of that school's Safeguarding policies.

For the purposes of this Code, a 'clear DBS check' means that the results of a DBS check reveal no information which would, in the view of HVCA, make the individual unsuitable for the school volunteer role.

HVCA school volunteers should not be left with children<sup>2</sup> on their own. School staff should always be present.

Within each school there will be a person who is responsible for safeguarding within the school. They are referred to as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Each school volunteer should know who is the DSL for each school they visit. HVCA leaders should ask to be kept up to date by each school on their Safeguarding Policy and procedures and share this information with school volunteers. The update should include:

- How to operate when on school premises as a school volunteer e.g. the agreed procedure for moving through the school site and engaging with children
- The procedure for reporting any concerns about individual children
- The procedure for reporting any inappropriate behaviour of school volunteers
- The procedure for reporting an incident which happens outside of school premises
- Anything else the school's DSL /DSP feels is appropriate to protect all parties.

HVCA will do all it can to promote good practice of behaviour around children through our written policies and communication, and practical example and guidance for school volunteers.

Schools may run Safeguarding courses for their volunteers, HVCA encourages all school volunteers to enquire about these and attend wherever possible.

All those who work with children or who have significant contact with them are in positions of trust. They will be seen as role models by the children, with whom they are in contact, including when they are 'off duty'. All school volunteers should, therefore, conduct themselves in accordance with a school's reasonable expectations of someone in this position.

### **Guidelines for school volunteers:**

1. Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
2. Always share concerns about a child with the school's DSL /DSP. Always share concerns about the behaviour of another school volunteer with HVCA trustees.
3. Seek to minimise situations where you could be alone with an individual child in school. Ensure there is always another school volunteer or member of the school staff with you. For example:
  - Avoid the accidental encounter with a child in the corridor by staying with other volunteers or with school staff when you move around the school.
  - Always use the staff toilets and never the children's.
4. Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
5. If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and the teachers or parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand.
6. HVCA recognises that in some circumstances the sharing of photographs of children can put a child in danger.
  - a) HVCA will never take photos of children without prior permission from the relevant school, and will always request a school staff member to take photographs if possible.
  - b) When seeking permission, HVCA will always explain the purpose for which these photos may be used, and will never use them for any purpose other than that for which permission has been obtained.
  - c) HVCA will never publicise any photos of children on any medium without assurance from the relevant school that written parental permission has been obtained for such use.

We are aware that children may seek out school volunteers outside the school premises.

- Please remember that it is not your place to form an individual relationship with a child. Without being rude or frightening, avoid long conversations especially if there is no other adult present. If you have concerns that there may be a child protection issue, you must refer it to the school's DSL/DSP without delay. Do not attempt to deal with it yourself.
- Where concerns arise in relation either to a child's safety or the behaviour of another school volunteer, these concerns should be disclosed only in compliance with the relevant law and in line with the safeguarding policies of the relevant school. Such concerns should not be discussed with others, including other school volunteers.

- Where possible a child's confidentiality should be respected, but it is important that school volunteers appreciate that confidentiality cannot be maintained if there are known concerns regarding the safety and well-being of a child. Concerns regarding confidentiality should never be allowed to prevent the appropriate reporting of concerns regarding child welfare.

Notes:

1. A School Volunteer is anyone visiting a school in any role where they are representing HVCA
2. For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a child is any pupil of the school, or any person under the age of 18.