

An Daras Multi Academy Trust

Volunteer Policy

The An Daras Multi Academy Trust (ADMAT) Company
An Exempt Charity Limited by Guarantee
Company Number/08156955

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Volunteer Policy

Introduction

“A Volunteer is a person who voluntarily offers himself or herself for a service or undertaking willingly and without pay”.

The value of well-deployed volunteers in schools is widely recognised. At An Daras, we welcome and encourage volunteers with their range of skills and experience they provide and recognise they can enhance the learning opportunities of learners, helping to raise their full potential. An Daras has no doubt that schools benefit greatly from volunteer support and appreciate their time and commitment they bring to our school. It is important to remember that when a person is acting as a ‘volunteer’ they are not a paid member of staff, therefore must be treated accordingly and respectfully. All employees must make all volunteers feel very welcome and treat them with the utmost respect at all times. A “thanks” goes a long way.

This policy will provide a clear statement on the correct engagement and deployment of volunteer support throughout the Trust. It will also indicate and highlight correct protocols of how An Daras will maintain procedure through a high standard of training, communication and a safe working relationship.

An Daras Trust volunteers past and present include:

- Parents
- People across the community
- Current midday supervisors and cover staff
- Former employees
- Learners
- Work experience learners
- School Governors

Types of activities the volunteers engage in, on behalf of the individual school, may include:

- Swimming
- Assisting in or outside the classroom
- Accompanying school outings
- Assisting school events

A named member of school staff will act as a Volunteer Co-ordinator. Their role is to implement this Policy and to ensure all aspects of Application, Induction, Training and Placement are overseen. This will be in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team, School Secretary and the allocated mentor. The Volunteer Co-ordinator will also maintain communication with the volunteer throughout their duration within the Trust to ensure their general welfare and role as a ‘volunteer’ is being maintained.

Becoming a Volunteer

When a potential volunteer approaches an An Daras School with regards to offering their assistance they will undertake a procedure to ensure correct and safe protocols are implemented:

Swimming Pool

Volunteers supporting swimming will undertake a separate pool induction process, be provided with pool policies and information regarding the learners/class they will be assisting.

Classroom

Volunteers will be taught and guided by the class teacher how to interact and assist the learners and how to assist with particular activities to help enhance their learning objectives. The class teacher will ensure the volunteer is fully aware of learner needs and any specific class H+S requirements. All class staff must ensure they remember the volunteer is a 'volunteer', therefore treated as one and not taken for granted and given the same responsibility as an employee.

Safeguarding & Supervision

A recruitment/application/interview process for volunteers must be followed. This is available from the Trust Central Office HR team. A volunteer must complete and await approval for their enhanced DBS check, prior to starting at a Trust school. Any differentiations i.e. DBS from similar environment, learners, work experience, training etc. will be required Head Teacher approval.

Trust policy states that volunteers working with children in the school setting must receive safeguarding training. The Head Teacher of the school will implement this in accordance with Trust procedures.

Insurance

Volunteers are covered under the insurance for the Trust details regarding this can be provided from the Trust Central Office HR@andaras.org

Other

Volunteers should not be left unsupervised with a learner. This is for safety reasons and allows the volunteer to always feel they have support and someone to assist upon a potentially difficult situation which may result in staff taking over applying their training.

At the swimming pool, there are occasions where a learner requires a toilet visit or something similar, volunteers must not be requested to undertake this task. Volunteers must not be left alone supervising learners in the pool lobby. Volunteers should not be responsible for changing any learner and should not be left unsupervised with any learner in a closed environment.

People who provide a 'one-off' assistance (this may include a learner) will be fully supervised at all times, wearing a visitor badge. They will not be permitted to 'change' a learner or be in a changing area whilst changing is in place. Where volunteers are recruited by an external organisation or come from another school or college, it is important that the school obtain assurance from that establishment to ensure they are who they say and are properly vetted.

Volunteers (non-employees) are not permitted to be aware of the door code to access the school or to any confidential information or to school IT equipment. Any volunteers under the age of 18 will require a risk assessment completed by the Head Teacher/Head of School.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the mentor as to how an activity is carried out and what the expected outcome is to help achieve the learner's full potential.

Volunteers should not be asked to carry out duties which:

- Put their own personal safety at risk
- Involves assisting learners who have a high risk of danger
- Involves assisting who have a high risk of medical needs
- Normally fall within a class teacher or classroom assistant responsibility

Where a volunteer is also a member of staff in another role, at the point of volunteering, it is important to provide adaptations to avoid incorrectly taking advantage of their role.

Informal Meeting

Upon receiving the application form, the Volunteer Co-ordinator will arrange an informal interview meeting.

This is to ascertain whether the applicant is committed and feels comfortable with the placement. It will also allow the Co-ordinator to judge their character, experience and personal qualities to suitably provide a suitable placement that will help both the applicant and An Daras. The interview will also allow time for the applicant to ask any questions. See Appendix 1.

The informal interview meeting may not be necessary for current/former staff or former volunteers.

Role of the Volunteer

- All volunteers must be respectful of learners and staff.
- Ensure that they do not affect the smooth running of a class or lesson.
- They will also be required to be reliable within their agreed commitment day/time.
- Be flexible and be prepared to move to different classes when asked.
- The volunteer will be required to follow the school's Safeguarding Policies and practices at all times.
- The volunteer may be asked to attend supervisory meetings with a member of the school Senior Leadership Team.

Confidentiality

All volunteers are bound by a code of confidentiality. All information learnt or mentioned in school must be maintained within the school. No confidential conversations are permitted outside the school premises. It is not within the volunteer's role to discuss learners with parents or any other school or community stakeholder.

Volunteers, who are concerned about anything in school, should raise the matter with the Volunteer Co-ordinator or Head Teacher or use the Trust Whistle Blowing or Complaints Policy (available on the An Daras Trust website).

The volunteer will be required to fill out a Volunteer Agreement Form (see Appendix 2). This is to ensure they understand it is vital to maintain confidentiality regarding school learners, staff and operations. This will be filed in the volunteer's folder (in the individual school office).

Health & Safety

The Volunteer Co-ordinator will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures and evacuation points for the school or during visits and trips external.

Volunteers are advised to be familiar with ADMAT Health & Safety Policy together with other current school policies, these can be found on the school website.

Nolan Principles

The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).

- **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity** - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity** - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness** - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty** – Holders of public office should be truthful
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

Breaks

It is important to remember that volunteers are 'volunteers', they are entitled to breaks and must be encouraged to take one during a morning session. Consideration must be made if the volunteer also works at lunchtime as a MTA. The Volunteer Co-ordinator will ensure a break is provided where appropriate consulting the volunteer's needs and assessing the duration of time assisting.

What can An Daras Offer?

An Daras would like to feel it can return and offer as much as possible to any volunteer through training or knowledge. As a volunteer, we feel they will gain:

- Safeguarding / hoist / moving & handling training
- Pool training
- Experience and knowledge from all An Daras staff
- Safety awareness
- Communication skills
- How to enhance learner's full potential
- Enjoyment of working in a rewarding and positive environment

- Friendly working environment
- Knowledge of Risk Assessments
- Supporting learner's health and wellbeing
- How to encourage learner's independence and progression

Appendix 1

Informal Interview Meeting – New Volunteer

Name of Applicant:.....

Contact Number:.....

Date of Meeting:.....

Employee meeting with volunteer:.....

Position:.....

Questions

- Reason for interest/what are you currently doing?
- Areas of the school/age groups of interest
- Qualities/experience you can bring to the school?
- What would you like to gain from volunteering?
- Area of interest: Swimming Pool*/ Classroom *Can you swim? Yes / No
- Age group of interest: Primary / Secondary / Post 16 / Any
- Availability: Mon AM/PM, Tues AM/PM, Wed AM/PM, Thurs AM/PM, Fri AM/PM
- One-off / Short Term / Long Term
- Do you know any learners or staff at An Daras Trust school already?
- Have you got any questions?
- Are you happy to undergo a DBS check?

Notes:.....

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Recommendation:.....

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Appendix 2

Volunteer Agreement Form

Your offer for help at An Daras is very much appreciated and we hope you will gain a great deal from your experience. Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement Form.

When helping in a school environment you may learn personal and confidential information regarding learners, staff and general operational duties. It is vital you refrain from taking any of this information outside the school to maintain confidentiality.

You will not be permitted to use any photographic devices. Any requests for this will be refused by the Head Teacher due to child protection procedures and Data Protection laws.

- I have read and understood the above and will adhere to the confidentiality conditions.
- I understand it is advisable for me to read An Daras/and school specific policies and procedures, for which I have been given the location to finding this information via the school website.
- I have been made aware of my designated mentor

Signed:.....

Full Name:.....

Date:.....

(Original copy for the School – filed in a secure cabinet and a copy for the volunteer)

Appendix 3

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION – DISQUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Self-declaration – for school volunteers

Under the Childcare Act 2006 and The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (“the 2018 Regulations”). Schools are responsible for ensuring that all the staff they employ are subject to the appropriate checks. Therefore, as part of our employment checks, we need to ask those who are applying for a role within our school to provide relevant information, by way of self-declaration.

Name of Person:

.....

Post:

.....

Workplace:

.....

The following are grounds for disqualification from working with early years children or later years children under the age of eight years; or being directly concerned in the management of that childcare:

- The person is included on the Children’s Barred List;
- The person has been cautioned for or convicted of certain violent and/or sexual criminal offences against children and/or adults;
- Certain grounds relating to the care of children, including where an order is made in respect of a child under the person’s care, for example where the person is the subject of an Order, direction or similar in respect of childcare, including orders made in respect of their own children’
- The person has had their registration refused or cancelled in relation to childcare or children’s homes or is disqualified from private fostering;

I have read and understood the above grounds and declare that (please tick):

☐ I am not disqualified from working with children, none of the above criteria apply to me

OR

☐ I have been disqualified from working with children, one or more of the above criteria apply to me*. *I understand that if I tick this box that I will be asked to provide further details

AND

I understand that should any of the grounds listed above become applicable and/or change during the course of my work with the school that I must declare this to the school as soon as I become aware.

Signed:

Date:

Any information given will be completely confidential and will be considered only in relation to a post to which the Disqualification Regulations apply.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

Volunteer Process (School to check completed)

Applicant Name:

Volunteer Process Date:

Prior to starting

- Informal meeting
- Volunteer to meet Head Teacher/ SLT, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Secretary
- School tour
- Secretary to issue: Application Form, DBS, medical questionnaire
- Observing a session (one-off)
- Safeguarding training arranged
- Starting process
- Secretary confirmed DBS, medical & references information received back
- Disqualification Declaration signed (Appendix 3)
- Contact volunteer to arrange a start date and pool induction if required
- Secretary informed of start date & recorded (& DBS recorded) on SCR
- Meet front office staff & shown signing in folder
- Volunteer introduced to the class/staff they will be assisting
- Volunteer Induction info provided
- Volunteer agreement signed & copy given
- Mentor named
- Pool training arranged if required
- Moving & handling training (if required)
- 2-3 weeks review, to ensure everything is going well