



Chatsworth Multi Academy Trust
Achieving Excellence Together

Volunteering Policy

Adopted: Spring 2014

Signed:

Reviewed: December 2015

Reviewed: September 2019

To be reviewed: September 2021

Mission Statement

Chatsworth Multi Academy Trust is a caring, happy and progressive learning community in which each person is valued equally and respected unconditionally. Our community promotes high expectations for each person and supports every member of our community in achieving their potential as life-long learners. At Chatsworth Multi Academy Trust every person matters.

Ten Core Beliefs

1. We believe the health and safety of our students is paramount
2. We believe in the right of all people to be emotionally healthy, financially secure and learning fulfilled
3. We believe we should all belong, and feel we all belong
4. We believe in continuously improving our Trust through honest, collaborative teamwork
5. We believe our curriculums should be relevant, purposeful, accessible and constantly evolving
6. We believe teaching and learning should be enjoyable, exciting and consistently inclusive
7. We believe teaching and learning should be founded on established best practice and an openness to innovative approaches
8. We believe in working hard and doing our best
9. We believe we should help one another in our learning and support one another in our lives
10. We believe we are providing a foundation for our students' adult lives

Introduction & rationale

The Trustees at Chatsworth Multi Academy Trust (CMAT) believe that volunteers bring a rich diversity of experiences, skills and attributes to our community. We believe that in their roles at CMAT, volunteers can:

- Develop our wider community links and opportunities for our students therein
- Shape the development of relevant social and learning opportunities for the young people they work with
- Gain valuable and highly rewarding experience of working with young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)
- Gain an increased understanding of our students' needs and qualities
- Gain an increased understanding of how our Trust and wider communities function
- Develop their potential, confidence and appreciation of Special Education

Finally, volunteering placements can cultivate social inclusion opportunities for our students and give them a platform upon which they may make positive contributions to the learning and to the lives of others.

Practice

Volunteering Placements

Volunteering Placements at Chatsworth will typically last for six weeks. This is to ensure that:

- Placements are supported, focused and purposeful
- There are equal opportunities for all those wishing to apply for volunteering placements
- The notion of volunteering at CMAT is sustainable and well managed

Placements will typically be half a day or more per week, as agreed by the volunteer and the volunteering coordinator at the outset of the placement.

Volunteers will be asked to reflect on their learning on a regular basis using a weekly log of their experiences (Appendix 1). This log will be shared and discussed with the Volunteers Coordinator. Where appropriate, additional research tasks may be set by the Volunteers Coordinator, to be carried out at an agreed time.

The role of the Volunteers Coordinator

The role of the Volunteers Coordinator is:

- To ensure there are adequate opportunities for Volunteering at CMAT
- To process applications for volunteering
- To set up appropriate volunteering placements for successful applicants
- To provide ongoing support for volunteers to ensure placements are positive and productive, including structured opportunities to reflect and receive constructive feedback
- To provide an induction programme and training opportunities as appropriate
- To provide support for members of Trust staff to ensure placements are positive and productive, including structured opportunities to reflect and provide constructive feedback

Christa Donnelly acts as Volunteers Coordinator at Chatsworth HS&CC and Tracey Holmes acts as Volunteers Coordinator at Chatsworth Futures Specialist College. They are supported by the Trust Business Manager, Vicky McRae and she is the initial point of contact for all volunteering enquires and may be contacted at Chatsworth.highschool@salford.gov.uk or via the school/college office at Chatsworth High School and Community College: 0161 921 1405

The role of the Volunteer

The role of the volunteer is to support student learning and the delivery of learning opportunities by Trust staff. Extended Schools Activities may provide further opportunities to potential candidates. Volunteering, like most roles within CMAT, is an exciting and varied role, the nature of which may fluctuate dependent upon a

number of factors from day to day. However, the core responsibilities of a Volunteer will be as follows:

- To support students with SEND in their learning and build appropriate relationships
- To support students to achieve personal learning goals
- To engage with students in a variety of ways and to help stimulate their learning experience whilst demonstrating a growing understanding of their strengths and weaknesses
- To support members of CMAT staff through the completion of relevant tasks and jobs as requested
- Preparing and maintaining a safe and productive learning environment
- Supporting the school in its vision and core values
- Working as part of the CMAT team

Volunteers at Chatsworth Multi Academy Trust will never be asked to work alone with any individual or group of students.

Volunteers must adhere to all policies and practices adopted by paid members of staff at CMAT, including the safeguarding of our students from harm, abuse and neglect.

Recruitment

Opportunities for Volunteers at CMAT may arise from:

- Responses to advertising through Salford CVS
- Responses to advertising on the Trust website
- Links with other schools, colleges and universities
- Links with known stakeholders such as families, existing employees or members of the Governing Body
- Partnerships with local organisations such as The Salford Foundation Trust
- Word of mouth in the local community

Upon enquiring about Volunteering opportunities at CMAT, volunteers must:

- Complete a simple application form (assistance may be given in completing this where needed)
- Undertake a tour of the school or college and discussion with the Volunteers Coordinator
- Undertake an informal interview

If, following this process, the applicant and the Volunteers Coordinator wish to continue to proceed, a placement will be arranged pending:

- Receipt of suitable references
- The appropriate outcome of a **criminal records check** processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (**DBS**)

Please note, if it is not felt that a volunteer is matched to the role within CMAT, the Volunteers Coordinator will endeavor to signpost the applicant to other opportunities that may be more suitable.

Induction

All new Volunteers to CMAT will receive an induction with the Volunteers Coordinator prior to beginning their placement. This will include:

- A discussion around role of the volunteer and nature of the placement with reference to this document, the reflective log and a list of clear *Do/Don't* guidelines
- An introduction to members of staff as appropriate
- A description of the differing models of CMAT provision and guidance around the timetable
- Essential information around Safeguarding and Child / Young Persons Protection, including the location and purpose of the Safeguarding information board
- An overview of our students' needs.

- Other information as appropriate to the specific setting the Volunteer will begin working in
- How to make an expenses claim where appropriate
- Absence procedures

Insurance

All volunteers will be covered under the Trust's public liability insurance.

Confidentiality

Due to our students' complex and multiple needs, it is likely that there may be some medical or sensitive issues that a Volunteer becomes aware of. We ask that our young people's needs, their right to anonymity, and that of our staff team, are handled sensitively and kept entirely confidential. The discussion of Chatsworth Multi Academy Trust and its associated organisations on all social media is extremely prohibited and any breach of this will result in legal proceedings. For additional guidance on this matter, please refer to our Respect Charter and to our Social Media Policy.

Safeguarding & Child Protection

The Safeguarding of our students and Child and Young Persons Protection are of paramount importance to Chatsworth Multi Academy Trust. All volunteering placements will be subject to the appropriate outcome of a **criminal records check** processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (**DBS**), which must be approved by the Executive Headteacher, Dr Martin Hanbury. For further information on this matter, please refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Support

Volunteers will receive close supervision throughout their period of volunteering, and will have a named contact for all days in school. It is important that volunteers feel welcome, and that their valuable contributions are recognised.

An 'open door policy' is adopted so that a volunteer may speak with the Volunteers Coordinator at any time. There will be regular volunteer meetings to offer ongoing support; this process will be supported by, and supportive of, the reflective log.

Expenses

In order to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement, volunteers may apply for a maximum amount of £4.00 per day for travel expenses. Claims can be made via the Trust Business Manager, Vicky McRae. Please note that bus tickets or petrol receipts must be provided.

Our commitment to Volunteers at CMAT

It is recognised that volunteers at Chatsworth give their valuable time, energies and talents to our students, their learning and our work as a Trust. In return, we will provide:

- Support throughout the six week placement
- Regular and constructive feedback wherever appropriate
- An environment in which volunteers feel comfortable, welcome and confident to say 'no'
- Opportunities to be consulted on matters that affect the role and work of volunteers
- Reimbursement for out of pocket expenses.
- A fair, healthy and safe working environment
- Demonstrable appreciation of volunteers' contributions to CMAT

Volunteers' commitment to CMAT

When somebody becomes a volunteer at Chatsworth Multi Academy Trust, they become a valued part of our community and are, essentially, an unpaid employee of our Trust. We ask that all volunteers:

- Recognise the position of trust they are placed in and uphold this trust.
- Work hard to fully understand, follow and respect our policies and procedures
- Are reliable, punctual and follow staff absence procedures wherever necessary
- Are honest if there are any problems and ask for help or support when needed
- Follow our health and safety guidelines at all times

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

If at any time a volunteer feels they have been unfairly treated or has an issue with a member of paid staff, then they must raise this with the Volunteers Coordinator.

If a volunteer has a grievance with the Volunteers Coordinator then they should direct this to the Head Teacher / Principal as appropriate.

Any unacceptable behaviour or manner on the volunteer's part will be referred to the Volunteers Coordinator where every option will be used to resolve the situation. If a situation cannot be resolved, the Senior Leadership Team at Chatsworth High School & Community College or Chatsworth Futures Specialist College may end the volunteering placement with immediate effect.

At all times and incidences, a volunteer would be able to state their case and can be accompanied by a friend or trusted person. In such cases, all options will be explored to resolve any matters.

Equal Opportunities

The Trust, and Governing Bodies and Senior Leadership Teams within the Trust, are committed to equality of opportunity both in the provision of services and in our employment practices. This commitment extends to our provision of Volunteering opportunities. Please refer to our Equal Opportunities Policy for further information.

Conclusion

Volunteers have the potential to help our students and community grow and develop. The notion of volunteering provides a range of opportunities and challenges for all members of the Chatsworth community. To respond positively to this, volunteering placements must be structured, well matched to everyone's needs and learning-driven. Volunteers must feel valued, welcome and safe; they must appreciate the power of their contributions and the responsibility they have. Undertaken successfully, a volunteering placement at Chatsworth is an opportunity for all members of our community to benefit.

