

Volunteer Policy for Oakham School Archives

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 AIMS OF THE POLICY

Oakham School Archives were founded and initially maintained by loyal volunteers. Since the hiring of archives staff, the archives are committed to involving volunteers within our work and see the immense benefit and knowledge that they can bring to our organisation. This policy aims:

- To ensure that the work of volunteers is documented.
- To outline how the archives will manage volunteers, clarifying their role within the service.
- To enshrine the rights and responsibilities of volunteers and the service.
- To outline the process for recruiting volunteers.

1.2 DEFINITION

Oakham School Archives define a volunteer as an individual who performs non-contractual work for the archives on a unpaid basis. The work is undertaken by choice. This can be regular (weekly/monthly etc.) or as a one off period of time (for example a work experience placement).

Volunteering opportunities are open to anybody and we aim to attract volunteers from all backgrounds and abilities.

1.3 WHY WORK WITH VOLUNTEERS?

We recognise the value that volunteers can provide an institution. They offer additional help in completing everyday tasks such as cataloguing, allow the archives and thus the School to play a part in helping the local community, and facilitate greater engagement with archives' outreach and educational work. Volunteers can also bring the potential benefit of providing an external perspective on Archive work and the School's history. People volunteer for a variety of reasons and Oakham School Archives endeavour to support all motives.

2 THE ARCHIVES AND ITS VOLUNTEERS

2.1 WORK GIVEN

Volunteering should be an enjoyable and rewarding experience. As such, tasks allocated to volunteers will be adapted to their skills and personal aims.

Types of tasks that may be offered to volunteers include:

- Cataloguing

- Accessioning
- Preventative conservation
- Research
- Social Media work (twitter and blog posts)
- Educational work (producing physical and digital resources)
- Tours and special events (such as speech day)
- Daily administration tasks (e.g. answering enquiries)

2.2 WHAT CAN THE ARCHIVES OFFER?

- Tasks which are suited to everyone's skills and aims.
- An interesting and diverse role.
- Opportunities for training and learning.
- Support in volunteering and long-term career goals.
- A chance to meet new people.
- The opportunity to share knowledge and skills.
- Flexible volunteer working.
- To work in a safe environment and be given necessary health and safety training.
- Fair treatment, free from discrimination.

2.3 WHAT DOES THE ARCHIVES EXPECT FROM VOLUNTEERS?

The Archives are keen to hear from anyone interested in volunteering. Whether you were a former pupil/ staff member, a member of the local community, or a student thinking of pursuing a career in archives, we would be more than happy to welcome you.

We expect volunteers to:

- Be committed to volunteering and carry out any task given to them to the best of their abilities.
- Attend the Archives as regularly as possible at times agreed with the Archives' staff.
- Adhere to any GDPR, copyright or other archival policies that the archives has.
- Be willing to undertake any necessary training.
- Accept direction and decisions made by members of the Archives' staff.
- Be enthusiastic about archives and history.
- Have a sound knowledge of IT.
- Be friendly and respectful to others

- Work well as an individual and as part of a team.
- Have a keen eye for detail.
- Communicate history and stories in a clear and engaging manner to a wide age range.
- Embrace new technologies, methods of communicating with audiences, and exhibition techniques.
- Be sympathetic towards the aims of the School and is mindful of marketing policies.

3 RECRUITMENT

The Archives are very keen to draw volunteers from inside and outside of the School's community. We will support pupils in volunteering with us to gain work experience.

3.1 BEFORE RECRUITING

Before accepting any new volunteers, the Archives staff will consider the benefits of having the said individual in relation to staff time and resources required for their management and training. Thought will also be given to the hours that the volunteer will work and any necessary safeguarding which needs to be put in place to accommodate the proposed volunteering.

Furthermore, the Archives staff will ensure that adequate equipment will be available to support the volunteer in their tasks.

3.2 HOW WILL THE ARCHIVES RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS?

The School Archives are committed to equal opportunities. Volunteers from all backgrounds and skill ranges are encouraged to contact the archives if interested in working for us.

Potential volunteers should contact the Archives via email or telephone. Once preliminary contact has been made, then discussions over email or face to face can be held between archives staff and the volunteer as to their motives and skills. Information about the archives and the projects that the volunteer may be involved in will be communicated in these discussions. Volunteers will be made aware of the expectations of the Archives staff from the voluntary placement. The volunteer introductory questions form will be filled in during this informal discussion.

Acceptance of volunteers will be made on merit, suitability for tasks, and availability for volunteering. Reasonable adjustments will be made where possible.

If these arrangements are suitable to both parties then the volunteer information sheet will be completed and a start date confirmed. The information sheet will contain essential personal details which will be held by the archives for the purposes of contact or emergencies. The information will not be disclosed to third parties and information used for data analysis will be anonymised. All records will be held in accordance with the GDPR 2018 legislation.

When it is appropriate, the School Archivist on behalf of the School may require references from volunteers.

The archives have no upper age limit for volunteers however those who are between the ages of 11 and 16 will need permission from a parent or guardian and will always be supervised.

3.3 EXPENSES

No expenses will be paid to volunteers for travel. Expenses will only be compensated for items brought for the purposes of archival work, any such expense to be agreed prior with a senior member of Archives staff.

3.4 DBS

Volunteers may need to be DBS checked depending upon the work that they are undertaking. DBS checks could take up to three weeks to confirm. References will also be taken in these instances for the purposes of child protection.

4 TRAINING

All volunteers will be given suitable training for any task that they are expected to undertake. This training will be adapted to suit each individual.

Volunteers can ask for additional training in a variety of archival areas from staff members.

Archives staff members will endeavour to help volunteers with any training that they desire to complete.

5 HEALTH AND SAFETY

The archives will assess the risks of any tasks carried out by volunteers. Risks will take into consideration a number of factors including any restrictions that individual may have.

Volunteers will be given necessary health and safety training to assist them with every day work in the archives such as manual handling and DSE.

6 CONFIDENTIALITY, GDPR, AND COPYRIGHT

All volunteers are expected to abide by GDPR and copyright legislation in addition to archival confidentiality policies. Documents or topics which contain sensitive data or material will be made clear to volunteers, as will the restrictions of such material.

7 RECOGNITION AND REWARD

7.1 RECOGNITION

All contributions made by volunteers will be recognised within work. Depending on the format and type of task, this recognition may take a variety of forms such as credit being given at the end of an article or publicity on social media.

All work produced by volunteers whilst working at the archives will be considered to be copyright of the archives and not the individual. Where necessary, volunteers may need to sign a copyright

agreement form. The archives reserve the right to publish, physically and/or digitally, the work produced by volunteers when it is deemed appropriate or relevant.

7.2 REWARD

No cash rewards or anything that could be mistaken for payment will be given.

8 PROBLEMS

8.1 HIGHLIGHTING AND RESOLVING PROBLEMS

If a volunteer encounters any issues or problems relating to their work or a member of staff, this should be raised informally with the Archivist first. All reports will be kept confidential between the volunteer and the archivist unless deemed that someone is in danger.

A plan for an initial solution will be discussed and enacted. Should this fail to improve the situation, then it may be necessary to involve others into the discussion. This will be made clear to the volunteer and they will be offered the chance to speak with someone external from the Archives staff should they wish.

Any formal complaints should be made in writing and will be given to the Head of the Library and Archives at the school to ensure impartiality.

If an allegation is made regarding the conduct of a volunteer by members of staff, either the archivist or the head of the library and archives will be notified. A solution will be discussed to ensure the retention of the volunteer and retraining if necessary. The volunteer will be made aware of their actions and a plan going forward will be agreed.

8.2 UNRESOLVABLE ISSUES

Any serious misdemeanours or behaviours by volunteers may result in the volunteer's position being reviewed and potentially their volunteering contract nullified.

Should any issue remained unsolved then a meeting with all parties will be arranged and a plan for the future will be agreed. This may be, for example, a change of volunteering hours, retraining, new tasks allocated, or a termination of the volunteer's contract.

9 TERMINATION

Volunteers can chose to leave their position at any time. Whilst there is no formal contract, we respectfully ask that volunteers provide archives staff with prior notice for their wish to leave either in writing or verbally.

Should a volunteer's contract be terminated due to inappropriate behaviour, the volunteer will be given forewarning of this and will be consulted regarding their final day.

In all circumstances, volunteers will be treated fairly and with respect.

The archives reserve the right to ask for feedback from volunteers to ensure that we continue to make working with us engaging, fun and relevant.



The archives will provide references for volunteers upon leaving if desired and requested.

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Written by: CVM

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