



Student and Volunteer Policy

*Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School
Federation*

Spring 2025

To be reviewed Spring 2026

1 Background

Students are crucial to Children's House and Rachel Keeling as they provide another means for the schools to reflect on their practice as well as contributing to the provision of high quality professionals within early year's education and related fields. Volunteers equally offer valuable support and enhance service provision by filling a wide variety of roles, which may involve working with teachers, early year's practitioners, teaching assistants and children. Neither students nor volunteers can take the place of a member of staff.

2 Scope of Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to cover students and voluntary workers undertaking duties on behalf of, and in support of, the activities of Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School Federation. These guidelines set the minimum standards expected.

Expected Standards of Conduct for Students and Volunteers

Principles:

Students and Volunteers provide valuable assistance to the schools and the local community and as such are responsible for their own conduct.

The following are some of the key standards with which Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School Federation expects its students/volunteers to conduct themselves while undertaking tasks/placements.

Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School Federation therefore expects the following from its students/volunteers:

1. As first point of contact to the public it is necessary to be polite and courteous at all times;
2. All students and volunteers are expected to adhere to these values and support them at all times in school;
3. To read, sign and adhere to the Federation's Child Protection Policy and Section 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, following the procedure at all times;
4. To read and support our Behaviour Policy, alongside staff members;
5. To attend the designated school at the times/days agreed by both the student/volunteer and their mentor;

6. To maintain the security of any confidential or personal information you become aware of while on placement/volunteering at Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School Federation;
7. No mobile phones may be used in the Nurseries except at allocated break times.

Failure to comply with any of these standards may result in your student placement/volunteering role being terminated.

3 Use of Students/Volunteers

If the student/volunteer is a relative of a pupil or staff member of the federation, they can still work in the schools, however, consideration will be given to separating the personal and professional relationship.

The federation may choose to end the placement and will inform the student/volunteer immediately.

If a volunteer wishes to end their relationship with Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School Federation, they should inform the Executive Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or Mentor immediately.

4 Recruitment of Volunteers

Volunteers

We carry out DBS and pre-start vetting checks appropriate to the post and require regular volunteers to provide details of two referees when they apply to volunteer. References are taken up as detailed in this policy. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis (e.g. trips) are supervised, in accordance with the legislation.

Students on Placement

When volunteers are working in school as part of a recognised training course (such as PGCE, LETTA, UCL and NVQ etc.) references and completion of an application form will not be required. However we will require proof of DBS enhanced clearance with a barred list check and will carry out identity checks when the student arrives at school.

Students on Work Experience

Students on work experience will always be supervised.

The Executive Head Teacher must comply with the federation's Single Equality Scheme. Opportunities to undertake a placement should be available to all so long as the candidate does not compromise the quality or safety of its children or staff.

The Executive Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher should undertake a form of selection to ensure a person is suitable for the role. The process will be less formal than

that used for paid employment; however it is still important that the Executive Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher conduct a form of vetting and assessment of skills and suitability. The process should include:

- Volunteer expresses an interest in working for Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School Federation. Executive Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher explains safeguarding procedures and expectations and roles of volunteers within the designated school.
- Volunteers complete a contact form so that the school has their contact details.
- Executive Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher conducts an informal face to face interview.
- Executive Head Teacher/ Deputy Head Teacher contacts two referees if required (see below in Section 6).*

5. INTERVIEWING

VOLUNTEERS/STUDENTS

Interviews should be less formal than for paid staff, however, it is important that Executive Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher check that the person is able to undertake the role and understands what will be expected of them. The face to face interview is an important part of the risk assessment process.

The Executive Head Teacher/ Deputy Head Teacher should make every effort to place a person in a role that would be suitable and safe for them, and safe for anyone else coming into contact with them (such as other volunteers, pupils/students, employees, and members of the public).

The Executive Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher should also probe into the motivation to undertake their chosen work, especially if they have no previous experience. The interview should also promote the role and explain how the individual is likely to benefit from working at Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School Federation and the positive input they can make.

6 PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

*The Executive Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher should take up two references for all adult volunteers who are not known to Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School Federation. These can be personal or professional references. Students will require a letter from their institution verifying their position and purpose for the placement.

Enhanced DBS checks will be required for placements (students/volunteers) who are aged 18 and over. The Executive Head Teacher/ Deputy Head Teacher are to explain the reasons for the check and reassure the student/volunteer that such checks are a

standard procedure when working within schools. We should also give reassurance that all information will be treated with the strictest confidence and provide information on how the process will work. A criminal record will not be an automatic bar to volunteering, as only relevant convictions will be taken into account. A risk assessment will be undertaken by the Executive Head Teacher in consultation with the chair of governors.

Some volunteers, such as a parent volunteering to help out on a school day trip, fete or sports day will not require DBS checks. However, a person who regularly or frequently has contact with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to DBS checks. Regular contact is defined as three times or more in a 30 day period. A DBS check will be undertaken for all volunteers.

A person volunteering in a post working with children will not be permitted to start until appropriate checks have been undertaken.

Volunteers/students who have an unsatisfactory DBS check or reference will be automatically refused the role and will be advised of the reason for the decision by the Executive Head Teacher/ Deputy Head Teacher.

Volunteers/students who do not agree to the checks will be refused the opportunity to work/be placed at either school.

7 INDUCTION

All volunteers/students should be subject to a local induction to ensure that they know what is expected of them and what they can expect from Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery Schools. This will take the form of a tour and discussion with either the Executive Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.

A copy of the student/volunteer policy will be provided to the Student/volunteer.

All students/volunteers are valued for their contribution and some of the standards we expect from our contracted employees will apply, such as demonstrating motivation, enthusiasm and a commitment to enhancing the learning for all our children. Students/Volunteers will also be required to be courteous and professional, including being punctual and conscientious.

Any student/volunteer working at either school will receive a briefing on safeguarding procedures and the Executive Head Teacher will keep an up to date file of all volunteers/students placed in their office at the relevant school. Emergency contact details will be kept in the Main School Office in the Emergency Contact File as per General Data Protection Regulations.

8 Mentoring

All students/volunteers will be provided with a mentor. The mentor will discuss with the student/volunteer on the frequency of meetings to ensure they are progressing effectively. The support and time provided by the mentor will be such that it does not

impede on their role within the federation. The student/volunteer should initially see their mentor as the first point of contact for any questions/queries.

The schools value the importance of investing in high quality training for students and volunteers. We work closely with LETTA, University College London (IoE) and University of East London and local apprenticeships. All placements are considered with the children at the centre.

The schools reserve the right to end any placement if the needs of the children are compromised.