



Volunteer Policy

Introduction

The Park Community Centre places great value on the involvement of volunteers and their contribution to its work in various ways, including:

- helping to deliver services to meet the needs of our clients;
- providing new skills and perspectives;
- providing administrative support;
- fundraising; and
- helping to run events.

Volunteers make a vital contribution towards the charity's aims and objectives, and help to enhance the range and quality of services provided by the charity by giving their time, skills, knowledge or experience.

Policy Statement

The Park Community Centre is committed to best practice in the recruitment, support and management of volunteers. This policy covers volunteers acting 'on behalf of' The Park Community Centre and it is underpinned by the following principles:

- The Park Community Centre will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure;
- The Park Community Centre expects that trustees and staff will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work; and
- The Park Community Centre recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and will help volunteers do their work effectively.

Recruitment

The Park Community Centre is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs or offending background that does not create a risk to vulnerable groups including children. If a volunteer has a special need or disability that makes their involvement difficult, every effort will be made to involve them. An explanation will be given if this is not possible. The acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role is made on merit, with the sole selection criterion being the individual's suitability to carry out agreed tasks.

Information about volunteers which are not relevant to the performance of the volunteering tasks concerned will be disregarded by the organisation in terms of recruitment and selection. Personal information recorded about volunteers is stored and maintained securely as outlined in The Park Community Centre's Privacy Policy. All volunteers must complete a DBS check before starting. Volunteers will be given an appropriate level of scrutiny for the volunteering task to be assigned to them. A clear description (verbally and in writing) of the volunteer's role will be given.

Support, Supervision and Recognition

Each volunteer will have a designated trustee, who will be responsible for providing information on The Park Community Centre, its policies and provide support for the duration of their volunteering assignments. Volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence. The Park Community Centre encourages feedback and volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the charity's trustees and staff. The Park Community Centre will seek to recognise volunteers' achievements and contributions in a variety of ways. Volunteers will be given formal recognition of their contribution (e.g. internal awards, articles in newspapers and newsletters, thank you letters etc.).

Expenses

The Park Community Centre values the contribution of our volunteers and aim to ensure there are no barriers to involvement. The trustees recognise that the reimbursement of expenses incurred in traveling to and from the place of volunteering or in the course of volunteering is important from an equal opportunities perspective.

The Park Community Centre's volunteers can claim reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence of the expenditure. Volunteers will be given clear guidance on what expenses can be claimed from the organisation and how these should be calculated. The Park Community Centre has a consistent approach to the reimbursement of expenses which are the same for volunteers, staff and trustees, based on the authorised Mileage Rate (45p per mile).

Insurance

Volunteers are covered by The Park Community Centre's Public and Employer's Liability Insurance. The organisation does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage.

Confidentiality

The Park Community Centre places significant importance on the confidentiality and security of individuals' personal information and we will always try to take appropriate precautions.

Volunteers must ensure sensitive information remains confidential; this includes the personal information of supporters, beneficiaries and volunteers, as well as information relating to the overall business of the charity.

Confidentiality agreements are signed by all volunteers working with The Park Community Centre. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of a volunteer's relationship with The Park Community Centre.

Resolving Problems

The Park Community Centre aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently and seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly. The Park Community Centre will aim for a positive and amicable solution in accordance with the procedures in its Complaints Policy. Volunteers are encouraged to raise any problems with their designated trustee at the earliest opportunity, so that issues may be resolved promptly and informally.

Summary: Rights and Responsibilities

The Park Community Centre recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is (and what is not) expected of them
- have adequate support in their volunteering
- receive appreciation
- volunteer in a safe environment
- be insured
- know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
- receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses
- receive appropriate training
- be free from discrimination
- be offered the opportunity for personal development

The Park Community Centre expects volunteers to:

- be reliable and honest
- respect confidentiality
- make the most of training and support opportunities
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the organisation
- carry out tasks within agreed guidelines
- respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute
- comply with the organisation's policies

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Privacy Policy

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.