



## **Volunteering Policy**

**April 2019**

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Volunteering is a way that people can gain skills, enhance their knowledge and enjoy giving something back to their community or to a specific group. We believe that there are many members of the community who have skills and experience which they could impart to children and young people to develop their personal growth and understanding.

We welcome volunteers from the wider community who have a willingness to work with young people and whose aim is to challenge, support and engage with young people in order to help them achieve their potential.

Volunteering is defined as any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation. (Volunteering England definition).

## 2 PCC GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

The Good Practice Guide recognises the valuable contribution of our volunteers and provides consistent standards for volunteering opportunities.

It has been produced to provide a framework for all staff working with volunteers to:

- Promote best practice across the authority.
- Provide consistent terms of engagement for volunteers across all Council Directorates.
- Ensure our work with volunteers adds value to our service delivery.
- Ensure the safety of volunteers and those they come into contact with in the course of their volunteering.
- Support volunteers in developing their skills and knowledge.

All staff working with volunteers are encouraged to follow the Good Practice Guide: <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/intranet/hr/hr-support-and-advice/working-with-volunteers.aspx>

### 2.1 KEY PRINCIPLES

Each individual service area will coordinate the recruitment of the volunteers it needs, according to corporate guidelines and best practice.

Volunteers will not be used to replace the work of paid staff.

Volunteers will be recruited to a specific role and consulted on a regular basis regarding their involvement.

### 3. WHO CAN BE A VOLUNTEER?

The youth service work with young people up to the age of 19 and in some cases up to the age of 25 if they have additional support needs therefore our volunteers for this service must be over the age of 21.

The play service work with children between the ages of 6 - 13 years therefore volunteers for this service must be over the age of 18.

For both services if a young person wants to lead an activity or assist with younger members in a club then we regard them as peer mentors. We provide support and training in the same way as we do volunteers but the emphasis is on providing the young person with opportunities for learning and personal growth whilst operating in a safe environment.

Ideally a volunteer would have some skills and life experience that they could bring to the placement and share with young people. A volunteer should also be someone who understands our ethos and aims and is willing to work within our Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding policies and who is able to maintain appropriate boundaries with children and young people.

Any placement is subject to two satisfactory references and an enhanced DBS check being completed.

### 4. HOW DO WE RECRUIT?

Often people will apply for a job within the service and not be successful and we suggest they need to gain more experience and offer them the opportunity to become a volunteer.

Sometimes people approach us directly through the adventure playgrounds and youth clubs or members of staff. On other occasions, we may get a general enquiry through the PCC help desk or website.

Play, Youth and Community Services has a volunteer's application form (**See Appendix 1**) which any aspiring volunteer can fill out if they are interested in volunteering for us.

The process we follow is:

- Aspiring volunteers make contact with the service.
- They fill in the volunteering application form.
- Asked in for an interview.
- If an appropriate volunteer opportunity can be found then a DBS form filled in (if do not already have a current one that can be shown to the supervisor).
- 2 references to be requested.
- DBS certificate seen and play and youth DBS process completed.
- Volunteer agreement signed and agree a placement setting and start date.
- Probation and supervision schedule agreed.
- Relevant training to be completed.
- Placement commences.

In terms of where the placement is located, we do endeavor to place volunteers in the project of their choice or where we feel their skills would be most useful, however, any placement will be made in negotiation with each individual.

If the volunteer has users in the setting that they have personal relationships with, this needs to be referred to the head of service to ensure there is no impact on the service delivery. The head of service will review and agree the way forward ahead of the volunteer arrangements being agreed.

## **5. SAFEGUARDING**

Local authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. They have a number of statutory functions under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts which make this clear. This includes specific duties in relation to children in need and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, regardless of where they are found, under sections 17 and 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Professionals / Volunteers working with young people are responsible for ensuring that they fulfill their role and responsibilities in a manner consistent with the statutory duties of their employer.

Having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of children but also it enhances the confidence of staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public.

Please refer to the play and youth services safeguarding policy 2018 for more information.

## **5. VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTIONS AND AGREEMENTS**

Each volunteer will have a named work placement supervisor who will undertake an induction to the work area and their specific work place. The supervisor will be a paid member of staff and will provide ongoing support to the volunteer regarding play or youth work practice and ethos as well as any issues that arise within the placement.

All volunteers will sign a volunteer agreement (**See Appendix 2**) which sets out the

hours and responsibilities of their role, whilst being flexible to the potentially changing lifestyle of the volunteer or the changes to the settings. This is not a contract of employment but rather a written record of the offer and agreement of voluntary work, in respect of the commitment offered by the volunteer and the conditions under which the work will take place. It will also state the appropriate communication route if there are any occurring problems or the time commitments cannot be fulfilled for any reason at any point.

## **6. PROBATION PERIOD**

The volunteer will be expected to complete core training before the placement starts. These include (but not limited to):

- Information Governance - GDPR
- Safeguarding E Learning
- Equalities & Diversity
- Health and Safety
- Fire Safety
- Anti-fraud, Bribery & Corruption.

Other training may be available and the volunteer is welcome to engage in training as part of their professional development and also to apply for any vacancies that arise within the service in line with the Portsmouth City Council recruitment process.

There will be a probation period of a minimum of 3 months (this can be extended if needed) and this will be input to the volunteer agreement.

## **7. SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT**

The role of the supervisor is to encourage and support the volunteer in their work placement. The supervisor will be someone who can role model good youth and play work practice and is able to help the volunteer to reflect on their practice and experiences. They will be able to help the volunteer to problem solve and provide a greater understanding of youth work and help them to develop appropriate support relationships with young people. The support may be whilst in the work place, during session reviews or at a supervision meeting. The volunteer should endeavor to make use of the supervisor's knowledge and experience and seek guidance on areas or actions that they do not understand.

Review meetings will occur every 4 weeks initially with the work place supervisor. These sessions will include arranging any training, resources or requirement needed to fulfil agreed tasks, providing advice, guidance and opportunities and to feedback on how both parties feel the placement is going.

This is also scheduled time for the volunteer to be given the opportunity to discuss any highlights or issues of concerns with their supervisor.

All supervision sessions will be recorded and a copy will be provided to the volunteer for their records.

If at any point during the placement either the supervisor or the volunteer feels that the placement isn't working then the arrangement can be ended without prejudice to

either party.

## **8. COMMITMENT**

Ideally we would like an overall commitment of 1 or 2 years from a volunteer. As a service we will invest a considerable amount in terms of time, money and resources into our volunteers and we would hope that they would be willing to reciprocate with a long-term commitment. This is particularly important from the relationship building aspect of play and youth work. If however the commitment needs to cease, this can be done by arrangement with the supervisor.

## **9. TRAVEL EXPENSES**

Travel expenses to and from the place of volunteering will be covered by the volunteer themselves. If an offsite activity occurs travel expenses, then these to be agreed with the head of service prior to the event.

## **10. PCC VOLUNTEERS DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The most basic information held about a volunteer (name, address and telephone number) must comply with the Data Protection Act and should be dealt with accordingly. Volunteers to be supplied with information to ensure they are aware of the responsibilities under both the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act.

Volunteers have the same confidentiality rights and protection of any paid employee and will be treated with the same respect and professionalism as any staff member.

## **11. INSURANCE LIABILITY**

Volunteers who are recruited by Portsmouth City Council are covered by the council's insurance policy.

## **12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

Portsmouth City Council is firmly committed to diversity in all areas of its work. PCC believes that there is much to learn and profit from diverse cultures and perspectives and that diversity will make our services more effective in meeting the needs of all our customers. PCC are committed to development and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and experiences are able to participate and contribute.

## **13. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Portsmouth City Council is committed as an authority to offering equality opportunities to volunteers from different backgrounds to build on establishing a diverse cohort of volunteers. PCC will strive to welcome and involve people from differing backgrounds, ages, cultures, genders and outlooks so that as an organisation we can adapt new ideas and fresh approaches.

## **14. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Portsmouth City Council has a duty of care to avoid exposing any volunteer to risk to their health and safety. Volunteers must be made aware of health and safety arrangements as part of their initial training. This includes their duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do, or neglect to do.

## Appendix 1

### Volunteer Registration Form

Full Name :			
Tel:		Mobile:	
Address :			
	Post Code:		
Email:			
Age ( if under 18)			
I would be interested in:			
		<input type="checkbox"/> Youth work	<input type="checkbox"/> Play work
		<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Centre Work
How many hours a week would you be able to give?		Which days would suit you best?	
		Which time of day are you available?	
Please tell us about any experience you have had with working with children or young people (please give ages or age ranges)			
Please tell us about any experience, interests or qualifications that might be useful in working with young people?			
<b>References:</b> please give two names of referees who can vouch for you, ideally one of these should be your current employer(references <b>MUST NOT</b> be from a member of your family),			
<b>Referee 1</b>		<b>Referee 2</b>	
<b>Name:</b>		<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>		<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Tel:</b>		<b>Tel:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>		<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Capacity known:</b>		<b>Capacity known:</b>	

I confirm that all the information given above is true to the best of my knowledge

I understand that if I am taken on as a volunteer for the Housing - Play and Youth services I will have to undergo a DBS check at enhanced level.

**Sign :**

**Date:**

**Print Name:**

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

Volunteers are an important and valued part of the Housing- Play and Youth Services. We hope you enjoy working with us and feel a full part of the team.

This agreement tells you what you can expect from us and what we expect from you for (full details please ask for a copy of the Housing- play and youth services volunteering policy, if you haven't been given one already).

Your role as a volunteer is to support the work of the Play and Youth Service teams by assisting the staff in the supporting of the Youth Clubs/Projects and adventure playgrounds, in the planning and delivery of activities to children, young people and adults using the Service.

#### **A. the Housing Service (Youth & Play) commits:**

##### Induction and training:

- To provide you with a thorough induction into the work of the Service the policies and procedures on the site, the staff and your role as a volunteer
- To provide you with the training necessary to carry out your role effectively
- To advise you of any accredited training opportunities and to support you in accessing them where possible

##### Supervision & Support:

- To explain the standards we expect for our services and to support and encourage you to achieve and maintain them
- To provide a named person who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering and any successes or problems
- To do our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us

##### Expenses:

- To reimburse you for any pre-agreed travel or other costs incurred while volunteering with us

##### Health & Safety:

- To provide adequate training and feedback in support of our health & safety policy and procedures

##### Insurance:

- To provide adequate insurance cover for you whilst undertaking voluntary work approved and authorised by us

##### Equal Opportunities:

- To ensure that you are treated in accordance with our equal opportunities policy and procedures

##### Problems:

- To try and resolve fairly any problems or difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us

- In the event of any unresolved problem to offer the opportunity to discuss the issues with a senior member of PCC staff

**B. The Volunteer**

I agree:

- To help the Play and Youth Service to fulfil its aims to provide safe but challenging opportunities to all those who use the Youth/Play Service, irrespective of their age, race or gender
- To perform my volunteering role to the best of my ability
- To follow the organisations procedures and standards, including health & safety and equal opportunities, in relation to its staff, volunteers and children using the site
- To maintain the confidentiality of information on the organisation and the users of the service
- To meet the time commitments and standards agreed to and to give reasonable notice when this is not possible
- To provide references as agreed and to agree to a DBS (Criminal Records Bureau) check

**This agreement is binding in honor only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created now or at any time in the future**

<b>Agreed Rota :</b>			
<b>Day/s:</b>		<b>Time/s:</b>	
<b>Agreed Probation period length :</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This must be in line with the Play and youth volunteers policy, if not sure please ask service manager for support</li> </ul>			
In accordance with Equal Opportunities and the Equality Act please answer the following question:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bearing in mind the volunteer profile for this opportunity, are you aware of any disabilities (mental/physical limitations) that may impact on your ability to be a volunteer?</li> </ul>			
<b>Sign:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Print:</b>			
<b>Manager Sign :</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Service manager Sign:</b>		<b>Date</b>	