

Volunteer Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Volunteers play a crucial role in helping Sacriston Youth Project ('the Charity') achieve our mission and we could not achieve our goals without their hard work. We are incredibly grateful for their support and want to make sure all our volunteers have a safe, rewarding and enjoyable experience.
- 1.2 The Charity seeks to involve volunteers to:
- Ensure our services meet the needs of our clients.
 - Provide new skills and perspectives.
 - Increase our contact with the local community we serve.

2. Principles and Responsibility

- 2.1 This Policy is underpinned by the following principles:
- a) The Charity will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to youth project work.
 - b) The Charity expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
 - c) The Charity recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development opportunities and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing training for them to do their work effectively.
- 2.2 Responsibility for this policy rests with the Business Manager and the Board of Trustees.
- 2.3 This policy is for volunteers recruited by the Charity and colleagues working with those volunteers. It will be provided to all volunteers at the time of their induction with the Charity.

3. Our Volunteers – Definition

- 3.1 A Sacriston Youth Project volunteer is someone who, unpaid and of their own free will, chooses to give their time, energy, skills and expertise to support the Charity in achieving its aims. The arrangement is voluntary on both sides. The charity's relationship with volunteers is based on trust and is not intended to have the obligations associated with employment. No payment, other than the reimbursement of agreed out-of-pocket expenses, is made by the Charity to people who give their time as volunteers.

4. Equality and Diversity

- 4.1 The Charity is committed to building a diverse organisation that is responsive to the needs of young people, members of our community and our stakeholders. The Charity is also committed to equal opportunities at all stages of recruitment, selection and volunteering. Short-listing, interviewing and selection of volunteers will always be carried out without regard to protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. This commitment is reflected throughout the charity's policies and procedures. The Charity will not condone, accept or ignore any forms of discrimination or unacceptable behaviour.

5. Safeguarding

- 5.1 The Charity believes that all children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from harm, abuse and exploitation. The Safeguarding Policy will be shared with all new volunteers to the Charity. Where the Charity feels it is necessary, failure to meet the obligations of the Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct, may lead to a volunteer being asked to step back from volunteering temporarily or permanently, or other appropriate action.
- 5.2 Volunteers taking on roles that are eligible for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, or equivalent, will be required to undertake a relevant check. If required, this will be made clear during the application process. We welcome volunteers from a range of different backgrounds and having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from volunteering with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of their offence.

6. Recruitment

- 6.1 The Charity will collect information on all prospective volunteers during the recruitment and selection process. Additionally, volunteers might be required to attend an informal interview to provide relevant information and explore their aspirations and the experience they can bring to the Charity. It is important for all involved to appreciate that the interview is not a competitive process, and the sole selection criteria is suitability for the role. A personal reference might be required and taken up to help confirm suitability for volunteering.
- 6.2 All our regular volunteers must read and agree to the Volunteer Agreement which outlines what is expected from the volunteer and what they can expect from the Charity. In commencing their role, the volunteer commits to the aims, values and key policies of the Charity. This Volunteer Agreement does not and is not intended to create a contract of employment between the Charity and volunteers.
- 6.3 When appointed, an appropriate named contact for that role will lead on the relationship management of the volunteer. This may be a colleague or a volunteer. The named contact is responsible for guiding and supporting the volunteer in their role and should be available to discuss any aspect of the volunteer's role. A volunteer will be informed in writing (letter or email) if their Charity contact changes.

7. Training and Support

- 7.1 Volunteers will have a valuable set of skills, knowledge and attitudes gained from their education, work, previous volunteering, and life experiences. To help ensure that volunteers are appropriately equipped for their role, each volunteer must undergo the appropriate induction and training process prior to commencing their role, alongside continuous training, where appropriate, whilst volunteering with the Charity.
- 7.2 Each volunteer will be provided with relevant management and support. This might include regular, appropriate and mutually agreed contact.

8. Health and Safety

- 8.1 Volunteers must take reasonable care of themselves and others while volunteering for the Charity, and follow any health and safety advice and instruction given for their role. Volunteers should cooperate with the Charity on health and safety matters, and immediately report accidents/incidents (including near misses – accidents/incidents that may have led to injury). Volunteers should not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- 8.2 The Charity will ensure that all volunteers are provided with the appropriate information, supervision and training required to enable them to complete voluntary work safely. This includes providing suitable systems and procedures and guidance is outlined in The Health and Safety Policy.

9. Expenses

- 9.1 The work of the Charity is critically dependent on our network of volunteers. We will look to reimburse reasonable expenses if there are financial barriers to volunteering. Please note that we will only reimburse expenses if previously agreed with the volunteer's named contact, based on their assessment of the Charity's requirements and the available budget.

10. Insurance

- 10.1 The Charity provides Employers Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover for all volunteers whilst working on Charity activities. The Charity does not provide motor insurance cover. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement.
- 10.2 All volunteers that hold Business Class motor insurance will be automatically covered for their work on behalf of the Charity. However, if their insurance is limited to social and domestic use then they will have to discuss their role as a Charity volunteer with their insurance company to ensure that they are fully covered. Volunteers will be asked to sign the relevant section on the Expenses form to confirm that they have agreed to drive on Charity business with their insurers before we can reimburse mileage costs.

11. Data Protection and Confidentiality

- 11.1 The Charity will protect volunteer information in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data will be held securely and confidentially and will only be accessed by authorised individuals. Please see our Privacy Policy on the website for further information about how we collect, manage and use the personal data of our volunteers. We expect all volunteers to comply with the Charity's Data Protection Policy and associated policies.
- 11.2 When using Charity's devices or IT systems as part of their role, volunteers must read, understand and sign up to our Communications Policy prior to starting their role.
- 11.3 When volunteering with the Charity, volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about the Charity, its staff, young people and community members supported by the charity and third parties. All volunteers are required to maintain confidentiality and should not disclose the Charity's information during their volunteering services and any time afterwards.

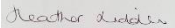
12. Feedback and Complaints

- 12.1 Although the Charity makes every effort to ensure that any experience of volunteering with us is positive and rewarding, we recognise that volunteers at times may experience difficulty within their role or they may want to share feedback or raise an issue with a member of staff or another volunteer.
- 12.2 In the first instance, volunteers should talk to the Business Manager or a member of the Trustees to try to resolve the issue, get advice or share feedback. We will make every reasonable effort to resolve difficulties at an early stage and we always review feedback and learn from it.
- 12.3 However, where the areas of concern cannot be resolved by these means, please refer to our Complaints Policy, which can be found on our website. In line with this policy, feedback and complaints can be submitted to the Charity in the following ways:
- Email: info@sacristonyouthproject.co.uk
 - Phone: 0191 3711689
 - Post: Sacriston Youth Project, Unit E, Sacriston Enterprise Workshops, Plawsworth Road, Sacriston, Durham, DH7 6PD
- 12.4 There may be occasions where named contacts may have concerns around a volunteer's behaviour or approach. In this case, the Business Manager or a member of the Trustees will approach the volunteer directly to discuss any concerns they may have amicably and openly and resolve difficulties at an early stage.

13. Leaving the Charity

- 13.1 Volunteers are free to cease volunteering with the Charity at any time by speaking or writing to the Business Manager or Board of Trustees. When deciding to finish volunteering with us, we ask that volunteers give us as much notice as possible to help us organise alternative arrangements. Upon leaving a volunteer role, we may offer an exit interview to reflect on their experiences and improve our volunteer opportunities.
- 13.2 There are many different ways to support young people and members of our community through the Charity and so we encourage volunteers to stay in touch and get involved in the future.
- 13.3 There may also be times when the Charity will ask a volunteer to cease volunteering. This may be because the role no longer supports the needs of the Charity and its current work, or because the volunteer is no longer able to satisfactorily carry out a particular role. When this happens, we will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to the volunteer and try to find an acceptable alternative role. In all cases, the volunteer will be treated fairly, with dignity and respect.
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This policy has been approved & authorised by:

Name: Heather Liddle
Position: Trustee – Sacriston Youth Project
Date: May 2021
Signature: 

Date of Review	Reviewed By	Changes Made	Date of Next Review
May 2021	Jo Cameron - Trustee		May 2022