

Lower Earley *Family Contact Centre*

Volunteer Policy

Our aim is to treat volunteers fairly, equally and consistently. This policy ensures that volunteers know what they can expect and where they can turn to if they feel things are going wrong.

In order to operate the contact Centre volunteers are needed to:

- co-ordinate the service (Co-ordinator / Assistant Co-ordinator)
- keep attendance records
- buy and serve the refreshments
- prepare and clear up the Centre on the day
- ensure that the Centre is secure and safe
- be on hand to assist the families using the Centre

(See further details in the separate leaflet ‘Guidance Notes for Volunteers’)

Recruitment

Our “Recruitment and Induction Procedure” includes appropriate means to advertise for volunteers, which takes into account the principles of our “Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy”. The applicant will have to complete an application form, but help can be given with this if necessary. The applicant will be interviewed by the Co-ordinator and if this is successful:

- a) the two references asked for will be taken up
- b) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate will be requested

Induction and training

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by the Co-ordinator or Team Leader, covering

- the role of the volunteer
- essential procedures
- details of ongoing training
- other information as appropriate

and supported by an induction checklist. For more information please see the “Recruitment and Induction Procedure” and the “Training Policy”.

All the Centre’s policies are on Google Drive. Copies of the Constitution, Mission Statement and insurance policy are on the noticeboard.

There will be a trial period of 4 sessions to give the Centre and the volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other. A review – the last item on the checklist - will be made midway through the trial period and also at the end.

Expenses

We want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. All out-of-pocket expenses, if required, will be reimbursed, including expenses for travel and

training courses. In order to claim expenses, volunteers should see the Co-ordinator or Team Leader.

Support

The Co-ordinator, team leaders and other volunteers will offer support to the volunteers. There will be a briefing session at the beginning and a de-briefing at the end, if necessary, of each session.

The Co-ordinator will support all volunteers and will have regular meetings with the volunteers to discuss any problems or issues that may arise.

The Co-ordinator will receive support from the Chair of the Management Committee.

Insurance

The Centre has a valid insurance policy, which volunteers are advised to read.

Confidentiality

The Centre has an explicit “Confidentiality Policy”, which the Management Committee and volunteers are obliged to observe.

Resolving problems

The relationship between the Centre and its volunteer is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the Centre is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to the children, families and referrers who use it, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service.

If a volunteer does not meet with the Centre’s standards, here is how it will be dealt with:

1. Initially with a meeting with the co-ordinator who will explain the concerns.
2. If this does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the Chair of the Management Committee will be convened.
3. If the volunteer still does not meet our standards, they will be removed from the rota.

If a volunteer is dissatisfied with any aspect of the Centre’s operation:

1. They should initially explain their dissatisfaction to the Team Leader
2. If that does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the Co-ordinator should be convened
3. If that does not resolve the issue then a formal meeting with the Chair of the Management Committee should follow.
4. If, after this, their dissatisfaction still cannot be resolved then it would be appropriate for them to cease volunteering at the Centre.

In regard to either types of problem above, volunteers will be freely able to state their case and can have a friend to accompany them.