



TOGETHER, WE CHANGE LIVES

GUIDANCE FOR INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE IN VOLUNTEERING

The purpose of this pack is to support organisations who want offer and work with young people within volunteering roles, and what needs to be considered when taking them on. Young people can help bring a new energy to volunteering, with fresh ideas, perspectives and enthusiasm. Enabling them to support their local community or services can help them to build skills, confidence, identity and a strong sense of social responsibility. However, it is the role of the organisation to create a safe, supportive environment that meets legal and best practice standards.

In this pack you will find informational guidance on safeguarding, insurance, risk assessments, inductions and more.

Benefits to your Organisation

- Bring new skills to the organisation
- Long-term engagement
- New ideas & creativity
- Diversify volunteer base
- Ensure the service is meeting the needs of young people
- Help shape volunteering culture
- Create community connections with younger people
- Access new partnerships & networks
- Increased visibility across social media platforms

Benefits to Young People

- Gain skills & experience
- Develop confidence
- Build professional & personal skills
- Take an active role within the community
- Break down generational barriers
- Develop new support systems
- Contribute in a positive way

Health & Safety

All voluntary and community groups, including those run entirely by volunteers, have a common-law duty of care to volunteers. Organisations involving volunteers should have an up to date health and safety policy. Health and Safety legislation, responsibilities and requirements must be observed and made known to all staff and volunteers through an induction process.

It is important to consider Health & Safety when young people are concerned, as a proper analysis of the suitability of roles and tasks make up the duty of care you have towards them as an organisation. You should already have a risk assessment for your organisation however you will need to have a new risk assessment specifically tailored towards young people as there are different risks associated with them. This should also be a document which is readily available for young people and their parents or guardians to view.

Why do you need a risk assessment specifically for young people?

- Risk of exploitation
- Physical & emotional wellbeing
- Impact of pressure at busy times in their lives i.e. exam period
- Maturity levels & experience
- Some tasks may be unsuitable for younger volunteers e.g. manual handling, lone working, working with vulnerable people

Points to consider

- Complete the risk assessment prior to the young person starts volunteering
- Consider the site layout
- Will they be exposed to any physical, biological or chemical agents – for how long & to what extent
- What types of work equipment will be used
- Maturity, inexperience and awareness or existing or potential risks
- What control measures can you implement to eliminate or minimise risks
- Identify the age group the role is suitable for and level of supervision required

Following the risk assessment analysis, the key findings and control measures you have introduced should be shared with parents/guardians prior to the young person beginning their volunteering. Make sure you are considering the points within the risk assessment when deciding whether the young person should be prohibited from any activities or whether specific activities or tasks can be modified to reduce risks. Where possible, involve young volunteers in the process of identifying any health & safety risks and developing solutions together to overcome these. Risk assessments can always be reviewed if the nature of the volunteering changes or you believe certain points are no longer valid.

Insurance

As an organisation, you will need to have Employers Liability Insurance when taking on young volunteers and you can check your current insurance policy and see if young people are covered. If you are unsure or need to make changes to your insurance policy, you can contact your insurance company and find out if the age of the persons covered can be lowered if the age limit is 18.

If younger volunteers are volunteering in the same activities as your other volunteers, there should not usually be an additional charge for changing the age limits of your policy.

Your insurance policy should explicitly mention volunteers, to ensure they are covered.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding Policy

As an organisation you will need to have a clear safeguarding policy that includes specific guidance for working with under 18's.

This is something which should be in place prior to them starting volunteering with you, and it is something which should also be shared with the volunteer/their parents or guardians. Where relevant, it is also important that you have a 'social media safeguarding guide for young volunteers' which outlines how your organisation will ensure safe use of social media and digital platforms young people are likely to use.

DBS Checks

Staff working with young volunteers do need an up to date DBS check, and young people should not be left alone with people who do not have a DBS check. Those aged 16 and 17 who will be working with other young people under the age of 18 will also need their own DBS check. In the case of Regulated Activity with under 16s, staff will need an Enhanced DBS check- which is typically, in regards to volunteer management, "teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising a child who is under the age of 16 in relation to their employment" for "more than 3 days in any 30 day period", would be classed as regulated activity.

It is important to note that under 16s cannot have a DBS check carried out on them and may need more supervision and support. Any volunteering activity that have substantial unsupervised access to vulnerable groups, including children, is not advised for volunteers under the age of 18.

Parental Consent

It is important to get parent or guardian consent for anyone under the age of 16 who is volunteering with your organisation, prior to them starting volunteering. It is also good practice to obtain permission from the parent or guardian for 16 to 17-year olds. Additionally, the parent/guardian should be informed about the organisation's activities, what the young person will be doing and when and where. It is important that both the young person and their parent/guardian fully understand what the volunteering role entails and a copy of the organisations young person risk assessment should be shared with them. It is important to, in return, get contact details of a parent or guardian for volunteers in case of emergencies.

If you are using photos of young volunteers for publicity purposes, you need to obtain the young persons permission and if they are under the age of 16 you need to get permission from their parent/guardian to use them. If a young person is over 16 and living independently of parents or social services, they can provide their own consent.

Key points for consent include:

- You may need separate consent forms for specific activities e.g. trips
- Parents or guardians for under 16s must sign a written consent form
- Parents or guardians must be aware of your safeguarding policy and procedures
- If the young person is working away from their typical volunteering premises, additional consent must be obtained
- When using photos of young volunteers, consent must be obtained

Supervision

Young volunteers should not be left alone with members of the public, or other staff members who are not DBS checked. You should ensure that young people are always supervised by a responsible adult and that they are available for them to go to for advice, information or support. They should have an awareness of the work the young person is carrying out at all times, and intervene if necessary. The person who supervises and trains young volunteers should themselves have a successful DBS clearance.

Good supervision is essential for young people and can help to form their volunteering opportunity.

Key points for supervision include:

- Supervisor must have a successful DBS clearance
- Supervision must be regular & consistent during the volunteering hours
- It must be reasonable in all circumstances to ensure the volunteers protection
- A DBS is free for any volunteering staff, so do not rule out having a more experienced volunteer as a supervisor

Induction & Training

Induction and training is as important for volunteers as it is for paid staff. It is important that as an organisation you provide young volunteers with the opportunity to access training to enhance their knowledge, and to provide them with adequate opportunities to use their skills. It is important at the start of their volunteering journey, they receive appropriate training and support so that they are able to carry out tasks without putting themselves or others at risk. As an organisation, you should ensure that all relevant training is completed and has been understood.

Young people will also need appropriate training and instruction around the hazards and risks present within the workplace and what preventative control measures are put in place to protect their health and safety. This training should include an introduction to health & safety, such as first aid, fire and evacuation procedures, who to go to if concerns arise, equal opportunities and emergency procedures.

As an organisation, the induction process should be a friendly and accessible one that also covers:

- Volunteer tasks – what they will be doing and when
- Who to approach for questions and support
- Health & safety information
- Safeguarding information
- Code of conduct/behaviour expectations

It is important to use clear, age-appropriate language and provide ongoing support with regular check-ins or reviews to ensure they feel confident and safe.

Volunteer Hours

The number of hours a young person can work in a week does not currently apply to volunteering. The Working Time Regulations (1998) implemented the European Working Time Directive into UK law.

It is important to note that:

- There is a limit of eight hours working time a day and 40 hours a week
- Young people are not usually allowed to work between 10:00pm and 6:00am or between 11:00pm and 7:00am
- There should be 12 hours rest between each working day
- There should be two days weekly rest and a 30 minute in work rest break when working longer than 4 and a half hours

Ongoing Support

Young volunteers may require additional support in order to be able to carry out their role in a safe and effective way. An important point to remember is that everyone is an individual and some young people may not yet be very mature and may be unfamiliar with the working environment. Some volunteers will need a lot of support, where others may be more confident and not require this additional level of attention. Consider buddying new young volunteers up with experienced volunteers.

Having an open-door policy can prove to be a great support tool for young volunteers, with them being able to approach you whenever they feel they need your advice. Holding one-to-one meetings can provide a great opportunity for an open two-way conversation that gives volunteers a chance to provide and receive feedback about their volunteering work.

Ways you can offer additional support can include:

- Regular, pre-arranged one-to-one sessions
- Informal day to day support
- Telephone support
- Review/development/evaluation sessions
- Personal development plans
- Action plans
- Volunteer journals
- Accreditation or awards
- Group support or social groups
- Peer support / buddy support
- Training
- Feedback forms at the end of the volunteering process

How Can We Help?

- Support from our Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum
- Get tailored advice from our Volunteer Manager – Su Hallam
- Bespoke Training

Contact Us

Call Us: 0115 969 9060

Email Us: volunteer@yourcvsnotts.org

www.yourcvsnotts.org