



Volunteer Policy

Aim

Flamingo Chicks CIC values volunteers for the diverse skills and experience they bring to our classes and community. It recognises that volunteers should be seen as complementary and additional to the staff group. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the interests of the volunteers are met, whilst bearing in mind that the children's safety and wellbeing is paramount.

Principles

This Volunteering Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- We will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisation and that systems are in place for them to contribute to the settings work.
- We expect that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- We recognise that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.

Procedure

Recruitment

We will invite volunteers to visit projects at a time convenient to the Session Leader, who will go through the application form and the other information with the volunteers. This approach will help volunteers who may lack the confidence or basic literacy skills to apply on their own.

References and checks

All volunteers must provide the organisation with two referees. We will ensure that all references are taken up before the volunteer starts work.

All volunteers will be expected to complete an enhanced level Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Volunteers are required to disclose if they have received any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings, whilst volunteering with us which may affect their suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults. We will also review their DBS check status on a regular basis to verify this.

Induction and Training

Staff will be taken through an induction when they start with the organisation which includes a clear explanation of health and safety issues and policy, the child protection policy and procedure and risk assessments amongst other areas. Records of these inductions will be kept and new staff and volunteers asked to sign these records to confirm that they have taken part.

The volunteer may be given a particular area of work to focus on, depending on their interests.

We'll share opportunities for training courses/sessions in the local area if volunteers would like to take up these opportunities to supplement their knowledge, including safeguarding and child protection training.

Insurance

We will provide a safe workplace and provide insurance cover against any injury caused by negligence. All volunteers are covered by the settings Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance.

Equal Opportunities

We operate an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our equal opportunities policy.

Health & Safety

Volunteers are covered by our Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which will be available on our website, www.flamingochicks.co.uk.

Supporting all children

Volunteers will support a mix of children with varying individual requirements whilst at Flamingo Chicks. Volunteers will be given appropriate overview information on the individual requirements of children that they will be supporting to ensure that they can best meet their needs.

Volunteers will support all children with respect, fostering confidence, self esteem and positive relationships and using language and actions that support the empowerment of all children to achieve what they would like within the class. All children are encouraged by volunteers to be an active part of all areas within a Flamingo Chicks session to a level that feels fun and appropriate for them. Volunteers will work to the aims of Flamingo Chicks as developing confidence, social skills, co-ordination, communication and concentration of all children who attend.

A parent/carer of a child attending is always on site and retains overall individual responsibility for their child. If a child is unwell, becomes upset or needs support to maintain positive behaviour then volunteers will reunite the child with their parent immediately, to enable them to have the reassurance or medical care that they need.

Physical Support:

Children at Flamingo Chicks may benefit from physical support from volunteers to enable them to join in the class and dance movements in the way in which they would like.

When physical support is appropriate, a volunteer will:

- Check with the child that they are happy to have physical support from the volunteer.
- Offer verbal reassurance to the child and explain how you are going to help them and check that is ok.
- Cause the minimum level of restriction of movement
- Check that the support was ok for the child at an appropriate point to see if there was anything the child would like the volunteer to do differently.

Volunteers will not:

- Physically support a child who does not want to be.
- indecently or inappropriately touch or hold a child

- *initiate* hugging, handholding or other unnecessary physical contact

Physical Intervention:

Should physical intervention be necessary – it should be absolutely as a last resort and an action due to imminent risk of injury – to protect, the child or others at the facility – and where possible undertaken by the parent/carer or a Class Leader only. It will only be used for the minimum amount of time and force. A Class Leader would then be record this on an incident record, shared with and signed by the parent/carer.

Types of intervention which may be appropriate:

- Physically preventing a young person from exposing themselves to possible danger by leaving the premises.

Child Protection

All volunteers will be given a copy of our Child Protection policy and will be required to work within it. In addition Volunteers have a responsibility to ensure a child's welfare and should adhere to the following:

- Avoid being alone with a child, at all times. This prevents difficult situations arising, which could lead to false accusations.
- Never take a child to the toilet – if a child requests to go to the bathrooms, find their parent and reunite them to take them instead.
- Never become involved with any child outside the normal hours of the project unless they have full consent of the main carer of the child.
- Confidentiality must be respected at all times, except where a child's safety is at risk.
- Take any concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of a child to the Session Leader.
- At all times try to act as a positive role model for the children.

Volunteer's responsibilities

- Be punctual and notify staff as soon as possible if they are unable to attend a session
- Help staff set up at the start and tidy up at the end of sessions
- Help to provide a safe, stimulating environment for children
- Work as part of a team and under the supervision of the session leaders
- Help ensure that equipment is maintained and that anything damaged or dangerous is removed.
- If there are any concerns about a child's behaviour, the volunteer should refer this to a class leader

Photos

Our official photographers regularly take photographs during our classes and if in class, you may feature in these. We send images to the local media to let more people know about Flamingo Chicks and use pics on own website and social media.

However – please note, volunteers are not permitted to take their own photos or video during sessions.

Problems

If a volunteer has any problems, they should to talk to the Class Leader. If there are any issues that cannot be discussed with staff then the volunteers should talk to Katherine Sparkes.

Date Agreed:

Signed by:

Signature:

Role of Signatory: