

Volunteers' Policy

Volunteers offer themselves for a service or undertaking. They give of their time willingly and without pay.

Birmingham Salvation Army Child Contact Centre offers a facility where children of separated families can enjoy contact in a neutral meeting place with one or both parents, and sometimes other family members, in a safe and comfortable environment. In order to offer this service, volunteers are needed to:

- coordinate the service
- keep attendance records;
- serve refreshments;
- prepare and clear up the Centre on the day;
- ensure that the Centre is secure and safe;
- assist the families using the Centre.

Recruitment

The Centre will use appropriate means to advertise for volunteers locally that take into account the principles of our Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policies. The applicant will have to complete an application form, help can be given with this if necessary. The applicant will be interviewed by the Coordinator and if this is successful the two references asked for will be taken up.

An enhanced level (DBS) will be made obligatory for every potential volunteer and all volunteers working in the Child Contact Centre. This will need to be renewed every three years. Until they have completed the DBS form and received the certificate all potential volunteers will be observers only and they will have a probationary period of three sessions to give the Centre and the volunteers time to see if they are suited to each other. Reviews will be made during and at the end of this period. This probationary period will be in sessions when the Coordinator is present.

Induction and training

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by the Coordinator or Team leader.

This will include:

- The role of the volunteer.
- A list of all staff members and volunteers.
- A list of Advisory Board members
- Copies of all the Child Contact Centre policies including the Volunteers' policy/ Volunteer Training/ Recruitment of ex-offenders/Data storage/DBS/ Confidentiality and those on Safeguarding & Child Protection/ Health & Safety/ Toys/ Equal Opportunities & Diversity, Domestic Abuse & Conflict Management, Compliments, Comments & Complaints and Whistleblowing.
- Essential procedures i.e. timekeeping, rota etc.
- Details of ongoing training.
- Information about NACCC and its Values and National Standards.
- Other information as appropriate.

Support

The Co-ordinator, Deputy Coordinator & team leaders will offer support to the volunteers. There will be a briefing session at the beginning and a de-briefing at the end of each Child Contact Centre session.

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

The Co-ordinator will receive support and regular supervision sessions from the Chair of the Advisory Board.

Insurance

The Child Contact Centre has a valid insurance policy.

Confidentiality

The contact process requires an explicit confidentiality policy, which all Centre workers, which includes Advisory Board and volunteers, are obliged to observe.

Resolving problems

The relationship between the Child Contact Centre and its volunteer workers is entirely voluntary. However, it is important that the Child Contact 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 your role as a volunteer does not meet with the Child Contact 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 Advisory Board will be convened.
3. If your work still does not meet with our standards then we shall have to stop using your services.

At all times you will be able to freely state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your work you should:

1. Initially explain your dissatisfaction with 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 Advisory Board should follow.
4. If after this, your dissatisfaction remains unresolved, and we are unable to resolve your grievance, then it would be inappropriate for you to continue to be a volunteer.

At all times you will be able to state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

This Volunteer policy is freely accessible to all on the website and at the Centre. It will be reviewed in 2016 to adapt or improve it.

Graham Andrews (Coordinator) May 2015