

Purple Elephant Family Support – Volunteer Policy

Introduction

We recognise the valuable contribution that volunteers can make to Purple Elephant. They can bring a richness of skills and experience and can often provide a bridge to community involvement that it is difficult for paid staff to achieve. We recognise that volunteers are motivated because it is their choice to volunteer and give of their time freely; in return we want to provide volunteers with opportunities that will develop new skills and experiences.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers. The volunteer handbook gives further details about the support and procedures in place for volunteers.

Status of Volunteers

A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment. We will discuss the role with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the role's requirements.

We will discuss with volunteers the amount of time that they are willing to commit to volunteering, the frequency of their availability and how this will fit in with our needs.

Volunteers are encouraged to let us know as soon as possible if they are not available so that a substitute can be found or different arrangements can be made.

Volunteers wishing to withdraw from their voluntary role are asked to give us as much notice as possible.

Principles

Our organisation:

- Recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and to the organisation.
- Will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- Expects that staff will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognises 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 where necessary.
- Recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- Will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.
- Will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers in our work.

Recruitment

We will endeavour to recruit volunteers through a range of methods including word of mouth, advertising, talking to other agencies and making contact with local volunteering organisations.

We will also endeavour to help any volunteer overcome barriers that may make it difficult for them to volunteer at Purple Elephant.

The Equalities Policy will be adhered to at all times in relation to the recruitment and support of volunteers.

All volunteers will be asked to sign a Volunteer Registration Form, which requires them to abide by Purple Elephant's policies.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and references may be required for **some** volunteer roles, especially where regular contact with children is necessary. This requirement will be discussed with relevant volunteers. Volunteers will be informed if we intend to apply for DBS checks and of the code of practice. DBS checks are not a reflection on the individual, but a legal requirement in certain circumstances.

Young Volunteers

Purple Elephant encourages the involvement of young volunteers in all its services. We can offer young people great opportunities to learn and gain experience, and they can bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the organisation. We'll support young volunteers from the age of 12 years upwards; those under 16yrs will need to have a responsible adult with them at all times, which can be a Purple Elephant staff member or experienced adult volunteer, or a parent/carer as appropriate.

Health and Safety

Purple Elephant has responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers should at all times follow the Health and Safety policies and procedures. Volunteers have a duty of care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers should not act outside their authorised area of work. Volunteers should report all accidents to the appropriate person and should be recorded in the accident book. We will provide volunteers with appropriate guidance on any health and safety issues that arise.

Insurance

Purple Elephant will ensure that volunteers, including young volunteers, are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury. We will also ensure that volunteers are provided with professional and public liability insurance. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering role.

Expenses and Support

We support volunteers at services by providing food and drink, and specifics where necessary such as sun cream. We do not routinely pay volunteer travel expenses unless this has been approved in advance. Receipts will be required.

Grievance

The relationship between Purple Elephant and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and it does not imply any contract. However, it is important that Purple Elephant is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to those who attend our services, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service. If the role of a volunteer does not meet with our standards, the case will be dealt with informally by the Directors. If a volunteer has any concerns regarding their treatment by Purple Elephant and have fully discussed this with us but are still not satisfied, they may take any further complaint in writing to the Trustees.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed at the AGM to ensure that it is in accordance with best practice.

Dated: April 2023. To be reviewed at the AGM in 2025.