

Our Free Minds Volunteer Policy

Our Free Minds believes in the value of voluntary activity as an important expression of citizenship. In adopting this volunteer policy Our Free Minds wishes to:

- Set out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers and ensure good practice in working with volunteers.
- Encourage and enable the involvement of volunteers.
- Take responsibility for ensuring our volunteers are valued for their contribution and respected as colleagues.

Equal Opportunities

- As an employer and engager of volunteers, Our Free Minds is committed to the principle of equal opportunities. This principle will apply to recruitment, training, facilities, promotion, procedures and all terms and conditions.

Recruitment & Selection

- At Our Free Minds, volunteers are an official role, different from members of the society who offer to help and are not required to go through the recruitment process.
- Our Free Minds staff will invite the candidates of official volunteers to go through the recruitment and selection process.
- In the process, Our Free Minds will prevent discrimination particularly on the grounds of gender, marital status, disability, race, colour, religious belief, political belief, sexuality, nationality, ethnic origin, age, trade union activity, responsibility for dependents or employment status.
- Recruitment of volunteers should target as many sections of the community as possible, while appropriate targeting may be used.

DBS Check

- Our Free Minds will invite the volunteers to go through an enhanced DBS check. The cost will be covered by Our Free Minds.
- All information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and should not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work.

Information & Training

- Volunteers will receive full information about their chosen area of work and will be given a clear idea of their responsibilities.
- If necessary (and according the role undertaken), volunteers will be given induction and training. As a minimum, training will always include internal risk assessment training and external safeguarding training.
- Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them.

Support & Supervision

- Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person for supervision and support.

Problem-Solving

- Our Free Minds recognises that problems do arise and we aim to identify and resolve these problems at the earliest stage. Volunteers who have a problem of any kind should discuss it in the first instance with their named contact person.

Confidentiality

- Volunteers will be bound by the same confidentiality conditions as Our Free Minds paid staff.

Expenses

- Our Free Minds will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses.
- All agreed expenses should be reimbursed on production of receipts within a reasonable timeframe.

Volunteer Discount

- Our Free Minds offers an optional discount to all volunteers for the sessions which their children attend and where the volunteering parent is invited to attend to support the facilitators. The discounted fee is £13.5 per session and it will be reviewed by the trustees periodically.

Insurance

- Volunteers will be adequately covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

Health and Safety

- All volunteers are covered by the same health and safety policy as staff.

Relations with Paid Staff

- Our Free Minds is committed to ensuring that volunteers' work complements the work of paid staff, and that it will not be used as a substitute for paid work.
- Steps will be taken to ensure that staff at all levels are clear about the roles of volunteers and to foster good working relationships between staff and volunteers.
- Our Free Minds recognises the need for training for all those working alongside and managing volunteers.

References

- On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference.

End of voluntary work

- Our Free Minds reserves the right to ask volunteers to leave and will give reasons in writing if requested.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Our Free Minds will systematically monitor and evaluate its involvement of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy.

This policy was adopted by: Our Free Minds	Last reviewed and signed by:
Date of last review: 3.4.2025 To be reviewed: 3.4.2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Katie Kotting, Chair of the Board of Trustees - Clea Sambrook, Trustee for Safeguarding - Poppy De Witt, Trustee