

Park Centre Burgess Hill CIO Volunteers Policy

Reviewed 28th September 2023

Signed

Chair: Karen Taylor

Park Centre Burgess Hill CIO

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Registered Charity No. 1203295

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Policy Statement

Park Centre Burgess Hill is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all and to challenging barriers and stereotypes that prevent this, in every aspect of our work.

Park Centre Burgess Hill (including its trustees and staff) recognises the significant and valuable role volunteers play within the charity, helping it achieve our vision and mission, which we could not realise without their additional support and hard work. We are indebted to them for that support and see our relationship with them as two-way. We encourage new volunteers with energy, diversity and ideas who want to do something positive for others and ensure that our programme of activities for young people is sustainable for future generations. We acknowledge a volunteer should get something back from their involvement (It's not just about them giving) so in return, we will ensure our volunteers have a safe, rewarding, and enjoyable experience. Volunteers can learn from our team whilst being supported, helping them in their personal development, by improving confidence, self-esteem and helping develop new skills.

This policy reflects our commitment to volunteering at Park Centre Burgess Hill, and it sets out a framework of procedures and best practice, which we will endeavour to follow when recruiting and working with volunteers, to ensure that both party's expectations are met.

This policy is for volunteers recruited by Park Centre Burgess Hill and staff / colleagues working with those who volunteer with us. It will be provided to all new volunteers at the time of their induction.

Volunteer Definition

A Park Centre Burgess Hill volunteer is someone who supports and complements our work, who is unpaid and gives their time freely and of their own free will (not coerced). The arrangement is

voluntary on both sides, and we accept that a volunteer may leave at any time. The charity's relationship with volunteers is based on trust and is not intended to create legal relations (contract) or obligations associated with employment. We request our volunteers to demonstrate and reflect the core values and policies of Park Centre Burgess Hill when volunteering with us, especially around safeguarding and the safety and well-being of young people we support.

Recruitment of Volunteers

Park Centre Burgess Hill seeks to attract volunteers with appropriate skills, enthusiasm and attitude which is conducive to the role and to working within our 'youth environment' supporting young people.

Before a volunteer opportunity is advertised the following information should be prepared by the Worker in Charge and Administrator then agreed by the Chair:

- An updated role description
- Draft advertisement
- Recruitment timeline and roles and responsibilities

The role description should accurately reflect all elements of the volunteer role. Where a role description already exists for a volunteer opportunity then it should be reviewed to ensure that it still accurately describes the role and updated where necessary.

Care should be taken when drawing up the role description to avoid including criteria that may have the effect of indirectly discriminating against certain groups of applicants. Park Centre Burgess Hill will collect information on all prospective volunteers during the recruitment process including relevant volunteer aspirations, skills, experience, an application form, DBS check and references. Prospective volunteers will be asked to read, sign, and agree to our Volunteer Agreement prior to them being able to start volunteering.

The Volunteer Agreement outlines what is expected of our volunteers and what they can expect from us. Where a prospective volunteer cannot agree to the aims, values, and relevant policies of Park Centre Burgess Hill, then their application will be terminated. Our Volunteer Agreement does not and is not intended to create a contract of employment between the volunteer and Park Centre Burgess Hill.

New volunteers will be assigned a named contact for their role, who will lead on the relationship and management of the volunteer. This may be a member of staff or fellow volunteer. The named contact will be responsible for supporting, guiding, and supervising the volunteer and be available to discuss or refer through to a fellow colleague, any matter relating to the volunteer's role. Where a Volunteer Coordinator's post is filled, they may also act as a source of contact for the volunteer. They may also check on the volunteer's progress and be someone to go to if things go wrong.

Volunteer Application Process

Volunteering for Park Centre Burgess Hill is a simple four step process:

1. Initial discussion with the prospective volunteer to determine their reasons for volunteering, their needs and suitability to the role.

2. If considered suitable, discuss the possibility of doing a trial session, subject to completing an application form. Explain attending regular sessions is subject to a satisfactory DBS check and references.
3. Complete the Application Form and basic Health Questionnaire for Volunteers and return by email to info@parkcentre.org.uk or by post to: Volunteering, Park Centre, 60 Park Road, Burgess Hill RH15 8ET.
4. Once a satisfactory DBS check and references has been received, and a Volunteer Agreement signed, the individual will be considered to be a Park Centre Burgess Hill Volunteer and assigned to a club / activity. Their progress will be reviewed after 3 months and again after 6 months to see how they are getting on.

Volunteer Role Description

A role description will be issued to all volunteers. It will cover all of the following:

- To assist with delivering the aims and objectives of Park Centre Burgess Hill
- To support the delivery of a programme of weekly activities that are safe and appropriate to the age group.
- To help with the set up and delivery of sessions with young people, assist with clearing up and attend the debrief after the session.
- To help young people present to participate in and enjoy the activities.
- To notify the relevant member of the team if you are unable to attend a session giving as much notice as possible so alternative cover can be provided.
- To familiarise yourself with Park Centre Burgess Hill's policies and procedures on Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity, and Safeguarding, provided on our website.
- To treat information on the children, young people, and their families with the strictest confidence in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Equality and Diversity

Park Centre Burgess Hill is committed to building a diverse organisation that reflects society and the young people it supports. The organisation's Equality & Diversity Statement applies to all recruitment and must be complied with at every stage of the recruitment process. This means that prospective applicants for volunteer positions should not be discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, cultural or religious beliefs, disability, and age. In addition, candidates should not be discriminated against based on pregnancy. We will ensure all volunteers are treated fairly and in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Statement. Park Centre Burgess Hill will not condone, accept, or ignore any forms of discrimination or unacceptable behaviour, whether unfortunate or deliberate. We reserve the right to:

1. Act positively (educate / retrain) with any volunteer who discriminates, where their behaviour is unfortunate.
2. Terminate their role within the organisation if their behaviour is deliberate.

Safeguarding

Park Centre Burgess Hill is committed to safeguarding all those who interact with the charity, whether that be the young people we support, our staff, trustees, or volunteers. Volunteers will be shown our safeguarding policy as part of the induction or onboarding process and be asked to uphold best practice whilst acting on the charity's behalf by avoiding placing themselves in risky situations where their actions may be misinterpreted. Any safeguarding breach will be investigated and taken seriously. In such circumstances, a volunteer may be asked to step back from their role temporarily or permanently.

Part of Park Centre Burgess Hill's role to safeguard the organisation and young people it supports, is to carry out a DBS check and references on all new staff and volunteers. We encourage volunteer applications from a variety of backgrounds (see our Equality and Diversity Statement) which may include someone having a criminal record. This will not necessarily bar them from applying to volunteer with the charity, depending on the nature, circumstances, and background of their offence.

Interacting with Young People (outside of sessions)

Staff and volunteers may live and work in the same communities as the young people they support. This can be geographically and virtually (online).

Paid staff will be issued with Park Centre Burgess Hill emails, work mobile phones and equipment suitable for their role. This will allow them to provide young people, parents and guardians with contact details that are part of their professional role.

Staff and volunteers must ensure that they **DO NOT** share private and personal contact details with young people, parents, and guardians they do not already have a personal relationship with. This includes social media profiles and gamertags or their equivalent.

Care should be taken to ensure all interactions with young people away from the sessions should be managed in an as professional manner as possible. This could include considering familial and friendship relationships and be aware of the interaction of social circles.

Training and Support

To ensure volunteers are appropriately equipped to carry out their role, Park Centre Burgess Hill provides an induction including an overview of the organisation, general guidelines for working with children and volunteer role description. Training can only be offered where it supports the volunteering role.

Park Centre Burgess Hill will:

- Keep volunteers informed of training/support opportunities that could be of help in relation to voluntary work and their personal development.
- Arrange appropriate pre and post session meetings for groups of volunteers to enable them to prepare for activities and discuss successes and any concerns.
- Offer one-to-one feedback sessions for those who help with an ongoing activity, to give the chance to reflect on voluntary work etc. This will help develop their role and achieve the aims of the project and their personal aims.

- Thank you and recognise your voluntary work. We provide references, reports or certificates for volunteers for academic or work purposes.

Health and Safety

Volunteers must take care of themselves and others whilst volunteering with the charity and follow all health and safety advice / instruction given for their role.

Volunteers should:

1. Comply with all health and safety matters.
2. Report any health and safety incidents, accidents or near misses.
3. Not intentionally or recklessly damage, interfere with or misuse equipment, or anything provided for health, safety, and welfare.

Park Centre Burgess Hill will:

- Ensure volunteers are carrying out their role in a safe environment. Risk assessments are carried out for all activities and volunteers should familiarise themselves with these documents.
- Ensure volunteers are covered by the charity's Public Liability Insurance. This cover does not extend to property belonging to volunteers so personal items should always be kept with them or locked away.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

Park Centre Burgess Hill will comply with all legislation (GDPR) that protects volunteer information / data. It will be held securely and confidentially, only sharing access with relevant authorised people within the organisation. This information will not be accessed by others outside Park Centre Burgess Hill. We may be required to share certain information with external authorities should there be a serious incident.

Volunteers may become party to confidential information about certain individuals (young people and their familial situation). Volunteers are required to maintain that confidentiality and not to disclose any of that information externally unless the charity asks them to do so by complying with an external investigation.

Intellectual Property and Copyright

When signing the Volunteer Agreement, volunteers are agreeing to assign copyright to any creative material (intellectual property) created by them in their role as volunteer (whether alone or with any other person) in the course of their duties. Such original design (whether registerable or not) or other work in which copyright may subsist, volunteers agree that they are acting as the agent or nominee of Park Centre Burgess Hill and that the rights in relation to any such design or other work shall vest in and become the property of the charity.

Reimbursement of Expenses

- Park Centre Burgess Hill is grateful to its volunteers who do not claim expenses however, any reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, payable by the charity must be agreed in advance, by the Youth Worker in Charge. Expenses can be claimed for travel to and from an activity, childcare costs or materials needed for an activity. Reimbursement will not be paid without prior agreement and a valid receipt. No payment, other than the reimbursement of agreed out-of-pocket expenses (as per our expenses policy), will be given.

Leaving the Charity

Volunteers can bring their volunteering to a close with the charity at any time by speaking with or writing to their named contact. Park Centre Burgess Hill requests as much notice from the volunteer as possible in order to make alternative arrangements for cover.

Park Centre Burgess Hill may offer an exit interview to monitor:

1. Whether their volunteering experience has been a good one
2. If their expectations were met
3. Any negative reason why a volunteer may be leaving
4. Any learning for the charity

There may be occasions where a volunteer is asked to cease volunteering with the charity. This may be because a role naturally comes to an end, or the volunteer is no longer able to carry out their role to a satisfactory level. In such circumstances, Park Centre Burgess Hill will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to the volunteer. Whatever the situation, the volunteer will be treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

Trustees

Trustees are volunteers who have independent control over, and legal responsibility for Park Centre Burgess Hill's management and administration. They should familiarise themselves with the Charity Commissions guidance for Trustees found here: [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-what-you-need-to-do)

Trustees are only entitled to act as a charity trustee when they have returned a Trustee Application Form, appropriate Safer Recruitment checks completed and have attended a formal meeting of Trustees where they are welcomed as Trustee. They must abide by the policies and procedures of Park Centre Burgess Hill.