



Volunteer Policy

Aim

Flamingo Chicks 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 wish to provide a rich and rewarding volunteer experience that matches volunteers' skills and interests with our current requirements. Volunteers are asked to complete an application form and we willingly offer assistance to anyone who may lack the confidence or basic literacy skills to apply on their own.

Adjustments

Please advise the Volunteer Manager of any adjustments we can make in order to assist you with volunteering. Please also let us know of any special requirements or health conditions so we can ensure your experience with us is as safe and comfortable as possible. Please contact our Volunteer Manager Bethan Guest (bethan@flamingochicks.org or 07725 953735).

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 who work directly with children/vulnerable adults, have access to our records, are considered 'familiar adults' or are in a strategic /leadership role or other sensitive role 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

All volunteers with access to children/vulnerable adults are required to complete an on-line training course before volunteering, and other volunteers are encouraged to undertake this too. This gives a clear explanation of health and safety issues, the child protection policy and procedure and risk assessments amongst other areas. As part of this training, volunteers will be expected to consent to the Volunteer Policy, the Child Protection Policy and the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy. Any volunteer working more than 3 days out of 30 will also need to complete child protection training.

Records of these inductions will be kept and new staff and volunteers asked to sign these records to confirm that they have taken part. Anyone who does not gain 100% in the on-line training will be coached to reach 100%.

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.

We regularly share training and development and best practice tips via email and social media.

Opportunities

We recognise volunteering as a learning and development opportunity and strive to meet volunteers' objectives. Flamingo Chicks offers many different types of volunteering positions and we encourage volunteers to be involved in a diversity of roles. We regularly communicate new opportunities and new ways to be involved to all our volunteers.

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 and this can be found on our website. Volunteers will be expected to share our commitment to equal opportunities.

Health & Safety

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

Supporting all children and vulnerable adults

Volunteers will support a mix of children/adults with varying individual requirements whilst at Flamingo Chicks. Volunteers will be given appropriate overview information on the individual

requirements of children/adults that they will be supporting to ensure that they can best meet their needs.

Volunteers will support all children/adults 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 of 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/carer immediately, to enable them to have the reassurance or medical care that they need.

Physical Support:

Children at Flamingo Chicks may benefit from light touch 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
- Lift a child

Physical Intervention:

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

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/carer 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.
- Volunteers in strategic leadership roles should undertake the NSPCC Child Protection Training.
- If there any concerns about a child/adults welfare, the volunteer should refer this to a Session Leader, the Volunteer Manager or the CEO (Katie Sparkes) – Katie@flamingochicks.org or 07968081152.

Volunteers' 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 Session leader
- If there any concerns about a child/adult's welfare, the volunteer should refer this to a Session Leader, the Volunteer Manager or the CEO (Katie Sparkes) – Katie@flamingochicks.org or 07968081152.

Devices and photography

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, subject to consent from families.

However – please note, volunteers are not permitted to take their own photos or video during sessions. Telephones and devices should not be used during sessions other than in case of emergency.

Problems

If a volunteer has any concerns, they should talk to the Session Leader or the Volunteer Manager. If there are any issues that cannot be discussed with staff then the volunteers should talk to Katie Sparkes, CEO, – Katie@flamingochicks.org or 07968081152.

Date reviewed: January 2023

Bethan Guest, Volunteer Manager