# Volunteer procedures

All volunteers must be aware that for the period of time that they are with Glow Education Project, they are entrusted with responsibilities that are as serious as if they were employed. The only difference is that they might work for fewer hours, and work under the guidance of employees.

Your attention is particularly drawn to the subject of confidentiality. This means that volunteers must always treat the information they become aware of (whether by word of mouth or written, etc.) with the greatest respect and avoid talking/communicating (whether directly or indirectly) about it to other volunteers or anyone outside of Glow Education Project.

Volunteering is an excellent opportunity for the volunteer to gain new skills and experience of working and also assists Glow Education Project in delivering excellent service provisions.

**Introduction to volunteer policy**

Glow Education Project recognises that people choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons including the benefit to themselves and others.

This policy is designed to enable employees to involve volunteers in the most appropriate and effective way as well as avoid potential difficulties.

Glow Education Project welcomes the involvement of people from all sections of the community. We recognise the specific experience and skills that different community members bring and work to prevent any discrimination against individuals.

**Planning**

Staff should decide why they want to use volunteers in their service, defining:

* The nature of the volunteer role(s); this should be defined as specifically as possible, including a list of duties and the name(s) of those they are responsible to.
* The ways the role(s) differ from those of a paid employee – if any.
* The cost implications of involving volunteers, including reimbursing expenses and training costs.

Volunteer roles must always compliment rather than substitute the work of paid employees. Volunteers should not replace the work of employees who have been made redundant. (Although, there may sometimes be unclear cases.)

It is important that in each service using volunteers, there is one employee identified as having lead responsibility for volunteers. Aspects of this role may be delegated to other employees or volunteers if appropriate, provided the named supervisor retains overall responsibility.

The relevant volunteer supervisor must agree each new volunteer role.

**Recruitment and selection**

1. Glow Education Project’s Equal opportunities policy applies to volunteers in all respects.
2. Volunteers will be recruited in ways which encourage the participation of members of different community groups.
3. The selection process includes:
   * + an interview – to ascertain the potential volunteers skills and reasons for volunteering
     + a DBS check, in line with the procedure for recruiting paid staff
     + two references
     + the agreement of service users and the employees who will be responsible for them.

**Support and training**

* It is essential that all volunteers are given regular support, either directly or organised through a supervisor.
* Volunteers should be given appropriate induction and safeguarding training and on-going training as needed. This may be through existing staff training, online and development provision or training especially arranged for one or more volunteers. It is recognised however that the most important training will be ‘on the job’.
* Training/support will be given as needed to employees who supervise volunteers.
* The relevant aspects of Glow Education Project’s Grievance, Disciplinary and/or Complaints procedures apply to volunteers, and they should be told about these as part of their induction, including whom to contact
* Wherever possible, the supervisor should hold an exit interview with volunteers.
* Volunteers will be notified of job vacancies with Glow Education Project.

**Insurance**

Volunteers are covered by Glow Education Project’s insurance in the same way that paid employees are, as they are working on behalf of and under Glow Education Project’s direction, simply on an unpaid basis. The insurance cover is in respect of public liability, vehicle liability, product liability, employers’ liability and personal accident. They are not covered for individual professional indemnity but it is possible for this to be arranged for individual volunteer roles if necessary.

**Health and safety**

Glow Education Project’s responsibility under Health and Safety legislation extends to ensuring the safety and welfare of volunteers. Volunteers must also be made aware of their responsibilities and all relevant Glow Education Project policies.

**Other relevant Glow Education Project policies**

Volunteers should be informed about and trained as necessary in all relevant Glow Education Project policies.

**Expenses**

* Wherever possible, volunteers should have their expenses repaid so that they are not out-of-pocket through volunteering and to prevent anyone being excluded because they cannot afford to volunteer.
* Expenses should be repaid through the appropriate local arrangements, which will generally be the petty cash system for claims below £50.00.

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