Woodview Community Forum

Volunteer Policy

January 2016

Volunteer Application Process
You will be required to fill in an application form, give two references and complete a police check form. This is required by law for anyone working with children or vulnerable people. You are free to visit the centre before you do this to get a better understanding of what happens here and to meet some of the people. You will be given a volunteer interview to discuss if WCF is the right place for you to volunteer and what role you would be best suited for. There will be an induction period when you will be supervised more closely or work with other experienced volunteers or with staff and the first three months (depending on the regularity of the volunteering) will be seen as a probationary period to find out if you are happy being here and if the placement seems appropriate to your needs and the needs of the project.

We accept volunteers on the basis of suitability for role based on role description, clean CRB (can be overlooked at the discretion of trustees), available work and willingness to sign our Equal Opportunities Statement.

WCF activities
Volunteers at WCF can find themselves becoming involved in all sorts of activities and areas of work. The volunteer is not expected to do anything that he/she does not want to do or that is not suited to their abilities. We do however find that those volunteers who enjoy being flexible and are not afraid to step out into new areas, meet with some really exciting and worthwhile tasks and challenges. The main areas of activity at the moment are focussed around the following: - administration, befriending the elderly and families, outreach in the community, practical DIY and decorating and advocacy. These areas may increase to include others, if you would like experience in a different area or have some new skills to offer, please let us know.

Volunteers' Guidelines
These guidelines have been written for the safety of the volunteer and those coming to the centre, to give insight into some of the problems that may arise and to suggest ways of reducing risks whilst working at the project and out in the community. Certain areas and issues may require sensitivity, as detailed below.

Health and Safety
In summary, be aware of the health and safety issues that may arise in any situation. The health and safety of volunteers is a priority. Volunteers must have read and understood the Health and Safety Guidelines for Volunteers.

Equal Opportunities
WCF is committed to the equal treatment of all human beings regardless of their age, sex, race, ethnic or national origins, colour, marital status, sexual orientation, family responsibility, physical and sensory disability, political or religious beliefs and activities. WCF is firmly opposed to any form of discrimination which can be shown to be either directly or indirectly related to a person's values or beliefs. Discriminatory behaviour will be treated very seriously by WCF, in accordance with the disciplinary procedures or the complaints procedures.

Confidentiality
Volunteers are expected to read, understand and comply with the Confidentiality Guidelines for Volunteers. Any action that breaches these guidelines will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure. Again, the complete policy is on record in the office.

Children and Vulnerable People
Volunteers may be working with children and vulnerable people. They are expected to read, understand, and comply with the Child Protection Guidelines for Volunteers. Volunteers are not permitted to work on their own with children, a carer or a parent must always be present. If you are put in a difficult situation eg a parent asks you to mind the child while they pop out to the shop, always say that you are not authorised to do so and you are sorry but the parent must take charge of the child. Do not worry about offending the person – hopefully they will have enough experience of us to know that our intentions are good. If any allegations are made against a volunteer they must report them to the Centre Manager. A written report will be made and filed confidentially for reference and/or the defence of the volunteer on any future occasions.

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
If you would like to consult these procedures, please contact the office.

Support and Supervision
We will seek to offer you support and supervision suitable for your role. This will be discussed with you at your volunteer interview. We are here if you need to talk or have any questions or suggestions. Each volunteer will be offered a slightly different form of support, depending on the volunteering role. WCF recognises the right of the volunteer to withdraw at any time, but we would like to encourage a minimum of commitment of 3 months. WCF takes the welfare of its volunteers very seriously and would appreciate being able to learn from the experiences and opinions of volunteers in order to improve practice and the welfare of other volunteers.