



HYDE PARK SOURCE

Improving health and wellbeing through improving our environment

Volunteer Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the principles and guidelines for volunteering with Hyde Park Source (HPS). The policy ensures all volunteers are treated fairly and consistently. It lets volunteers know what to expect from us and what we expect from them.

Definition of volunteering

[NCVO \(National Council for Voluntary Organisations\)](#) defines volunteering as:

“Any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation and social action. Everyone has the right to volunteer, and volunteering can have significant benefits for individuals”.

Recruitment

We will always recruit volunteers fairly and equitably following our [Equality and Diversity Policy](#). All volunteers will be required to complete an application form and carry out an induction before starting (unless it is agreed that they do a taster session first- only with adult groups).

For anyone volunteering with children and young people, two-character referees are requested (these will always be followed up) and an enhanced DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) check with access to the barred list is processed.

For any Volunteer with previous convictions HPS asks for disclosure on a separate form, including details of any unspent convictions, or convictions, which would show up on their DBS check. We take things on a case-by-case basis, completing an individual Risk Management Plan and Risk Assessment to see whether we feel the offence can be safely managed in terms of the role the person has applied for.

Equality and Diversity

It is our policy to recruit volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and experience to reflect the communities we work within. There is a lot to learn from a range of perspectives, and diversity helps to make HPS effective in meeting our aims. We want everyone to feel valued for his or her time, effort, skills and differences.

We monitor our progress towards diversity annually with our Management Committee.

We aim to provide appropriate support to volunteers who are disabled or have other additional needs, as organisation resources and sites allow. We often encourage peer support within groups, encouraging a more sustainable support network to form.

All volunteers are required to act in accordance with our [Equality & Diversity policy](#).

Behaviour

We expect all volunteers to always comply with the Volunteer Agreement.

Hyde Park Source has developed a set of principles to guide our work these are centred around the following 5 headings:

- Connect
- Be Active
- Take Notice
- Keep Learning
- Give

These values inform everything we do, from the decisions we make to the way we behave in the workplace. We expect that everyone working at or with Hyde Park Source conducts themselves in a manner in keeping with these values.

Discrimination in our groups

Hyde Park Source is fully committed to fostering a culture of support and solidarity for all Volunteers. We stand against any form of discrimination within our groups and strive to create an environment where everyone feels a genuine sense of belonging. We are dedicated to ensuring that all Volunteers know they are supported, and that we have their back.

For more detailed information on our approach to discrimination, please refer to the [HPS Culture Around Discrimination](#)

If any instances of discrimination occur within our groups, staff will follow a restorative process designed to address the issue and make things right.

Support and Training

We will provide all new volunteers with an induction, which will be carried out by a staff member, and any role specific formal training. All Volunteers have a named person they can approach if needed and receive on-going support either through group or individual support from the Volunteer Co-ordinator or the Project Officer.

Expenses

We want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteering at HPS and that volunteers do not end up out of pocket. We will pay any reasonable out of pocket expenses for travel (cheapest form of transport up to the price of a Leeds Day Rider). If a Volunteer is required to help for a full day or over a mealtime, a **maximum amount of £8** will be paid to cover the cost of a sandwich and a hot or soft drink. To make a claim, relevant receipts must be provided and given to a staff member.

Resolving Problems

The relationship between HPS and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the organisation is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to its users (outlined in the [Volunteer Agreement, which is available in your volunteer induction pack](#)).

It is important that Volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to the service. Therefore, if your role as a Volunteer does not meet with HPS standards, here is how it will be dealt with:

1. Initially a meeting, Teams or phone call with the Volunteer Co-ordinator will be arranged, who will explain the concerns.
2. If this does not resolve the concern, the Volunteer Co-ordinator will ask for a second opinion from the Project Co-ordinator.
3. If your volunteer contribution still does not comply with our standards, then there are two options
 - a. If another volunteering opportunity is available that may be appropriate for you the Volunteer Co-ordinator will take the relevant action.
 - b. If there are no other opportunities or it is not appropriate for you to remain at HPS then we will bring your volunteering with the project to an end.

At all times you will be able to freely state your case and have a friend to accompany you.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your volunteer role, you should:

1. Informally
 - a. Explain your issue or concern with your Project Officer
 - b. If that does not resolve the concern, then a meeting with the Volunteer Co-ordinator should be arranged
2. Formally
 - a. By following our [Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy](#).
 - b. At all times you will be able to freely state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

Moving On

We explain the levels of commitment needed for different roles and ask volunteers to be mindful of this. However, we understand that many volunteers may have to prioritise other things (e.g. care for dependents/paid work). We ask Volunteers to be honest and ask for support if needed. If volunteering as a 'Support Volunteer' please, try to give as much notice

as possible to ensure smooth running of the project. We ask volunteers to give feedback on their experience via an informal chat, online or over the phone, so we can continually improve people's experience here.

We are more than happy to recognise the time, effort and skills given and gained at Hyde Park Source through a reference. Please email us before giving out our contact details so we know to expect a reference request.

Health and Safety

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all volunteers on our premises and for our projects. We will give volunteers appropriate instruction, training and supervision to foster a safe and healthy environment.

Volunteers should take all necessary steps and follow advice to ensure their own and others' safety at all times.

Any accident/incident or potentially dangerous circumstances that occurs in the course of your volunteering should be reported immediately to the Project Officer or another member of HPS staff.

Should a volunteers' commitment become detrimental to their own or others health and safety, HPS has the right to decide if it is appropriate for a volunteer to reduce, pause or cease their volunteer contribution as a duty of care.

Insurance

HPS has a valid employee's liability insurance policy which covers volunteering activities.

Confidentiality

All Volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff. HPS offers opportunities to a range of adults and children and at times Volunteers may have access to an individual's personal information, in this case it is imperative that this information remains confidential.

All volunteers must adhere to the HPS policies and guidelines on:

- [Health and safety](#)
- [Child protection/Safeguarding](#)
- [Equality and diversity](#)
- [Data protection](#)

The above policies and guidelines are covered in your induction and can be found in the Volunteer Handbook.