

Volunteer Recruitment, Management and Safeguarding Policy

Version 1

Version Control				
Version	Date	Content	Manager Approval	Board Approval
V1	Aug 2026	New Policy	G Phillips	M Howlett

1. Purpose

Cheshire Young Carers recognises that volunteers are essential to achieving our charitable objectives. We are committed to recruiting, supporting and retaining volunteers in a fair, safe and inclusive manner while ensuring the highest standards of safeguarding for the children and young people we support.

This policy sets out how volunteers are recruited, inducted, supervised, supported and expected to conduct themselves when undertaking activities on behalf of the charity.

Our primary responsibility is always the safety, welfare and best interests of children and vulnerable people.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all volunteers;
- volunteer trustees where appropriate;
- sessional volunteers;
- student placements;
- work experience placements;
- anyone undertaking unpaid work on behalf of the charity.

It should be read alongside the Charity's:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Artificial Intelligence Policy

3. Principles

The charity will:

- recruit volunteers fairly and transparently;
- provide equal opportunities;
- operate safer recruitment practices;
- protect children from harm;
- support volunteers through appropriate induction and training;
- recognise and value volunteer contributions;
- provide appropriate supervision;
- investigate concerns promptly;
- maintain confidentiality.

4. Equal Opportunities

The charity welcomes volunteers from diverse backgrounds.

Selection decisions will be based upon:

- suitability for the role;
- skills and experience;
- values;
- safeguarding considerations.

We will not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or any other protected characteristic unless a lawful occupational requirement applies.

5. Volunteer Recruitment

Recruitment will normally include:

- completion of a volunteer application form;
- an informal interview or discussion;
- identity verification;
- references where appropriate;
- safeguarding assessment;
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where required;
- agreement to abide by charity policies.

Volunteers will receive a role description outlining expectations and responsibilities.

6. Safer Recruitment

Because the charity works with vulnerable children and young people, safer recruitment principles will always be followed.

Depending upon the role, this may include:

- enhanced DBS checks with children's barred list checks where legally eligible;
- verification of identity;
- references;
- discussion of previous experience;
- assessment of suitability to work with children;
- safeguarding declaration;
- right to volunteer in the UK where applicable.

No volunteer may begin regulated activity until the appropriate recruitment checks have been completed.

7. Induction

All volunteers will receive an induction appropriate to their role.

This will normally include:

- introduction to the charity;
- safeguarding responsibilities;
- health and safety;
- confidentiality;

- data protection;
- information security;
- equality and diversity;
- reporting concerns;
- role expectations.

8. Training

Volunteers will receive appropriate training relevant to their responsibilities.

This may include:

- safeguarding children;
- recognising abuse and neglect;
- whistleblowing;
- first aid (where required);
- communication skills;
- behaviour management;
- information security;
- cyber security awareness.

Refresher training will be provided where appropriate.

9. Working with Children

The welfare of the child is always paramount.

Volunteers must:

- treat every child with dignity and respect;
- listen to children appropriately;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- always follow safeguarding procedures;
- report concerns immediately;
- work within their competence;
- respect diversity and inclusion.

Volunteers should never place themselves in situations where their actions could be misinterpreted.

10. Professional Boundaries

Volunteers must always maintain appropriate professional relationships.

They must not:

- develop inappropriate personal relationships with children;
- exchange personal contact details unless authorised;
- communicate with children through personal social media accounts;
- give personal gifts or money;
- transport children in private vehicles unless specifically authorised;
- arrange to meet children outside authorised activities;
- share inappropriate information;
- use offensive or discriminatory language.

11. Appropriate Conduct

Volunteers are expected to:

- act professionally;
- be reliable;
- be punctual;
- respect confidentiality;
- follow instructions;
- support colleagues;
- represent the charity positively;
- behave honestly and with integrity.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

12. Safeguarding Responsibilities

Every volunteer has a responsibility to safeguard children.

If a volunteer:

- witnesses abuse;
- receives a disclosure;
- suspects neglect;
- has concerns about another adult;
- believes a child is at risk;

they must report this immediately using the charity's Safeguarding Policy.

Volunteers should never investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

13. Lone Working

Where possible, volunteers should avoid working alone with children.

If lone working cannot be avoided:

- appropriate risk assessments must be completed;
- managers must be aware;
- communication arrangements must be agreed;
- safeguarding procedures must be followed.

14. Photography and Social Media

Volunteers must not:

- take photographs of children using personal devices;
- publish information identifying children;
- discuss service users online;
- share confidential information on social media.

Only authorised images may be used in accordance with consent procedures.

15. Confidentiality

Volunteers may have access to confidential information.

They must:

- keep information secure;
- only access information required for their role;
- never discuss confidential matters outside the charity;
- comply with data protection legislation.

Confidentiality continues after volunteering ends.

16. Health and Safety

Volunteers must:

- take reasonable care of themselves and others;
- report accidents;
- follow risk assessments;
- use equipment safely;
- comply with health and safety procedures.

17. Expenses

Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed in accordance with the charity's Expenses Policy.

Claims **MUST** be supported by receipts wherever possible.

18. Supervision and Support

Volunteers will receive appropriate support through:

- named supervisors;
- regular check-ins;
- feedback;
- opportunities to discuss concerns;
- additional training where required.

Constructive feedback is encouraged to support volunteers in their roles.

19. Recognition and Retention

The charity values the contribution of volunteers and aims to retain them by:

- providing a welcoming and inclusive environment;
- recognising achievements;
- offering training and development opportunities;
- listening to volunteer feedback;
- providing meaningful roles;
- celebrating volunteer contributions;
- communicating openly and respectfully.

Where possible, volunteers will be consulted about improvements to the volunteer programme.

20. Resolving Concerns

If concerns arise regarding a volunteer's conduct or performance, the charity will seek to resolve issues fairly and promptly.

Depending on the circumstances this may include:

- informal discussion;
- additional supervision or training;
- temporary suspension from volunteering while concerns are investigated;
- ending the volunteer arrangement where necessary to protect children, staff or the charity.

Safeguarding concerns will always take precedence.

21. Ending a Volunteer Role

A volunteer may leave at any time by informing their supervisor.

The charity may end a volunteering arrangement where:

- safeguarding concerns arise;
- recruitment checks are unsatisfactory;
- conduct falls below expected standards;
- confidentiality has been breached;
- the volunteer is unable to fulfil the role;
- organisational requirements change.

Where appropriate, an exit discussion may be offered to gather feedback.

22. Whistleblowing

Volunteers are encouraged to raise genuine concerns about:

- safeguarding;
- misconduct;
- unlawful behaviour;
- fraud;
- health and safety;
- malpractice.

Concerns will be handled in accordance with the charity's Whistleblowing Policy.

Volunteers raising concerns in good faith will not be treated unfairly.

23. Policy Review

The Board of Trustees will review this policy annually, or sooner if:

- legislation changes;
- safeguarding guidance changes;
- significant incidents occur;
- organisational needs changes

Volunteer Code of Conduct

All volunteers are expected to:

- Put the welfare of children first.
- Act professionally and respectfully.

- Maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Follow safeguarding procedures.
- Treat everyone fairly and without discrimination.
- Protect personal information.
- Follow charity policies and procedures.
- Report concerns immediately.
- Behave in a way that maintains public confidence in the charity.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in the volunteer role ending.

Policy Statement

Cheshire Young Carers believes that volunteers make a vital contribution to improving the lives of children and young people. We are committed to creating a safe, welcoming and supportive volunteering environment that reflects our values of integrity, inclusion, respect and safeguarding.

Every volunteer shares responsibility for protecting children, maintaining professional standards and upholding the reputation of the charity.