



Little Village Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Little Village exists:

1. To promote sustainable living through the re-use of baby clothes and equipment
2. To share resources between families, creating a local circular economy and helping everyone give their kids the best possible start in life
3. To relieve poverty and improve living standards in Tooting by providing good quality second hand baby clothes and equipment to families in need

In line with this mission Little Village seeks to involve volunteers to:

- contribute to the delivery of our services
- ensure our services meet the needs of our clients
- provide new skills and perspectives
- form our management committee
- increase our contact with the local community we serve

Principles

This Volunteering Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Little Village will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the work of Little Village
- Little Village expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work
- Little Village recognises 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.
- Will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible

Practice guidelines

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of the involvement of volunteers. More detailed information, including copies of the various documents referred to, is provided in Little Villages' Volunteers Handbook.

Recruitment

Recruitment of volunteers will generally be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with the Little Village Equal Opportunities Policy. Positive action in recruitment may be used where appropriate.

All prospective volunteers will be asked to complete a simple registration form appropriate to the role they are applying for and interviewed to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their potential might be realised.

Every volunteer role will undergo a risk assessment. For volunteer roles which involve 'regulated work' such as care giving and/or sustained and direct contact with children or vulnerable adults, volunteers will be subject to an Enhanced DBS Check. Little Village has a legal obligation to ensure that volunteers are not barred from working with children or vulnerable groups. Potential volunteers for such roles will be required to join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme, and scheme records and/or disclosure records will be accessed. This information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and will not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work.

Volunteer agreements and voluntary work outlines

Each volunteer will have a volunteer agreement establishing what Little Village undertakes to provide them. In addition, they will agree to a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking. Neither of these documents is a contract; Little Village has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteers. Each volunteer will also receive a Volunteers Handbook.

Induction and training

All volunteers will receive an induction into Little Village and their own area of work. Training will be provided as appropriate. Where possible volunteers will be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff.

Support

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. They will be provided with regular supervision to feed back on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

The volunteer's voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Little Village and its work.

Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Little Village's insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on Little Village's behalf.

Expenses

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. Out-of-pocket expenses, if required, will be reimbursed, including expenses for travel (see guidance in Volunteers Handbook). In order to claim expenses, an expenses form must be completed and submitted to the management committee.

Health and safety

Volunteers are covered by Little Village's Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which is in the Volunteers Handbook.

Equal opportunities

Little Village operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. A copy is in the Volunteers Handbook. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our equal opportunities policy.

Problems

Little Village has a policy to help deal with grievances that volunteers may have. In line with this policy volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with their named contact at any time.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

Signed:

Reviewed: