

Porch Project Volunteer Policy

Firstly it has to be said that without the work of a volunteer team the Porch Project would not be able to facilitate such a large youth work project and we value every volunteer. Secondly if you are reading this form it means that you have decided to start a journey with the porch project or are considering the journey of being a volunteer with us so that is really exciting.

We recognise that everyone benefits from the involvement of volunteers:

- The paid staff in the way that we are able to increase the range and quality of opportunities on offer.
- The children and young people in having access to these increased opportunities and access to a diverse group of adult role-models.
- The volunteers for a variety of reasons including gaining experience relevant to career choices, increasing their social circles, gaining confidence or quite simply having the chance to make a positive contribution.

The Porch Project welcomes anyone who offers to be a volunteer with the Project subject to initial interview, references, CRB check and completion of a four week trial we refer to as "shadowing". We believe that provided the prospective volunteer has a genuine interest in and commitment to working with young people, the Project is diverse enough to be able to accommodate most people regardless of their level of experience or ability.

The Porch Project should be keen to "muck in" with some of the less glamorous but nonetheless important things that need to be done. While we would never use a volunteer to replace a paid member of staff, we encourage volunteers to get the most out of their experience of volunteering and strive to supply appropriate support and training to enable them to do so. Here at the Porch Project we also try to remember that everyone has a level they feel comfortable with and endeavour to ensure that no volunteer ever feels that they are being pushed into anything they may feel uneasy or unconfident about. The Project has managed to attract a large and diverse group of volunteers from different backgrounds who bring with them different skills and hopefully reflect the realities of life beyond the confines of the Project.

A volunteer will be required to sign a number of documents that shows what is expected of them as a porch project volunteer both in and outside the project. The volunteer document will be drawn up by the youth work co-ordinator and then given to the chairman of the management committee who will then submit it for approval by the management committee.

Porch project volunteers are to be given copies of all of the Projects policies and procedures relevant to their involvement. These include Child Protection, Bullying, Health & Safety, and Confidentiality, fire and safety policy and Complaints Procedure. These documents clearly outline our position in relation to the implications for our practice. We believe that adherence to the guidelines and principles outlined in these policies are essential to the promotion of best practice with the children and young people we work with.

Volunteers will also receive relevant materials giving them information on the work of the Project including our Mission Statement. The youth work Co-Ordinator will have on a laptop, information about the Project for volunteers including copies of our business plan, annual reviews and annual work plans.