

# Volunteer Policy



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## Appendix 1

### Introduction

Walkergate Children's Centre offers a selection of services to families living predominately within the Walker, Walkergate and Daisy Hill Estate. These include full time nursery, parent and toddlers, playgroup, outreach support along with training opportunities with crèche support.

Walkergate Children's Centre recognises the valuable contribution made by volunteers from the local community and believes that by supporting volunteers the centre can contribute to their personal development. We can do this by providing volunteers with the opportunities to gain experience working in the centre and providing supervision, training and mentoring.



**Volunteer Centre**  
Newcastle

The skills and experiences that volunteers can bring to the centre represent a valuable resource. By working in partnership, volunteers and staff at Walkergate Children's Centre can make a difference, from which users of the centre, staff and volunteers can benefit.

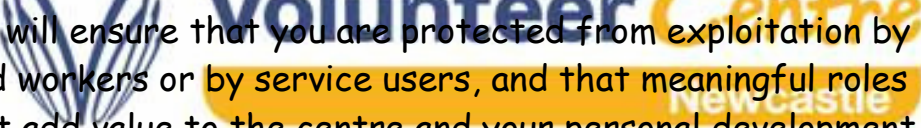
All volunteers within Walkergate Children's Centre will as far as reasonably possible have the same rights as other workers within the centre including the payment of out of pocket expenses and access to relevant policies and procedures etc. However as volunteers are not employees they will not accrue the employment and pension rights that employees do.

## Values and Aims

Walkergate Children's Centre respects the unique worth of every person and encourages people to achieve their full potential. We aim to work with parents, parents to be and children. It is expected that parents will share the same values and aims in relation to other parents.

Walkergate Children's Centre is committed to equality of opportunity for all involved in the centre. This is fundamental to achieving the highest standards within the centre as a whole. Volunteers will therefore be provided with equal access to jobs and training opportunities without discrimination.

## Walkergate Children's Centre Commitment to you



We will ensure that you are protected from exploitation by paid workers or by service users, and that meaningful roles that add value to the centre and your personal development are identified. Volunteers to not act as a substitute or replacement to paid work.

Walkergate Children's Centre will provide you with accurate information about the centre and the individual projects within it and the ways in which you may contribute.

As a volunteer you have the right to say NO without feeling guilty. We will listen to what you have to say and treat you fairly and without discrimination.

You can expect constructive feedback with regards to your contribution to the centre. The work that you do will be valued and appreciated by Walkergate Children's Centre staff.

Any approved expenses incurred to you by you during the course of your work will be reimbursed.

### **Your Commitment to Walkergate Children's Centre**

Walkergate Children's Centre expects volunteers to support the aims and objectives of the centre and follow the procedures that are put in place to achieve those objectives.

We expect volunteers to be reliable and punctual, carrying out your work to the best of your abilities. If you are not available for work we would like you to notify us as soon as possible to allow alternative arrangements to be made.

The rights of those that you come into contact with throughout the centre will be respected; you will not discriminate in any way against any person and will respect the need for confidentiality regarding any information relating to families.

To facilitate communication and best practise within the centre you will be required to undertake training.

### **Engaging Volunteers**

We aim to have an open, fair and inclusive policy. All potential volunteers will after the first expression of interest meet with Gail Jamison, the Centre Manager. This will be an informal meeting designed to inform prospective volunteers of the opportunities available along with the process of becoming a volunteer, before volunteering can begin. Volunteers will also be asked to provide some information about their experiences to date and the roles they are interested in.

Volunteers will be supplied with sufficient information to enable them to make an informed decision about whether to undertake voluntary work for Walkergate Children's Centre.

All volunteers will be required to complete Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks prior to commencing work within the centre. This process takes account of the centres responsibility of other families accessing the centre. We believe that children entrusted within our care should be in a safe and welcoming environment that encourages them to thrive. By completing these checks we can demonstrate to parents our commitment to ensuring that a safe environment exists for their children. Any subsequent safeguarding registrations will be adhered to in respect of the centre's safeguarding adults and children policy. Information regarding the Local Safeguarding Board will be shared with volunteers once it becomes available in July 2010. It will be the responsibility of the individual volunteer to register with the LSB.

### Continued Development

Walkergate Children's Centre is committed to ensuring that all involved with the centre are equipped to undertake the tasks requested of them.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to attend training sessions workshops, which will develop both their interest in volunteering and ensuring that best practice is always applied.

Volunteers will be expected to complete induction training prior to volunteering. The elements are Walkergate Children's Centre Awareness, Child Protection, Confidentiality and

Equality and Diversity training. The Management team will provide support around these areas.

### **Expenses.**

Walkergate Children's Centre will reimburse volunteers for reasonable travel expenses and other miscellaneous expenses incurred throughout their work at the centre. Expenses should only be incurred once prior approval has been obtained from the Manager.

### **Policies**

All volunteers must be familiar with the following policies; NO Smoking, Drug and Alcohol, Health and Safety Policy, Equality and diversity.



### **Insurance**

Volunteers will be covered by the same level of insurance as paid workers.

### **Smoking Policy**

Volunteers will be required to follow the same procedures as paid staff. Volunteers should not smoke whilst on duty either inside or on the centre premises and should never smoke in the presence of children.


## Drug and alcohol policy

Volunteers should not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst working as a volunteer within Walkergate Children's Centre.

## Health and Safety

All volunteers must familiarise themselves with the procedures in operation at the Walkergate Children's Centre and any other building or venue associated with the centre. Volunteers must not engage in any activity, which may adversely affect the well being of themselves or anyone else.

## Volunteers whilst in receipt of benefits.



It is each individual volunteers responsibility to advise all relevant agencies that they are working as a volunteer e.g. employment service, benefits agency that they are working as a volunteer. Walkergate Children's Centre accepts that volunteers that are in receipt of benefits may have to give up their voluntary work with 48 hours notice in order to attend an interview or to take up work.

## Problem Solving

Occasionally volunteers may find that there is an issue that they wish to raise formally. In these circumstances the volunteer should put their complaint in writing to Gail Jamison (Centre Manager). If the complaint is about the Centre

Manager it should be given to Dee Teasdale (Head Teacher). The issue can then be discussed confidentially and resolved.

Where a complaint is made against a volunteer, the Centre Manager will deal with the issue in the first instance. If the complaint is of a serious nature the volunteer may be requested to take leave until the issue is resolved.

This policy is not a contract of employment; it should not be regarded as such and is not binding by either side.



Revised: March 2010 Gail Jamison



## Appendix 1 - Volunteering - General Principles.

Walkergate Children's values the contribution that volunteers make to the delivery and development of the centre.

The process outlines in the attached flowchart, as well as the general principles are intended to reflect the position of responsibility that volunteers have, and to ensure that they and the beneficiaries of their services and support are protected.

The general principles below also help to ensure consistency in the treatment of volunteers during the recruitment process as well as ensuring that they have the correct training and induction to enable them to make a positive contribution from the outset.

These principles also help to safeguard the credibility of the centre and all staff and volunteers who are responsible for the delivery of services, by ensuring that all volunteers are suitable for the role they undertake.

Criminal Records bureau Checks (CRB) will be carried out for all volunteers to ensure that the applicant is suitable for work with children. If the CRB check is returned with a trace, the matter will be discussed with the applicant. The nature of the offence, the seriousness and the timing will be considered to determine if the applicant can undertake duties at the centre. Some offences may mean that the applicant is unable to work

with children, or to work in positions where they will have unsupervised access to children.

Prospective Volunteers may be required to undergo a social services Department check. Any information returned will be used as part of an assessment of the suitability of the applicant to undertake voluntary roles within the centre, in some instances the applicant may not be able to work with children or in positions where they have unsupervised access to children.

Volunteers will also be asked about their health to ensure that there are no physical or mental health problems, which would put either them or the families, or children they work with at risk. Where there is any doubt about a volunteer's ability to undertake a specific role due to a concern about health, a GP reference may be sought.



No one can work or volunteer in the centre until the CRB and Social Services checks have been returned.

Even existing users of the service cannot undertake new volunteering role until police clearance and social service checks are back.

It is essential that applicants disclose anything and everything that is relevant. In the event that an applicant does not disclose and a trace is found the failure to disclose will be a significant factor in the assessment of the suitability.



WALKERGATE  
**Children's Centre**

**Volunteer Interest Form.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please tell us briefly why you would like to become a volunteer at Walkergate Early Years Centre



I am interested in working in the following (please tick):

- Parent and toddlers
- Creche
- Holiday club
- Play scheme
- Courses

Any other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

Date interest shown: _____ Meeting arranged for: _____ at _____
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**Please return this form to: Gail Jamison, Centre Manager,  
Walkergate Early Years Centre, Shields Road, Walkergate,  
Newcastle. NE6 4XW. Tel: 0191 263 2411.**