



Volunteer Policy

Section	Title	Page
1	Purpose	1
2	Scope	2
3	Target Audience	2
4	Responsibilities	2
5	Definition	3
6	Commitment to Volunteers	3
7	Volunteer Agreement	4
8	Volunteer Recruitment	4
9	Disclosure of convictions	4
10	Support	5
11	Resolving Problems	5
12	Confidentiality	5
13	Equal Opportunities	6
14	Ending Involvement	6
15	References	6
16	Health and Safety	6
17	Expenses	7

1	Purpose	
---	---------	--

It is the policy of Parents Opening Doors) hereafter known as PODS to recognise the significant and valuable role that volunteers have in creating and implementing our services. Volunteering should also be a worthwhile and rewarding experience for volunteers, who are an important resource for our community. This document defines the term 'volunteer' and sets out our principles and objectives with regard to working with volunteers. It provides a framework of best practice and procedures which we will follow when appointing, managing and supporting our volunteers. We will hold a copy of this document and will let volunteers know where it is held.



Volunteer Policy

2	Scope	
---	-------	--

The policy covers the Board of Trustees, volunteers, persons interested in volunteering and persons who come in to contact with volunteers and other interested parties.

3	Target Audience	
---	-----------------	--

The intended audience for this policy are volunteers, people wanting to volunteer and the Board of Trustees for PODS

4	Responsibilities	
---	------------------	--

The safety, wellbeing and support of volunteers engaged in carrying out different roles with PODS shall at all times be regarded as a top priority by the Board of Trustees and this emphasis shall be communicated throughout PODS in order to ensure its understanding.

Board of Trustees:

- Sets risk management goals, adopt annual operating objectives and budgets with risk management included.
- Manage PODS service provision, including any assets.
- Review operational reports to determine compliance and future priorities.
- Ensure compliance with policies and standards imposed by national organisations or accrediting organisations (DFE, LA, Charity Commission and or any other potential funders).
- Periodically reviews all staff & volunteers roles, responsibilities and absence cover within the charity.
- Adopt and establishes policies and standards.
- Review PODS insurance requirements periodically.
- Review PODS risk management plan annually.
- Oversees all financial management of the charity
- Are the point of contact for complaints and resolving problems

A full description of responsibilities for volunteers and trustees in terms of volunteering can be found in the Volunteer handbook

Volunteer Policy

5	Definition	
---	------------	--

Volunteers are individuals or groups who offer us their time, experience, knowledge and skills without financial gain, helping us to achieve our service objectives, or with the aim of providing a benefit to our community. There is **no** legal contract of employment or services between PODS and its volunteers.

Volunteers do not have to commit to a given number of hours. If we ask volunteers to work a given number of hours, this will be at their discretion and we will not penalise them if they are unable to do so. However if they have agreed to undertake a task, for example a trip or activity, they should endeavour to do so.

6	Commitment to Volunteers	
---	--------------------------	--

- We will apply our Equality and Diversity Policy to the recruitment and management of volunteers
- We will provide a volunteer agreement to all volunteers
- We do not regard volunteers as unpaid employees and will not expect volunteers to undertake inappropriate responsibilities or be used in a situation where a paid member of staff or a person who provides services under contract to the Council or any other funder should be used
- We will seek to offer induction, suitable training and support for volunteers
- We will consult and involve volunteers on issues concerning their volunteering activity
- We will make information available for volunteers to enable them to claim expenses. Any expenses must be agreed in advance or they will not be covered
- We will provide appropriate public liability insurance cover for all volunteers whilst they are engaged in a volunteer activity with us
- We expect all volunteers to behave reasonably and not bring PODS into disrepute
- We will review our guidance every two years
- We will update our guidance in line with any changes in the law.
- We will be inclusive of all.

7	Volunteer Agreement	
---	---------------------	--

We will record the arrangements for individual volunteer activities in a volunteer agreement. This is a description of the arrangement between PODS and a volunteer



Volunteer Policy

for the work they do. It outlines what a volunteer can expect from FVP and what they agree to undertake. The agreement is **not** a contract of employment or a legally binding document.

8	Volunteer Recruitment	
---	-----------------------	--

Recruitment of volunteers will generally be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with PODS Equality and Diversity Policy. Positive action in recruitment may be used where appropriate.

People interested in becoming volunteers with PODS will be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate contact person. They will be given an information pack including general information about the organisation and specific information on the volunteer post in which they are interested.

Where appropriate all volunteers will be asked to complete a simple registration form appropriate to the role that they are applying for and to supply two references. Where applicants are not placed in the role applied for, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles.

Every volunteer role will undergo a risk assessment. For volunteer roles which involve 'regulated work' PODS has a legal obligation to ensure that volunteers are not barred from working with children or vulnerable groups.

9	Disclosure of convictions	
---	---------------------------	--

Having a criminal record will not be a barrier to volunteering with PODS unless the Board of Trustees considers that a conviction means that the applicant is unsuitable. Under the requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and any other relevant legislation there may be a need to ask all volunteers to disclose any 'unspent' convictions.

10	Support	
----	---------	--

All volunteers will have a named person who shall be responsible for:

- Providing the volunteer with a written description of the volunteering role outlining specific and general tasks, responsibilities and who they will report

Volunteer Policy

- to;
- Organising a planned induction to the organisation, including explaining relevant policies and procedures (including in relation to dealings with other people) and the duties and tasks agreed;
 - Ensuring that volunteers are aware of their agreed responsibilities with regards to confidentiality policy and social media policy;
 - Ensuring that volunteers have adequate work space, equipment and services necessary to perform their tasks effectively and safely including personal identification where appropriate;
 - Arranging a short, timetabled trial period during which new volunteers will receive close support and mutual feedback, including the chance for them to feed back their views; and
 - Providing regular support
 - Making sure that the role and activities are reviewed

11	Resolving Problems	
----	--------------------	--

We hope that you will have a very enjoyable experience volunteering with us. However if your role as a volunteer does not meet with your expectations or with the commitments we have made to you, we want you to feel comfortable about letting us know. First of all, talk to the person who leads the team where you volunteer and he or she should be able to sort it out with you before it becomes a problem. If you do not feel this will resolve things you can speak to the Secretary to the Board of Trustees. The volunteer handbook also details problem solving ways of working.

12	Confidentiality	
----	-----------------	--

Information that volunteers have access to whilst volunteering is confidential. They must not give away any information about employees, members, trustees, parents/ carers and their children, members of the public, PODS finances or any other PODS business either directly or by talking to someone. Particular care and confidentiality is very important where sensitive information is involved. This must be read in conjunction with PODS policy on confidentiality.

Safeguarding will be covered in volunteer training. If a volunteer finds out something that might put a child/ young person or vulnerable adult at risk, then they must report this to the named safeguarding officer. In this instance confidentiality may need to be breached.



Volunteer Policy

13	Equal Opportunities	
----	---------------------	--

PODS complies with all policies on equal opportunity and customer care. We aim actively to promote diversity and equality of opportunity for both young people and staff. We do not discriminate against people on ground of race, sex, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or disability. We would expect volunteers to support us in following these policies and not to make remarks or comments about, or to, young people or colleagues that may be considered offensive.

14	Ending Involvement	
----	--------------------	--

- Either the charity or the volunteer can end the volunteering agreement by providing 7 days written notice.
- In all cases we will provide the volunteer with details of the reasons why their involvement is no longer needed.

15	References	
----	------------	--

If asked, either during a volunteer's time with us or when it ends, we will endeavour to supply a reference, where this is possible, based on a volunteer's service with PODS, indicating the skills and knowledge acquired as well as personal qualities observed.

16	Health and Safety	
----	-------------------	--

PODS has valid insurance cover so that volunteers are covered by public liability insurance, and a Health and Safety Policy which you are advised to read. It covers the volunteering activities you will be doing. We will keep reminding you of our Health and Safety Policy and give simple instructions on how to perform each task safely. We have clear procedures for accidents and emergencies and will always have a first aider on field sites.

17	Expenses	
----	----------	--



Volunteer Policy

We will reimburse physical out of pocket expenses in line with our expenses policy and volunteers are responsible for declaring this to any other parties such as the Department of Work and Pensions where applicable.

Approval Date: 11/11/2019

Approval Name: Phil Gillum

Position: Trustee

File Ref: PODS-CP-000

Revision: 1.2

Date of Issue: 11/11/2019

Page: 7 of 7

Registered Charity Number 1150871