

Developing Volunteering in Devon A Draft Strategy



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BELIEVE IN CHILDREN



*Draft Volunteer Development Strategy
Debs Rylands May 2011*

Contents...

1. Introduction	_____	
2. Aims	_____	
3. Volunteer Management Structure	_____	
4. Identifying Volunteer Roles	_____	
5. Core Skills and Knowledge	5.1 Recruitment and Selection	
	5.2 Induction	Towards volunteer led sessions
6. Supporting Volunteers	_____	
7. Accreditation	_____	
8. Reaching Skilled Volunteers	_____	
9. Supporting Staff Supporting Volunteers	_____	
10. Gaining volunteer support for working with paid staff	_____	
11. Strategies for effective teamwork	_____	
12. Development of an induction programme for staff working with volunteers.	_____	

1. Introduction

Barnardo's has an excellent reputation of working with volunteers across the UK with almost 13000 volunteers recorded as helping across a range of settings within children's services, fundraising and retail.

The Barnardo's Devon Volunteering Development strategy is for all of our children's centres to impact on the involvement and development of volunteer involvement, development and retention.

This strategy will work alongside an implementation plan which identifies our strategic volunteer requirements, support areas within centres and supporting organisations and resources.

Volunteers are vital. They increase the Barnardo's capacity to meet the needs of children and their families, locally and nationally. They provide a wide range of relevant skills and perspectives, enabling us to extend our scale and reach in a time of economic uncertainty.

Volunteering must be an enriching experience, with clear benefits to the volunteer and to our Children's Centres.

2. Aims

We are working towards a dedicated volunteer management structure across our Children's Services in Devon which reflects the needs of our volunteers and Barnardo's need for a skilled volunteer workforce to support our services.

This will be supported by a single induction and training system, underpinned by the **Core Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (Common Core)' framework**, for all new volunteers and standard training and development opportunities for staff and volunteers ensuring a consistent approach to our volunteering programme and the opportunities afforded to volunteers.

The overall aim of the volunteering strategy is to have a fully trained volunteer base able to provide additional services and added value to Barnardo's Children's Centres across Devon. Volunteers will enable us to provide services which otherwise would not be offered and these volunteers will be effectively supported by staff to deliver quality service,

With a view towards a supported staff and volunteer base, a staff training strategy need to be put into place to ensure that staff understand how to support volunteers and that they, in turn, feel supported.

Volunteering in our services will be diverse and inclusive. Volunteering opportunities will be opened up to all groups and individuals with a focus on minority groups in order to access the hard to reach potential volunteers.

The volunteering strategy will be delivered by the following:



Aims (continued)

Developing volunteering opportunities

We will engage with people from all sectors of the community offering a range of opportunities to use and develop their skills and experiences

We will achieve this by:

- ★ Identifying the volunteering opportunities we need in order to achieve our goals
- ★ Effectively promoting volunteering opportunities
- ★ Matching volunteers' skills and experiences to volunteering opportunities

Developing our volunteers and staff

Our volunteers and staff will be supported to maximise volunteering impact on our services and the families we support.

We will achieve this by

- ★ Equipping our staff with the knowledge and skills they need to maximise volunteers' contribution
- ★ Providing high quality recruitment, induction, on-going development, support and management to our volunteers
- ★ Investing in systems and processes that facilitate the above
- ★

Developing our infrastructure

We will strengthen our infrastructure to maximise the effectiveness of volunteers and staff.

We will achieve this by:

- ★ Having an appropriate staff structure to support volunteering
- ★ Measuring and managing the impact of volunteering against the Society's objectives
- ★ Demonstrating the value of volunteering

Volunteers will be invited to feed in to the strategy.

3. Volunteer Management Structure:

- Every volunteer will be linked to a member of staff or a volunteer co-ordinator to whom they are responsible. This will ensure that the volunteer has a dedicated buddy or mentor and will also provide our staff with necessary experience in working with and supervising volunteers.

Volunteer Management Structure (continued)

- Basic volunteer roles will be consistent across the services, to ensure the same joined-up approach. It will be important that we have a wide variety of opportunities and not every service will have to provide every opportunity. However, it is important that volunteers carrying out the same role have been provided with the same role description. These will be agreed by the CSMs.

Generic role descriptions are being developed and these will be available in the South West Recruitment section of LiveLink.

They will provide clearly defined responsibilities, suggested levels of commitment needed from volunteers and consistent support and training for each role. All of these arrangements are binding in honour only and are not intended to be legally binding.

The standard sections covered in each role descriptions are:

- Background to Barnardo's
- What the role is and its purpose in children's services in Devon
- How the role can benefit clients
- How the role can benefit volunteers
- Anticipated role duration and time commitment
- Reporting requirements
- Key tasks and responsibilities
- Person specification (both Essential and Desirable)
- Training for the role

3.1 Specialist Training

There may be a need for some specialist training within volunteering opportunities, in these instances, specialist training will be given by the staff member responsible for that particular service or identified in conjunction with the Volunteer Co-ordinator / LSC / CSM.

As a priority we must ensure that we have the right balance of volunteers to staff to provide a quality service to our service users. This will maximise the benefit of volunteers to Barnardo's and the children and families with whom we work as well as ensuring that we are meeting the diverse needs of our volunteers.

Available roles must reflect the need for skilled volunteers to help to deliver services. Roles will be developed in line with the requirements of paid workers. *We must however, be prepared to be adaptable for volunteers bringing specific skills to enhance our services and the activities that we are able to offer.*

To do this we need to increase our volunteers' engagement and ensure that we provide them with challenging and rewarding opportunities. This will lead to a volunteer base that is highly committed. Some may choose to take on multiple roles or choose to become a supporter. This needs to be undertaken with a view to volunteer-led services throughout children's services, with activities and sessions being designed, led and run by committed, long-term volunteers, supported by staff, rather than the other way around.

What are we doing?

We are currently undertaking analysis of our centres' volunteering needs. The implementation plan we have selected is based on four key phases. We are consulting all centres to determine what impact it will have and what processes are already in place.

- **Phase 1:** Analyse the current need for volunteers – what does each service have compared to what it needs to deliver its programmes both now and in a year's time.
- **Phase 2:** Assess the current volunteer pool – analysing the current volunteer pool to determine whether they are fully engaged, if they would like to take on an additional role, require further training, or opt out.
- **Phase 3:** Reorganise volunteers – the actual delivery of optimisation i.e. retraining, reallocating roles, and offering volunteers the chance to support The Trust in another way.
- **Phase 4:** Maintaining the engaged relationship – ensuring each volunteer receives an annual review, and where possible is constantly engaged.

At this stage we are undertaking **Phase 1**. Over the coming months each centre will be asked to take part in this process to gain an understanding of how volunteers are involved, how we currently progress our volunteers and what additional support volunteers will need to be given to enable them to be at the forefront of our services.

Following this analysis, centres will engage with their volunteers to understand their needs and interests and inform them of changes happening at a local level.

4. Identifying Volunteer Roles

Volunteers working alongside staff in centres to help to design, develop and deliver services. Identify leadership skills at interview – a more professional interview to identify these individuals but not to put off others.

CSMs/LSCs will need to identify those members of staff with the capacity and the competence to line manage volunteers effectively.

- Delivery of a half-day people management course for staff to help to manage delegation and evaluation.

Identifying a new role:

Tasks:

Can it be integrated into an existing role?

Adaptation of role forms on an individual basis to reflect individual skills and strengths.

5. Common Core Skills for Children's Workforce:

It is important that we have in place a volunteer programme to take volunteers through training to competence in delivering services and ensure that volunteers are undertaking mandatory training – this is not happening due to the distance to the courses.

Completion of the Children's Workforce Induction is a recognised qualification in the Children's Workforce. It is recommended that volunteers undertake this as the induction reflects the seven common core skills which should be embedded in the induction programme.

Certain areas of the induction can be met with training which we already deliver in centres for families. For example, much of the development of children area can be met by volunteers attending the Webster Stratton / Here's Looking at You... courses.

5.1 Embedding the Core Skills and Knowledge into our recruitment and Selection Process

Common Core Skills and Knowledge should be embedded in the recruitment process for volunteers to identify their training needs and their ability to undertake certain aspects of the role that they have expressed interest in.

Role descriptions should be updated to reflect our commitment to the induction and training of our volunteers. For example, inclusion of a statement in the Key Activities Section or Training and Support Section:

"Our Volunteers should have a commitment to ongoing learning and personal development, including the skills and knowledge outlined within the Core Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (Common Core) framework for the Children's workforce, as appropriate to the role".

In all roles' Attitude/skills/knowledge required section, use the Core Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (Common Core) Matrix' found under **Toolkit 1** and **Toolkit 1a**, to identify and build in the appropriate skills, knowledge and competencies, as appropriate to the post. The official guidance document found at www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/common-core may also be of use.

5.2 Embedding the Core Skills and Knowledge into our Induction Process

An online programme is available with Artemis and we are developing a more in-depth programme with in house modules from the CWDC generic modules which will meet with Barnardo's Children's Centres in Devon's work and ethos.

This in-house training will take approximately 22 hours and, ideally, should be undertaken within the first 4 – 6 (monthly sessions of 4 – 6 hours) months of working within Barnardo's. With 2.5 -3 hour sessions, the induction would take up to 12 months. Using these modules in conjunction with supervision, the volunteers would be able to complete their Induction handbooks and gain the accreditation.

What are we doing?

- ★ Induction modules are being developed from the CWDC's generic materials so that they meet with the Barnardo's ethos while still delivering the relevant material.

Once these are drafted, consultation will need to take place with the CSMs to ensure that we are not duplicating training which can be met through courses already being run.

- ★ Role Descriptions are being revisited to ensure that our desire to fully train and support our volunteers is communicated at an early stage.
- ★ Use interview questions coupled with key phrases and words to identify/draw from the candidates answers which assess a candidates level of skill and knowledge around the Core Skills and Knowledge (toolkit 2)
- ★ Development of sessions to help staff who supervise volunteers to understand their role and how they will fit in to the induction and support of our volunteers.
- ★ This will also help to embed the Core Skills and Knowledge into our Performance management systems for both staff and volunteers.

What does this mean for the centres?

This will ensure that our volunteers have the relevant skills to carry out quality work in our centres. This will enable us to have volunteers taking on more responsibility with a view to volunteer-led activity in the centres.

This can mean entire sessions, but will, more often (and certainly in the first instance) on individual bases.

Staff supervising volunteers may need training in understanding the elements of the full induction programme and how to evidence this.

6. Supporting Volunteers

A paid member of staff within the centres will support each volunteer. The named paid staff member will have responsibility to ensure that suitable ongoing support for the volunteer is provided and that expenses area authorized. In addition, supervision meetings will take place with the volunteer and the centre manager or a member of staff at least quarterly. This will allow further training needs to be identified and for any issues arising from volunteering to be discussed and then dealt with appropriately.

Paid Workers' Responsibilities

Paid workers who are responsible for supporting volunteers will:

- Support, encourage and advise the volunteer.
- Authorise expense claims on the appropriate form. It will be the volunteer's responsibility to ensure that they receive payment.
- Help the volunteer to access further training where necessary and appropriate.
- Any complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Centre Complaints Procedure.
- Keep written records for monitoring and evaluation purposes and ensure that volunteer hours are recorded.
- Volunteers will undergo a three month probationary period to demonstrate their suitability. The supervisor will help assess volunteer during this period and confirm completion. Unsatisfactory completion of probationary period to be notified to Volunteer Co-ordinator and CSM who will address this situation alongside the staff member.
- When a volunteer leaves, supervisor will conduct an exit interview so that feedback may be given to the centre on the volunteer experience. It will also be an opportunity to discuss the volunteer's future plans and where appropriate for the centre to offer advice and support on progression.

With the increased pressure on Staff time, Supervisions may be done as a group activity, however time must be made to listen to volunteers' concerns in private, where needed.

Staff must be skilled in supervising volunteers and this may be a skill gap which requires work. Supervisions must reflect the development needs of the volunteers, on personal and professional levels.

7. Pursuing accreditation for Children's Services Volunteers

Accreditation will improve the image of Barnardo's for potential volunteers and will improve our standing as a first choice for volunteers looking to work with Children and Families.

What are we doing?

We have sought a variety of training options for our staff and volunteers to increase their skills and knowledge in Early Years and childcare settings.

Free training from Devon Children's Trust:

See Appendix i.

Part time working volunteers:

Smart Training deliver Training free of charge for learners under the age of 25, as the Government funds the cost under its Apprenticeship Scheme. There is a top up fee of £500 plus VAT for learners over the age of 25 - this is to cover a shortfall in funding for this age group. The full charge would be £1,800.

NOTE: The free training (£500 plus VAT to over 25 year olds) is available to all learners who are in **paid employment** for more than 16 hours a week, have lived or worked in the EU for at least three years and don't hold a degree.

See Appendix I for details of other training available.

8. Reaching skilled volunteers

Skilled individuals can be accessed through working with local colleges.

- Targeting newly qualified social care and childcare professionals – newsletters, talk at colleges etc
- Working with organisations working with those facing redundancy to become a preferred delivery organisation of retraining and experience in childcare careers – St. Lyses / Shaw Trust, Workways, etc
- Reaching minority groups.
This will be supported by the use of Volunteer Champions or Interns:
BME, LGBT, additional needs, homeless?

Creation of role for volunteering champions in each area, mapping geographic areas and marketing opportunities

9. Supporting Staff Working With Volunteers

In order to secure the future of volunteering, our staff need to have a better understanding of how volunteers fit into the organisation. Barnardo's has a great deal of materials aimed at how to look after the volunteers, but little on supporting the staff who are supervising them.

We have been carrying out consultation with staff on what roles and duties can be given to volunteers. This can be found in Appendix ii

Paid staff may be reluctant to work with volunteers for a number of reasons, including:

- fears about job security and budget cuts
- resentment about an increased short-term workload for training, and general feeling that volunteers will be a burden rather than a help
- fear of having to manage volunteers without the experience of doing so
- worries about not being able to control volunteers
- apprehension about diminished quality of service
- reservations about volunteers not being dependable or unable to respect confidentiality

Unless we understand and address staff concerns, through policy and sensitive negotiations, staff may take their frustration out on volunteers! Strategies for gaining their support include:

- Enabling staff to be familiar with our volunteer policy
- Making effective working with volunteers an integral part of job descriptions, which are then evaluated at appraisals
- Assessing staff capabilities in terms of their own volunteering experience, their volunteer management experience and their attitudes to volunteers
- Inclusion of volunteering information in staff induction and ongoing training
- Staff involvement in the drawing up meaningful volunteering roles
- Staff involvement in the selection, induction and probationary period of volunteers
- Recognition of paid staff who work well with volunteers
- Seeking one department or individual for whom volunteer involvement is a great success and advertising this; others will want to follow.

10. Gaining volunteer support for working with paid staff

Volunteers are just as likely to have concerns, legitimate or otherwise, about working with paid staff. These may include:

- I'm more qualified than paid staff – so why should I let them boss me around?
- I'm here to help out and staff should be grateful
- Why should they get paid when I don't?
- I am always told what to do but never asked to participate
- My suggestions aren't listened to and people are unwilling to make changes
- Employees get the credit for my good ideas
- Why do I get the work no one else wants to do?
- Staff don't work hard enough
- Staff are here to support us volunteers.

Strategies for gaining staff and volunteer support include:

- Ensure that staff are fully supported in their work with volunteers, with sufficient training and management support and regular contact with their Volunteer Co-ordinator
- Meeting with staff who will be supervising volunteers to understand the issues and fears surrounding working with volunteers.
- Referral to the Barnardo's Volunteer Policy as a live, relevant document

- Selective, targeted volunteer recruitment, with careful matching of volunteers to tasks
 - Making effective working with staff a stated part of volunteer role descriptions
 - Inclusion of staff information in volunteer induction and ongoing training
 - Seeking feedback from volunteers about members of staff who work particularly well with volunteers
 - Allowing volunteers to play an appropriate participatory role in the organisation.
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11. Strategies for effective teamwork

In conclusion, productive volunteer and staff partnerships are characterised by:

- Clear understanding by everyone of all the different roles in the organisation and what the expectations of these roles are
- Two-way communication to inform who is doing what, when and how
- Team building that involves all levels in the organisation's planning and decision-making, thereby increasing ownership of the organisation's goals by everyone
- Open and honest evaluation of activities by both staff and volunteers
- Public and private recognition of the accomplishments of volunteers and staff, and what they have achieved together
- Dealing with problems and getting rid of people who persistently fail to work with others, through the appropriate management, disciplinary and election procedures of the organisation. The ultimate focus should be on your organisation achieving its mission – the human resources are there to make that happen, not to hinder that process!

Next Steps:

Meet with teams who are working with volunteers to ascertain the fears and issues surrounding working with volunteers. Group discussion around the support, training, guidance and materials they require to supervise volunteers effectively.

Further training or sessions may be required to understand how the Core Skills and Knowledge fit into Supervision and how to help volunteers to evidence this.

Preliminary questions to ask or issues we expect to be raised:

- ★ Have you ever supervised volunteers?
- ★ Are you or have you been a volunteer?
- ★ Are there jobs that volunteers should not do? And why?
- ★ Should there be an induction programme for staff on working with volunteers? - Further discussion on what it should involve.
- ★ Are there fears for the quality of work?
- ★ Are there worries about staff jobs?

Issues raised in the answers need to be addressed.

Paid staff in voluntary roles

It is best practice that paid members of staff do not volunteer in a similar role for the same organisation. If they do volunteer with us, it is important that their volunteer role be completely different to their paid role, in order to avoid potential power struggles and unclear disciplinary situations.

12. Development of an induction programme for staff working with volunteers.

Demonstrate how volunteers can directly benefit the work of the organisation by asking staff to help identify work for volunteers to do:

What parts of your job do you really like?

What parts of your job do you dislike?

What other activities or projects would you like to do but don't have time for?



Appendix i:

Training:

Internal:

Safeguarding
Health & Safety
Information Sharing
Equality & Diversity

Other internally delivered courses:

AXS01
Here's Looking at....
Safe and Sound
Equality and Diversity

Other courses from Devon Children's Trust:

[Children's Workforce Induction Programme](#) (CWDC) (Online)

Understanding and Facilitating Development (DCT Online):

[Understanding Children's Physical Development 0-3 years](#)
[Understanding Children's Physical Development 3-5 years](#)

[Facilitating Children's Physical Development 0-3 years](#)
[Facilitating children's physical development 3-5 years](#)

[Understanding children's social and emotional development 0-3 years](#)
[Understanding children's social and emotional development 3-5 years](#)

[Facilitating children's social and emotional development 0-3 years](#)
[Facilitating children's social and emotional development 3-5 years](#)

[ICAN](#) (Language development)

[Supporting Staff Supporting Children](#)
[Special Educational Needs for Childminders](#)
[Understanding Disabilities and Special Educational Needs](#)
[Here's Looking at you Little One](#)
[Children's Spiritual Well-Being](#)
[Foundation: Tackling Domestic Violence & Abuse](#)
[Safeguarding Children Awareness](#)
[Assertiveness](#)



Appendix ii:

Feedback from Staff Supervising Volunteers

- Require the confidence to supervise a volunteer – especially when the volunteer is older and lacks respect for a younger worker
- Guidance on group supervision – what to include – no confidentiality for individuals
- Workers require access to the files of the volunteers they are supervising
- Include “Working with Volunteers” in staff induction.
- Include “Supervising Volunteers” in staff supervision.

Training days:

- What is the staff role in supervising volunteers?
- What does “Supervise” mean?
- Training in giving supervision and managing risk.
- Training in giving effective feedback.
- Regular meetings with the Volunteer Co-ordinator to discuss development of this role.

Supervision is currently happening in line with the guidelines for staff supervisions.
Volunteers are invited to reflective practice meetings

- Staff require access to their volunteers’ files – esp with reference to supervision notes.
- Training:
 - The role of staff supervising volunteers
 - What is volunteer supervision and what is expected of the staff?
 - What do the volunteers expect from the staff?
 - Introduction to supervisions for volunteers.