

VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. Definitions

Sedbury Space accepts the definition of Volunteering as given by the National Compact Code of Volunteering:

“Volunteering is defined as an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives.”

2. Purpose and Scope

Sedbury Space is committed to providing opportunities for volunteering within the centre’s activities to help develop greater social cohesion in the community as well as individual well-being. This policy seeks to ensure that all volunteers are appropriately recruited, inducted, trained, supported, supervised and appreciated. It applies to all who volunteer, both regularly and occasionally, as well as to those who manage the volunteers.

3. Principles

It is widely understood through social studies that volunteering is good for mental health. It helps people feel more socially connected, thus warding off loneliness and depression. Recent research shows that volunteering also has positive implications for physical health—including lower blood pressure and a longer lifespan.

This Volunteering Policy is underpinned by the following principles and policies. Sedbury Space:

- will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisation;
- desires to invest in their volunteers through providing training in both skills and personal development;
- is committed to supporting its volunteers and expects that staff at all levels to work positively with them;
- operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of their volunteers.;
- is governed by GDPR regulations and has in place policies and protocols;
- has disciplinary procedures in place for the rare occasions that the volunteering doesn’t work out which is based on a positive rather than punitive foundation.

4. Implementation

Health and safety:

Volunteers are covered by our Health and Safety Policy and will be considered in all risk assessments. Volunteers will be made aware of their responsibilities in regards to reducing and controlling risk.

All volunteers are covered by the Charity’s insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any activities agreed in advance. They are not covered by this insurance if they go beyond the agreed boundaries of their volunteering role.

If a volunteer is using their own car to perform their volunteering role, they should inform their insurance company.

Recruitment and screening:

If recruiting for a particular role, a volunteer role description and person specification should be agreed and advertised as widely as possible, reaching a broad cross-section of the community using a range of accessible recruitment methods.

When someone interested in volunteering contacts Sedbury Space we will respond promptly. Upon first enquiry a committee member will meet with all prospective volunteers informally to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their potential might be realised.

All volunteers will be invited to complete a personal details form indicating their areas of interest and expertise.

When necessary, volunteers will be asked to provide two character referees from whom references may be taken up (written or verbal), particularly if the volunteer is unknown to the committee, as well as a DBS check. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent someone from volunteering. All checks will be handled in accordance with the DBS guidelines and the Charity's safeguarding policy.

Induction, training and development:

All volunteers based in the centre will receive an induction to include basic health and safety, fire awareness and safeguarding training.

A matrix of requirements indicates what checks and training is required for each voluntary role within the organisation. Where training is currently not sufficient for the role, appropriate training will be offered to the volunteer, either in house or via external providers.

Expenses:

All volunteers will be offered to have their travel and other agreed expenses incurred from working at the centre reimbursed. Volunteering is an unpaid activity; therefore only receipted amounts can and should be reimbursed.

People receiving benefits are required to let the job centre know if they are volunteering, this should not affect their income so long as they receive only actual expenses.

Support and supervision:

All volunteers will have a named person as their main contact and will be provided with regular supervision. Sedbury Space aims to accommodate all people as volunteers, including those with additional needs. We will endeavour to make the necessary adaptations within reason to enable people to volunteer with us.

Recognition and appreciation:

All volunteers will be invited to an annual celebration event as part of the Annual General Meeting. At Christmas a thank you card will be circulated to each volunteer from the committee.

Volunteering coming to an end:

We will always seek to find out why a volunteer is leaving and to learn from their experience with us. Anyone who has volunteered for over 3 months or 200 hours will be entitled to a reference; this would normally be provided by their Line Manager who has worked with them most closely.

5. Approval and Review

This policy has been approved by the Trustees and will be reviewed on a biannual basis.

Signed:



(Chair of Sedbury Space)

Date: November 2024

Date for Review: November 2026