



social care  
institute for excellence

# Managing Volunteers in Faith-Based Organisations

## Webinar and Your Questions Answered

20<sup>th</sup> April 2022

# Session Outline

- Why do I need to manage my volunteers?
- What do I need to do to manage our volunteers?
- Stages in managing volunteers
- What can happen if we don't manage our volunteers?
- What to do if things go wrong
- Next steps in managing your volunteers



# Safeguarding Training Fund

A safeguarding initiative with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), NCVO and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Between 2020 and 2022, SCIE are working with faith-based organisations to:

- Promote and champion safeguarding and safe culture
- Enable local networking and self-support
- Distribute and promote NCVO resources



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport



# Safeguarding Training Fund

SCIE are doing this, at no cost to organisations, by:

- Bringing together experts in safeguarding in faith-based organisations, to discuss the challenges faced and help shape SCIE's work in the area;
- Offering local learning opportunities and networks through online and local events
- Disseminating and sharing the NCVO materials
- Providing training opportunities
- Publishing resources to support safeguarding practices



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport



# Quick poll:



**Who has a planned approach to managing volunteers in their organisation?**

- 1. Yes, a formal process that is fully embedded**
- 2. Yes, there is a process that is used, but its not formal**
- 3. No, we don't have a process that we use for managing our volunteers**

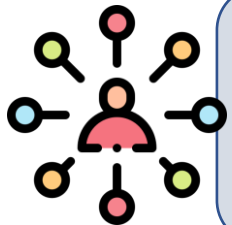
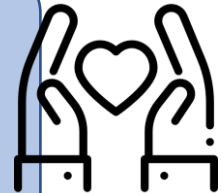
# Why Safeguarding in Faith-Based Organisations?

People may turn to their faith in times of personal struggle, hardship, bereavement and loneliness and when they feel most vulnerable.



This may include when things happening in their lives make them unsafe.

Faith groups play a major role in the lives of adults, children and young people; nurture, respect and caring are central values in all faiths.



Faith organisations and their leaders have significant reach within their community, to influence change and support those in need

# What is volunteering?



- Volunteering is when someone spends **unpaid time** doing something to benefit others
- **Helping your close friends or relatives isn't volunteering.** But doing something to benefit another or the environment is
- It should always be a **free choice** made by the person giving up their time.
- **Volunteers aren't employees and therefore, aren't covered by employment law**
- Volunteers are **not a replacement for paid staff**

# Who are our volunteers?



- They may be those who have **received a service from us previously**
- They are often part of the **local community**
- They can bring a **wealth of knowledge and experience** regarding the needs of those who use our services
- Are often **vital** to enable organisations' of all types to effectively deliver their services.
- Are often our **front face**, providing **direct work** to those who receive our services.
- They can bring **new opinions, ideas and approaches** to our work.



# Why is it important to effectively manage our volunteers?



1. Often, and particularly in charities, it is only with the support of volunteers that we are able to **fully run our services**.
2. They can bring such **diverse** levels of experience and skills, effective management can enable us to **keep hold of good volunteers**
3. Volunteers may have **unmet needs** for care and support which if unresolved, could place them at risk of harm or affect their wellbeing
4. To keep people safe from harm and create a **culture** where everyone connected understands their right to be safe.
5. Volunteer roles are often the subject of '**Role Drift**'
6. Like employees, they can have issues with **professional boundaries**
7. Often it is volunteers who contribute significantly to the **front facing services** within our organisation and as such, it is **how we are judged**.

# What can happen if we don't manage volunteers?

*'...volunteer had worked for the charity for **24 years**, whilst he raped vulnerable children...'*

*'...sex offender **infiltrated charity** to abuse vulnerable adults...'*

*'...given **free rein** with vulnerable elderly people and used this freedom to empty their bank accounts to fund her holidays and home improvements...'*

*'...**seemingly respected** professional, who spent all his weekends outreach volunteering, abused sex workers...'*

*'...**used her position of power** in the community to belittle and degrade those whom she was supporting...'*

*'...was viewed as being of **good character**...'*

*'...had not undertaken any **checks or training**...'*

*'...was not subject to any **supervision or monitoring**...'*

*'...concerns raised were **not taken seriously**...'*

*'...was viewed as a **vital member** to run the services...'*

*'...**blamed victims for their abuse**, relying on religious dogma when responding to allegations...'*

*'...demonstrated blatant hypocrisy and **moral failings**...'*

*'...victim received no support, because the **perpetrator was "valued"**...'*

# So, where do I start? – Volunteer Strategy

## *What to include*

- Organisational **aims** and how volunteers will help to meet them
- Opportunities and **risks** the organisation face and how these may affect volunteering
- Clear lists of **tasks, activities and limitations** for volunteers
- **Skills or attributes** volunteers need
- How the organisation **recruits, trains, monitors & supports** volunteers
- The **processes and policies** which support volunteering
- How the organisation will seek **feedback** and use volunteers' experiences to make improvements
- Volunteer **Contract/Agreement**
- **Finance - Insurance and expenses** for Volunteers

## *Who to involve*

- Senior **staff** and/or **trustees**
- Current Volunteer **managers**
- The **people** your organisation helps
- Paid **staff**
- Existing **volunteers**

# What's next?

The next things to consider are the following:

## How will you:

1. *Recruit*
2. *Induct and train*
3. *Monitor, supervise and review*
4. *Obtain feedback*
5. *Manage any issues*
6. *Take action when things go wrong*

What support documents you need to manage your volunteers, which in addition to documentation for staff, should include:

- *Volunteer Contract/Agreement*
- *Volunteers Job Descriptions and Person Specifications*
- *Volunteer Training Plan*
- *Volunteer Feedback Form*



# Advertising the role

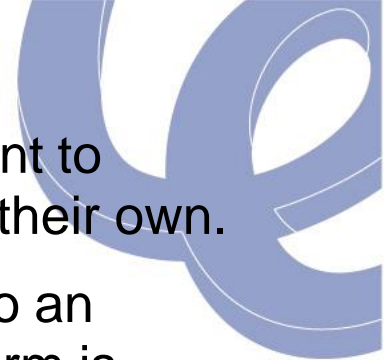


When you are advertising volunteer roles you should consider including:

1. *A statement which confirms the **organisation's commitment** to safeguarding and safer recruitment on all written advertisements/notices. .*

***Example:** “[Insert name of organisation] is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults with care and support needs. All volunteers are also expected to actively do so and will be assessed to establish their commitment*

2. *The essential elements of the **person specification** required for the role.*
3. *The **pre-appointment checks** that are required for the role.*



# Applying for the role

A **standardised application form** should be used for recruitment to all posts, including volunteers. CVs should not be accepted on their own.

Whether an individual is a paid employee or volunteer, access to an application pack and the completion of a standard application form is important in relation to safeguarding for the following reasons:

- It **reinforces the value** that the organisation places on work with children, young people and adults with care and support needs and the seriousness with which it takes the appointment of those who volunteer with such groups
- It gives a clear signal to anyone intent on abusing the trust placed in them that the **organisation is vigilant about the safety** and protection of children, young people and adults with care and support needs
- It enables those shortlisting to ensure they have the **same information** regarding each applicant

The application form should include important information about a **candidate's history**, including his/her experience of working or volunteering with children, young people or adults with care and support needs and his/her motivation for working with these groups.

# Shortlisting

The purpose of shortlisting is to identify, volunteers **who best meet the selection criteria** for the role and who you wish to take forward to the next stage of the recruitment and selection process, an interview.

Shortlisting should be conducted by **the person responsible for the appointment** and **at least one other person**.

Volunteer applicants should be shortlisted for interview **based on the evidence provided in their application form** and usually only those who meet all the essential criteria as defined on the person specification should be shortlisted

Application forms should be properly **scrutinised and any gaps** or queries (*eg in employment/education/church/volunteering history etc*) should be highlighted and marked for further exploration if the applicant is shortlisted and invited to interview

Candidates should be shortlisted by **comparing the information provided** on their application form **against the person specification** requirements.







# Interviews and Assessment

An interview gives the opportunity to investigate the volunteer's **motivation** for working with children, young people and/or adults with care and support needs, as well as to explore his/her **past experience** of working or volunteering, which may also reveal any indicators of concern.

- Interviews should be held **face to face**.
- Interviews should be held with a **panel of a least two**, one of whom should have been trained in **safer recruitment training** within the last three years and be competent in interviewing and possess the appropriate **expertise to assess the candidate's competence** in the role.
- Wherever possible, interview panel members should **not be related** to the candidate.
- Interviews should **explore issues relating to safeguarding** and promoting welfare through a combination of questions relating to the organisations values and expected behaviours, with questions that focus on establishing skills, knowledge, qualifications & previous experience.
- Any **gaps, anomalies or discrepancies** that have been identified in the application form during the shortlisting process should be discussed with the candidate during the interview and a satisfactory explanation provided.



# Pre employment checks

Carrying out pre-appointment checks is important for safeguarding children, young people and adults with care or support needs as it helps an organisation **establish a more rounded picture of the candidate's suitability** to work with these groups, but these checks should **not be used in isolation**.

## Consider:

- *When you will seek references?*
- *Seeking references from the most recent employer*
- *Checking qualifications*
- *Self Declarations*
- *DBS checks*





# Appointments

Appointment documentation is another opportunity to **reinforce the values** the organisation places on safeguarding.

A **start date** should only be confirmed once all pre-appointment checks and actions are satisfactorily completed and verified

All **volunteers** should be issued with a Volunteer **Agreement/Contract** which includes:

- ***Remit of their role***
- ***Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected***
- ***Induction and training requirements***
- ***Policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding, including the identity and responsibilities of those within the organisation with designated safeguarding responsibilities***
- ***Details of any probationary periods***
- ***Grounds for terminating their voluntary role***

*Volunteers appointed should **sign the contract** to indicate that they have received, understood and agree to adhere to all the written statements above*



# Induction

A planned, proportionate and consistent induction process ensures that volunteers fully understand and know how to follow safeguarding policies and procedures, and makes sure **expectations are clear and agreed**.

All volunteers should undergo an induction process appropriate to the role being undertaken, which should include/reinforce:

1. ***Mandatory training*** and information about the organisations safeguarding policies and procedures, including ***whom to report concerns***
2. ***One to one meetings*** with the individual to whom the inductee reports
3. ***Expectations in the role***, objectives and arrangements for ongoing support

*Your volunteer induction process should be **evaluated** and reviewed regularly as part of the continuous improvement of the safer people management cycle.*



# Probationary Period

A **planned** probationary/settling in period should be in place for all volunteers.

During this period, **regular meetings** should be scheduled and prioritised between the manager and the volunteer when **Safeguarding** (*process, understanding and behaviours*) should form a **core** part of these meetings.

The Volunteer handbook should detail the grounds on which the **probation period can be extended or terminated**, which should include **failure to complete Safeguarding training**, or **failure to comply with the Safeguarding policy**

The probationary/settling in period should include an element of **direct observation** of the individual by an appropriate member of the team to identify the volunteer is **demonstrating safe behaviours, maintaining appropriate boundaries** and can spot causes of concern and **knows when to report** and to whom.

# Quick poll:

**Are those who undertake interviews for volunteers who support children, young people and/or adults with care and support needs, trained in safer recruitment?**

- 1. Not currently**
- 2. Some staff are**
- 3. All staff who recruit to posts working with vulnerable groups are trained in safer recruitment**





# Challenging behaviours of concern

- It is important that any concerns are addressed quickly to ensure they do not become **accepted behaviours** within your organisational culture.
- All volunteers should **feel safe to raise concerns** and should be confident that they will be addressed.
- All volunteers should be not only aware of how to raise concerns, but know that they will be **treated seriously**.
- Volunteers should be **supported** to raise concerns regarding any member of your organisation, irrespective of if that person is a paid member of staff or in a more senior position to them.
- Volunteers should understand that they will be **protected** if they raise concerns.
- Volunteers should be aware of **alternative sources of referral** to raise concerns if they do not feel they can do so within your organisation
- Volunteer specific procedures should clearly be in place to **remove** volunteers who do not meet the required standards

***Failure to address concerns can result in those undesirable behaviours becoming acceptable practice across your organisation and/or those who do not raise them possibly being viewed as being complicit***

# Implementing a plan

- Remember that effective management of volunteers doesn't just happen!*
- Ensure you have a clear strategy for volunteers*
- Consider what volunteer specific policies you may need or need*
- Make sure you follow safer recruitment*
- Think about risks related to volunteer role and activities*

- Ensure your insurance covers volunteer activities*
- Think how you will pay any out of pocket expenses*
- Ensure you have a Volunteer Agreement and Handbook*
- Think about how you will induct and train your volunteers*
- Ensure your volunteers are appropriately supervised*

# Implementing a plan

- Reinforce what are and are not appropriate behaviours for volunteers
- Think how you can best support those who develop from being a recipient of services to a volunteer role
- Make sure all of your volunteers undertake safeguarding training yearly
- Ensure volunteers feel confident and supported to use your whistleblowing policies


- Ensure you effectively tackle any issues related to the conduct of volunteers that could be abusive or neglectful
- Ensure you have policies specifically related to terminating the volunteer agreement
- Consider devising a volunteer checklist
- Regularly review your volunteer strategy with volunteers and service users

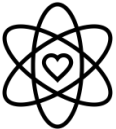



# Resistance to change?



Achieving good safeguarding including how you manage your volunteers may seem complex, and resistance is not uncommon. **Consider:**

 Bringing people along with you on the journey and rationale for change?

 Giving clarity about how safeguarding and safer recruitment sits with wider values?

 Addressing feelings of mistrust and judgement?

Tackling practical barriers (eg understanding procedures)?

 Giving a clear imperative and directive for change?

# **Quick for reflection:**



**What are the barriers to change that you may face in implementing a Volunteer Strategy?**

**What might help to overcome and address them, and who is needed to support this change?**

# Resources

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-manage-your-charitys-volunteers>

<https://beta.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers/>

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/checklists-training-and-other-support/specialist-guides/safeguarding-for-volunteer-managers>

To find out more about SCIE's work with faith-based organisations or to get in touch, please follow the links below.

SCIE and the Safeguarding Training Fund:  
[scie.org.uk/safeguarding/charities/resources](https://scie.org.uk/safeguarding/charities/resources)

Safeguarding for faith groups:  
[scie.org.uk/safeguarding/faith-groups](https://scie.org.uk/safeguarding/faith-groups)

Sign-up to SCIE's e-bulletin to find out about future events and resources:

[scie.org.uk/myscie/register](https://scie.org.uk/myscie/register)



# Thank you!



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