



VOLUNTEERS POLICY

**FURZEDOWN YOUTH CENTRE
(at back of St James' Church)
WELHAM ROAD
LONDON
SW16 6NT**

August 2024

Introduction

Furzedown Youth Centre (FYC) values the contribution that all its volunteers make in supporting our objectives. The object of the Centre is to help young people develop socially, physically, mentally, and spiritually, so that they may grow into full maturity as individuals and members of society. Use of FYC shall be mainly, but not exclusively, for young people between years 6 to 13 who either reside or are schooled in Furzedown, in the London Borough of Wandsworth. The Centre shall promote activities and programs accessible to all youth in the community.

This policy seeks to provide clarity to expectations so that volunteers nurtured, valued and supported.

FYC's History

FYC is a youth centre established in 2003, founded and funded by four local churches: St James, West Streatham (CoE), St Alban's, Streatham Park (CoE), St Paul's (CoE) and Mitcham Lane Baptist. FYC has consistently provided a wide range of youth work programmes in partnership with a number of statutory and voluntary organisations to serve the needs of local young people. It is founded on the distinctiveness of the Christian Faith.

Principles of Volunteering

FYC seeks to embrace the following five fundamental principles of volunteering:

- Choice - voluntary involvement must be a freely chosen option without sanction or penalty, pressure or coercion.
- Diversity - volunteering should provide opportunity for people from varied backgrounds. Equal opportunities principles are basic to supporting diversity.
- Reciprocity - giving voluntary time and work must be recognised as establishing a reciprocal relationship in which the giver also receives.
- Recognition - explicit recognition of the value of the work volunteers contribute to the Directorate, to the community, and to wider social and economical objectives.
- Respect - for any special skills, qualifications or experience of volunteers and help to use and develop them.

Volunteer Recruitment

We value the safety and wellbeing of both the young people we serve and the volunteers, staff and board members who make up FYC. This means this policy works in conjunction with our Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure and our Safeguarding Policy.

We seek to operate a safer recruitment process. This means all volunteers will be required to:

- Complete a volunteer application and give the contact details for two referees who can demonstrate a prospective volunteer's good character.
- Complete a Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Confidential Declaration
- Undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service application, for which FYC will pay
- Attend Safeguarding training
- Wear the appropriate identification

Safeguarding

FYC's Safeguarding Policy exists to promote the wellbeing and safety of both young people and the adults who form the FYC team, this includes volunteers. To enable this all volunteers will be issued with a paper copy of the latest Safeguarding Policy, be required to attend regular safeguarding training and have direct access to the Safeguarding Officer to be able to share any concerns with.

Equality and Diversity

FYC was founded on the premise that all people are created equal and have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. This is further set out in our Equality and Diversity Policy. FYC seek to

ensure that all young people, volunteers, staff and Board are treated fairly and without discrimination. We welcome all regardless of race, gender, culture, sexuality or religion. We do ask that all volunteers be respectful of all religious views and understand the distinctiveness of FYC as a youth centre based on Christian values.

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities and creating an ethos where prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour is challenged whenever and wherever it occurs, and to operating an appropriate code of practice to deal with all forms of harassment.

If there are any considerations that FYC can make that would enable you to further thrive in your volunteering then please do contact the session leader, Chair of the Board or Safeguarding Officer, depending on who is most appropriate.

Any equality and diversity concerns can be reported directly to FYC's Chair of the Board.

Volunteer Induction and Training

Volunteering opportunities may look different depending on the session/activity you are supporting. FYC will always seek to provide a paper copy of a Volunteer Handbook which includes all the relevant Policies and Procedures alongside clear information on who to contact in the case of sickness/absence and details of both the current Chair of the Board and Safeguarding Officer.

In each session it will be made clear who the session leader is, and all volunteers and staff will be given the opportunity to debrief together (or individually) at the end of the session with any need followed up.

It may also be appropriate for a 'buddying' system, enabling mutual support of volunteers. If you would appreciate this, at any time, please do speak to your session leader.

Volunteers will meet, termly, as a group, to discuss how things are going, and consider needs of individuals and the overall service. This may include the service being reviewed formally by Board members or for funding purposes.

Ongoing training is necessary for all voluntary workers, to enable them to deliver the best service possible, and as a form of affirmation. All voluntary workers must undergo regular in-house Safeguarding Training delivered by the Safeguarding Officer. Other training may also be appropriate such as First Aid and this will be paid for by FYC as and when required.

Behaviour Management

FYC operates a Behaviour Management Policy with guidelines for how we treat one another as adults as well as how we manage the needs and behaviours of young people in our care. All volunteers are expected to operate in line with this policy

Insurance

FYC will ensure that volunteers are adequately covered by insurance while they carry out their agreed duties at the centre and in the community and that they will be treated in the same way as staff for liability purposes.

Health and Safety

FYC operate a Health and Safety Policy and will ensure that volunteers are given a paper copy as part of the Volunteer Handbook.

Leaving

Endings happen for a variety of reasons.

FYC will only continue to provide volunteering opportunities when we are confident that this serves the best interests of the young people. If this is no longer the case, we may ask you to stop volunteering. If we do this we will follow up, in writing, clearly outlining our reason for this decision.

FYC will ensure all volunteers are offered the opportunity for an exit interview, this maybe in writing rather than face to face, if more appropriate.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

At FYC we ask that all volunteers will:

- accept the values and standards of the organisation
- be respectful of all religious views and understand the distinctiveness of a youth centre based on Christian values
- participate in Safeguarding training, induction sessions and other core training dependent on the placement area
- abide by ALL FYC's policies and procedures, particularly in relation to Safeguarding, Behaviour Management, Confidentiality, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and criminal record or reference checks
- inform the relevant member of staff or contact person if they are unable to attend a session, and if possible, in advance.
- give advanced notice if/when they are unable to continue volunteering
- raise any issue of concern relating to their volunteer work with the contact person to be able to meet the demands of the work without risk to their health.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board will monitor and evaluate this Volunteer Policy and will consult regularly with all relevant parties.