

Volunteer Handbook 2021



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Foreword

Volunteers play an important role within the Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust, supporting both our professional staff and the users of our services. Volunteers are involved in a large variety of roles throughout the Trust from meeting and greeting people in the Main Entrance and busy clinics; assisting the Play Specialists in providing activities for patients on the wards and in waiting areas; undertaking tasks under supervision in clinical areas; therapeutic massage and helping out with other organisations represented in the Trust such as the League of Friends and the Scouts. Their contribution is considerable and varied but we do always have systems in place to support volunteers and recognise their worth.

In 2019 volunteers contributed over 26,000 free hours into the Trust. If paid for at a national living wage, this amounts to over £150,000 a year that volunteers are contributing. In 2020 volunteer activities were severely curtailed due to the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions but volunteers have continued to support the Trust throughout the crisis.

We have introduced many practices to support volunteers, as we wished to ensure that a long term framework was in place to meet both the needs of our volunteers and those they help and have achieved a Volunteering Quality Standard for this.

We are so lucky to have such a dedicated and caring group of volunteers. They use their different skills and talents to really make a difference to patients, parents and staff.

Sheffield Children's wants to create a friendly, welcoming environment to everyone who walks through our doors. Our volunteers help us to do that, and with your support, we can continue caring together for the children and young people who need us.

We want for you to feel comfortable undertaking a volunteer role here, so I hope this booklet gives you some helpful information on how you can help us, and how we will support you too.

Good luck with your application – I hope we'll be seeing you very soon!

John Somers
Chief Executive

Background

Volunteering has continued to develop at the Trust, and in the last five years we have seen a substantial increase in the number of volunteers supporting various activities throughout the Trust. This has resulted in considerable benefits to the Trust, individuals and the community in Sheffield whilst providing a potential recruitment pool for NHS careers and other employability routes. It is extremely important, therefore, that the Trust continues to sustain the energy, enthusiasm and dedication the volunteers contribute, as part of the Trust's wider commitment to attract and develop talent.

Volunteers at this Trust must be 16 years & over and must have a good command of English. Other than being older than 16, age is not an issue – commitment is what we need.

Our volunteers commit around 3-4 hours each week on the same day/time each week in a specific department or ward. Opportunities are not ad hoc and we have very few in the evenings and only slightly more at weekends. We also ask for a commitment of at least 6 months from starting volunteering.

There are currently over 190 volunteers registered to support the hospital & these volunteers give the Trust their time in a variety of settings. 2020 saw this number fall to around 25 active volunteers during lockdown.

Specialist Activities

- In 2021 the 1st Sheffield Children's Hospital Scout Group will celebrate the anniversary of their 14th year of supporting patients and families at the hospital. The team of Scout leaders run the group every Thursday evening, offering arts and crafts activities to keep patients and siblings entertained and giving them the chance to meet new friends. In their 12 years at the Children's Hospital, the Scout group has helped more than 2000 children. During lockdown the Scouts have been delivering individual craft packs to inpatients on the wards.
- We have a small team of volunteers working within the hospital to offer gentle hand, neck and shoulder massages to parents and visitors to help with reducing stress and anxiety and at the same time they can talk to someone trained in listening skills. (Not active during lockdown)
- The shop in the Main Entrance of the hospital is run by the League of Friends, who support all areas of the hospital with their charitable donations from the shop proceeds. For the past few years they have supported our volunteers by sponsoring their uniforms. (Not open during lockdown)

What our Volunteering Programme isn't

Our volunteer programme is not a way to get your work experience hours for school or University. Our programme requires a bigger commitment.

It's not a way to learn what doctors, nurses or other clinical staff do.

You won't be shadowing clinical staff or going into theatres and you won't be in the thick of it in the Emergency Room.

It's not for you if you can't commit regularly. (think about the time you will need for studying/revision/exams etc before you decide to apply if you are a student)

What our Volunteering Programme is

It's a way to help improve our patients' experiences of being at the hospital.

It's compassion and support and laughing and playing and being a shoulder to cry on or an ear to listen.

It's being an extra pair of hands, an ordinance survey map and a guide all in one.

It's about representing the Trust and being part of our team. Helping families find what they need or where they need to go.

It's standing in to support a child while a parent goes and gets a coffee, or has a break and it's generally making the hospital a less scary place to be.

Who are our volunteers?

Our volunteers are people from very many different walks of life aged 16+ to 85+. Our volunteers are also any of the following:

- Parents and carers
- Former Patients
- Retired staff
- Other retirees
- Part time workers
- Students
- Unemployed people
- People from the local community

Before you apply

Before you apply make sure you ask yourself the following questions:

- Can I commit the time needed regularly each week?
- Do I have a regular timeslot in my week which would support the Trust's vacancies?
- Will I still want to do this when it's raining and snowing or it's a fabulously sunny day?
- Can I plan to cover my caring responsibilities for those times such as school holidays, children's or dependent's illnesses?
- Will I still be able to do it through exam periods, with extra studying and revision?

This might just help you realise what plans you might have to have on the back burner for the days you are volunteering.

How to apply

Everything you need to apply can be downloaded from the Sheffield Children's Hospital website. Please note CVs will not be accepted as an application.

If you do not have access to the Trust website at home then access is available at Public libraries or perhaps even a friend, relative or colleague would be able to download the information for you. If all else fails then a hard copy of the recruitment pack can be obtained from the Volunteer Services Coordinator by contacting 0114 271 7698 or sch.volunteering@nhs.net

Applications should be made for particular vacancies as identified on the website and applications which do not identify appropriate availability will not be considered. The Trust makes a huge investment into each volunteer and we will not put you through our rigorous process if we have no vacancy which matches your availability. Our vacancies will be updated monthly.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Our Recruitment & Selection process is governed by the Trust Volunteer Policy which is available on request. Recruitment will open and close to meet the service's needs and information is always available on the website.

All applicants can access an application form on the Sheffield Children's Hospital website (see above for details). The form will ask you why you want to join our volunteer team & what volunteer opportunities you are interested in.

All submitted applications that are completed appropriately will be read and considered for interview.

The interview will require you to demonstrate your motivation, communication skills and commitment. The interview panel will consist of 2-3 people, usually the Volunteer Co-ordinator, an existing volunteer and/or a member of staff from within the Trust.

If you are successful at interview you will be notified as soon as possible afterwards. At this point the following will happen:

- You will complete an on-line Occupational Health check
- You will complete an on-line enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- You will attend a corporate induction and volunteer training session which is a full day – these are scheduled once every month except for July and August each year (during lockdown this training has been moved on-line)
- We will take up your references

Please note these processes can take 3-4 months and we rely on you to complete any paperwork or answer any queries that may arise swiftly to aid the process. The quicker you provide your information, the faster we can get you into the hospital.

If you are unsuccessful at interview you will be able to request feedback.

Training

This is what your Corporate Induction and Volunteer Training Session day will cover:

- Safeguarding
- Moving and Handling
- Health & Safety
- Infection Control
- How to engage and Play with children
- How to engage and talk to families
- How to look after yourself as a volunteer
- Your rights as a volunteer

As at January 2021 we are considering changing the training we ask you to complete. This would involve our volunteers completing the NHS England Volunteer Learning Passport as well as some on-line Trust corporate training modules. We will update you if you are successful at interview about what training you would be expected to complete.

What Happens Next

Once all your checks and training have been completed we will start to talk to you about a Volunteer placement within the Trust. This will include a meeting with the Volunteer Coordinator. (during any Covid 19 lockdown these meetings may be virtual via Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Whatsapp.) When we have agreed a placement we will issue you with an ID Badge, a T-Shirt and ask you to attend your Ward or Department for a local induction with your Volunteer Supervisor. (Any PPE required will be provided by the hospital)

You will also be expected to sign a Volunteer Agreement which will outline your commitment for 2-4 hours volunteering a week for at least a 6 month period, as well as outlining the tasks you can be expected to do.

Once you start Volunteering

Volunteers are expected to attend regularly as agreed and, as a matter of courtesy to report in if sick or unable to attend. How to do this will be explained to you when you start your volunteering placement.

If you need to take time off (inc holidays) you just inform your supervisor. Where it is a break longer than 3 weeks, we also ask you to notify the Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Should you wish to leave you need to give notice to both the department and to the Volunteer Co-ordinator, and you may be asked to complete an evaluation form about your volunteering experience to improve the volunteering at the Trust. We will ask you to return your ID badge and uniform where applicable. We ask that volunteers give us at least 2 weeks' notice if they intend to leave, to give us and the department an opportunity to make plans to fill the vacancy.

Reviews and Support

All volunteers receive lots of support both during the induction period and while volunteering, from the Volunteer Co-ordinator and staff in the areas they support.

The first 6 weeks are seen as a 'trial period'. After this, volunteers will have an informal review/chat with the Volunteer Co-ordinator to see if they are settling in well. Further follow up reviews will be agreed between the Volunteer Co-ordinator & the Volunteer.

The volunteer review is a method of ensuring that volunteers are happy with what they are doing. If a volunteer has any issues or concerns they can contact the Volunteer Coordinator on 0114 2717698, or email sch.volunteering@nhs.net, or alternatively contact their supervisor.

Volunteers can also contact the Chaplaincy Service (via Kathy Green or Claire Williams) or the Clinical Psychology Dept (via Rebecca Mulholland) for support to process difficult feelings or talk through strong issues which may have arisen.

As a volunteer you can refuse demands you consider unrealistic, beyond the scope of your role or that you do not have the skills to carry out.

We will pay your travel expenses where we can and this will be discussed with you when you start volunteering. Public transport tickets need to be provided as evidence of travel. For those travelling by car, a mileage rate will be paid but we cannot pay for your parking. A meal voucher is offered to volunteers who support us for more than 4 hours at a time.

We will try to ensure volunteers with disabilities have the support needed to carry out their tasks. However we cannot always offer you an exact placement and we will work with you to get the best out of the placement you have.

Behaviours

All volunteers are expected to abide by the Trust policies on behaviour which will be explained during the induction. The Trust's policy can be obtained from your supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteers are advised that they must wear their ID badges and red uniform tops at all times when they are on shift in the hospital or other sites. There are some exceptions to this where plain casual clothing has been deemed to be more appropriate. (this is not the norm and will be discussed with the Volunteer Coordinator before agreement is reached) Blue jeans and/or denim skirts are not acceptable to wear with uniform tops. Shoes should not be loose but fastened and open toed sandals may not be appropriate in some volunteering areas – this will be discussed at induction with your local volunteer supervisor.

Confidentiality

Volunteers must abide by the Trust confidentiality policy and you will be expected to sign a Confidentiality agreement before you start. Everything must be kept in the strictest confidence. If you know someone who is a patient at the hospital, behave normally, and

don't disclose anything outside of the hospital. Similarly, if you see confidential documents lying around, make sure you take them to the senior person on duty on that ward/department.

The Trust also keeps your own personal information secure and in line with the Data Protection Act (1998).

Insurance

All volunteers are covered by the Trust's insurance.

Communication

The Volunteer Services team consists of the Volunteer Co-ordinator and an Admin Officer and they are available in the office for four days a week Monday – Thursday. The Volunteering email is read each day we are in the office and someone will reply or answer any queries you have as quickly as they can.

We try to hold quarterly Volunteer Social events (subject to take up), which are a great way to meet other volunteers in the Trust, however we are unable to do this during lockdown.

The Volunteer Co-ordinator will send out a monthly E-Bulletin which will have regular updates on what is happening within Volunteering and it will sometimes include one off opportunities for extra Volunteering.

Volunteer Rewards

Volunteers are nominated for any appropriate categories in the Trust's annual Star Awards by staff, patients and parents.

On leaving, volunteers can ask for a certificate of attendance and a reference.

During lockdown volunteers have received free hand gel and hand cream and some have been able to take advantage of free parking in Sheffield City Council car parks and on-street parking bays.

Trust Values

Our values are about 'how we do things around here' at Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust. They are called 'We Care' – it's simple but true.

The values are based around four key points: **Compassion, Accountability, Respect and Excellence.**

Our values define the acceptable standards and behaviours within our organisation and will now become a key part of the Trust's strategy and be visible around the organisation.

Check these out on the Trust website.

What do our Volunteers say?

John is a volunteer in our new main reception area doing 2 ½ hours on a Tuesday morning. John says:

"I meet and greet families in Reception on Tuesday mornings, helping them to find their appointments.

I enjoy what I do because many families feel lost and a little anxious when they arrive in Reception. By taking families to their appointment and chatting to them on the way you can put people at ease and it's always very rewarding when you get a big smiley thank you after you have dropped them off!"

Pauline is a volunteer on Ward 1 where she supports the play team. Pauline says:

"I love coming onto the ward each week seeing who is still around and how many new children we have. I like to help them to keep busy and keep their minds off being poorly. I also see my role as being an extra pair of hands for the play team. It makes me smile each week!"

Val volunteers in our new main reception and outpatients department. Val was very anxious about volunteering and was worried about what it would be like. She does 3 hours on a Wednesday morning. Here's what Val says:

"Hi, my name is Val I volunteer in the new outpatient department at the children's hospital as a meet and greet volunteer. I enjoy meeting the different people and feel as I'm doing something useful."

Thanks for thinking of applying for a volunteer role at the Children's Hospital. We value all our volunteers and look forward to receiving your application.

Good Luck !!