

Volunteering policy

Little Hiccups promotes volunteering opportunities. We recognise that there are situations in which help from volunteers can make a significant and appropriate contribution to the work and service objectives of our organisation. This document defines the terms and sets out the principles, practices and procedures that will be followed in the appointment and management of volunteers.

Volunteers can be described as people who put their experience, knowledge and skills at the disposal of an organisation, free of charge, with the primary aim of helping the organisation to achieve its service objectives and/or with the aim of bringing benefit to the local community. Volunteers will be officially accepted and welcomed into the organisation.

Principles

Little Hiccups in appointing volunteers will adhere to the following principles

- Volunteers will not be engaged in work that facilitates the loss of an existing employee's post, nor on any tasks or projects that (within the past two years) were done by paid employees whose posts have since become redundant.
- Volunteers will not be used to do the work of paid staff during an industrial dispute.

In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the values, goals and procedures of Little Hiccups.

Process for Recruitment of Volunteers

Little Hiccups will take into consideration the recruitment of any volunteers when approached by interested people. Little Hiccups does not currently recruit volunteers through other methods.

Little Hiccups select volunteers using the following process:

- Prospective volunteers will be invited to an informal meeting with one or more members of the organisation to discuss the role description, terms and conditions and specification of relevant experience etc. prior to appointment of the volunteer.
- In order to facilitate a clear understanding on both sides, the following information about the opportunity will be given to prospective volunteers:
 - o A role description, outlining the specific tasks, responsibilities and reporting procedure for the volunteer.



- o Terms and Conditions, including the duration, hours, expenses, insurance, training etc relating to the placement.
- o A specification outlining the relevant experience, skills, knowledge and abilities required to carry out the role effectively.
- o A copy of the Little Hiccups Equality and Diversity Policy.

The prospective volunteer will be asked to complete a Little Hiccups Volunteer Application Form that will enable the volunteer to:

- Provide contact details and a reference.
- Provide information about experience, skills, knowledge and interests.
- Introduce discussion about any difficulties/barriers they may perceive to their becoming volunteers with the organisation.

If the prospective volunteer is deemed to be unsuitable for the opportunity, they will be offered a 'debrief' when reasons for the decision will be explained to them.

Prior to commencement of their placement at Little Hiccups successful volunteers will be asked to provide information to enable a Disclosure Barring Check (DBS) to be obtained.

Prior to commencement of their placement at Little Hiccups successful volunteers shall be formally allocated to a named employee who will manage/supervise the volunteer. The manager's responsibilities will include ensuring that the volunteer receives the following:

- A planned induction to the organisation, including appropriate forms i.e. expenses claim forms etc.
- Copies of all the organisation's policies that are relevant to the volunteering role. (ie Health & Safety, Discipline & Grievance and Confidentiality Policies).
- Positive feedback on their contribution.
- Adequate accommodation, equipment and services to enable them to perform their tasks effectively.
- Lines of communication – should operate in both directions both formally and informally. Volunteers should be consulted regarding decisions that would substantially affect the performance of their duties.

Little Hiccups expects volunteers to:

- Be clear about the number of hours per week they wish to work
- Arrange times of volunteering and arrive on time and be reliable and regular
- Inform relevant member of staff if going to be late or absent



- Attend supervision and training events when required
- Follow the procedures and policies of the organisation
- Treat staff members, other volunteers and service users with respect
- Help the organisation to work towards its aims and objectives
- Perform agreed duties
- Report any accidents to a member of staff
- Respect confidentiality
- Consult the appropriate person if in need of help or guidance
- To claim for their out of pocket expenses

Expenses

Volunteers of Little Hiccups are entitled to out-of-pocket expenses or travel expenses at 45p per mile, as per HM Customs & Revenue tax guidance at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/Manuals.

Equality of Opportunity

Little Hiccups recognises that the activity of volunteering can provide a volunteer with experiences and opportunities for self and career development. In accordance with Little Hiccups Equality and Diversity Policy volunteer placements will be open to individuals irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age or marital status.

Little Hiccups aim to be an organisation that values, recognises and responds to the diverse needs of members and those we serve. We adhere to the Equality Act 2010 and will not discriminate against any person or other organisation with particular reference to the protected characteristics.

Confidentiality

Volunteers should regard all information as confidential and it must not be passed on to a third party and must adhere to Little Hiccups' Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy.

Volunteers should always use the business address to correspond with clients and must not give their personal details.

However, we understand that friendships and supportive relationships may naturally develop between volunteers and families. While Little Hiccups encourages community and connection, any sharing of personal contact details (such as phone numbers or social media accounts) is a personal decision



and is not facilitated or monitored by the organisation. Once contact is made outside of official Little Hiccups activities, these interactions are considered personal and fall outside the scope of Little Hiccups' responsibility and safeguarding framework. Volunteers are reminded to ensure that any such sharing is consensual and respectful of privacy.

Little Hiccups will do their best to safeguard any information retained (application forms etc.)

Volunteers have the rights to access their own records. Organisations must on written request; supply a copy of any information kept about a person and can charge up to £10 in most circumstances.

Insurance

Volunteers are only covered whilst they are engaged in activities on Little Hiccups' behalf.

Termination

Little Hiccups' represented by the Chief Executive or appropriate Manager, can, where appropriate, terminate the placement of the volunteer by giving one week's notice in writing. Should the volunteer wish to be debriefed on their termination they may request a meeting with the manager and/or Chief Executive.

Resignation

Volunteers of Little Hiccups can, where appropriate, resign from their role as a volunteer by giving one week's notice in writing.

Discipline and Grievance Procedure

Volunteers of Little Hiccups in case of any dispute will have access to the organisation's Discipline and Grievance Procedure, and will be subject to its procedures.

Policy agreed by Trustees on:

Signed by Chairperson:

To be reviewed:



Amendments

Date	Amendment Made	By whom
26/04/2021	None made. 3 year review approved at Committee Meeting	MWP
23/07/2025	Addition of new clause for friendships	MWP

