

# Volunteer Policy

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Members of



National Network of Parent Carer Forums  
'Our Strength is our Shared Experience'  
[www.npcf.org.uk](http://www.npcf.org.uk)



# Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC Ltd.

The independent voice for families from birth to 25 with additional needs or disabilities

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## Introduction

Somerset Parent Carer Forum is a parent led organisation, with all the people leading our working having a child or young person with additional needs and/or disabilities.

Our core purpose is to ensure parent carers in Somerset have a voice and help to make sure that services reflect the needs of local families. We are independent from the NHS, Local Authority and other education, health and care services, so parent carers can talk to us confidently and freely about their views and experiences.

We work together in partnership with various agencies to contribute to the development of services in order to improve and enhance the experiences and opportunities of children and young people with additional needs or disability by putting families at the heart of decision making.

We provide a range of information and support for parent carers in Somerset. We run groups for you to meet up with other parents , workshops to get information and a phone line where you can speak to one of our parent representatives. All of these are run by parent carers who have a shared lived experience.

Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC recognises that volunteers make a vital contribution to our aims. We recognise the added value that volunteers bring to our organisation and those who use our services. Volunteer involvement in this organisation does not replace or devalue the role of paid staff.

Within Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC volunteers are involved in:

- The Steering Group
- Running Chill and Chat coffee sessions for parent carers
- Attend participation meetings and workshops
- Support with covering phone lines and complete calls to parents offering peer to peer support
- Support project work

Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC aims to have a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship with our volunteers; with their involvement informing and developing our work, and our work enabling individuals to learn skills and achieve personal development through their volunteering.



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The involvement of volunteers will be guided by the following principles of good practice:

- the tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all everyone is sure of their respective roles and responsibilities
- the organisation will comply with the Data Protection Act in the use of data held on all volunteers
- volunteering opportunities will complement rather than replace the work of paid staff
- volunteers will be provided with regular opportunities to share ideas/concerns with a named contact
- all existing and future policies will be checked as to how they affect volunteers

## The Purpose of this Policy

By adopting this policy Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC aims to:

- highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers
- reflect the purpose, values, standards and strategies of the organisation in its approach to involving volunteers
- recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers
- confirm this organisation's commitment to involving volunteers in its work
- establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers; and
- ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers

This policy provides an overview of the activities carried out by volunteers currently and provides a basis for the expansion, if required, for the role of volunteers alongside paid staff. This document and the forums policies, procedures and guidance provide a framework for the involvement of volunteers.

## Recruitment and Selection

Company No: 10227489. Vat no: 432586488  
Registered in England.  
Unit 2, 32 Goldcroft, Yeovil. Somerset. BA21 4DH.  
[www.somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk](http://www.somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk)  
E: [admin@somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk](mailto:admin@somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk)

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Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC will adhere to its equalities and diversity policy when recruiting and selecting volunteers. All potential volunteers will be asked to complete a volunteer's application form. All volunteers will be required to provide 2 references.

Written task descriptions will outline time, commitment, necessary skills and actual duties. Where there is specific training required this will be highlighted as part of the recruitment process. Where there is a requirement for a Disclosure Check this will be highlighted as part of the recruitment process. Where individuals cannot be placed, we will endeavour to refer them to another agency who can support them to find a volunteering opportunity.

## Support and Supervision

Once placed, we will expect volunteers to comply with existing policies and procedures. All volunteers are covered under [Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC Public Liability Insurance.

All volunteers will have an induction to their volunteering which will involve an overview of the relevant policies and procedures. Volunteers will be required to complete an Induction and will be invited to the monthly team meetings.

Volunteers will have regular support and supervision meetings with a named contact to identify areas for development, or to discuss any issues. A record of these discussions will be held as part of the individual volunteer's records. Volunteers can have access to their records at any time.

Volunteers will be able to claim reasonable expenses for their volunteering in line with the Finance Policy. Volunteers should discuss any planned expenditure to ensure that it will be covered by the organisation.

Where volunteers have holidays or other commitments which mean that they cannot attend their normal volunteering, they should advise their named contact to ensure that we can arrange alternative cover. If volunteers require a longer break from their volunteering, they should discuss this with their named contact. Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC will endeavour to be as flexible as possible to accommodate the needs of volunteers.

Volunteers can access learning and development opportunities which are relevant to their volunteering role throughout their time with Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC. The forum buys into the Ihasco suite of training and volunteers will be asked to complete core modules such as safeguarding.

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Opportunities for Learning and Development will form part of the discussions at support and supervision sessions.

## Problem Solving

Where a concern is highlighted – either by a volunteer or about a volunteer, this will be dealt with using the organisation's Disciplinary, Grievance and Dismissal Policy.

## Responsibility

Overall responsibility for the implementations, monitoring and review of the policy and procedures lies with the directors. Implementation and adherence to this policy is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers within the organisation.