

The Spark Arts for Children

Volunteers Policy



1. Volunteer Policy

In order to run our projects and The Spark Festival, we rely on the support of volunteers to represent The Spark by stewarding at performances and events, getting feedback from audiences and helping with arts and crafts workshops. We value your commitment and appreciate the time you donate to help us, and therefore will support you throughout your time with us, so you can gain practical experience in working within the Arts and Festival industry. We will also provide references upon request to future employers.

We aim to:

- Ensure that all volunteers are treated equally and fairly.
- Provide clarity to volunteers about what they can expect and where they can turn to if they feel things are going wrong.
- Provide opportunities for skills development through volunteering for us, enhancing volunteers CV's and therefore their employability.

2. Recruitment

We will use appropriate means to advertise for volunteers locally that take into account the principles of our Equal Opportunities and Equalities Policies. The applicant will be invited to submit a form to register their interest and provide a reference. If successful they will then be invited to a group induction.

3. Disclosure & Barring Service

It is the normal practice of the company that volunteers are recruited for activities that are **not considered "Regulated Activity"**, and therefore are not required to have an enhanced DBS check. However each activity will be assessed on an individual basis to ensure proper supervision is in place.

In the case of a volunteer being required to undertake "Regulated Activity" (e.g. unsupervised on a regular and intensive time period), a DBS check will be undertaken.

The Spark requires all volunteers for roles involving contact with young people to complete a self-disclosure form. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant from working with the company, but this will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of any offence.

4. Induction and Training

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by the volunteer's line manager. This will include:

- The role of the volunteer
- A list of all staff members and volunteers
- A list of Management Committee members
- Copies of all the relevant policies including this Volunteer policy, Health & Safety and Equal Opportunities policies.
- Essential procedures i.e. timekeeping, rota etc.
- Other information as appropriate.

On-site pre-event induction will also be taken on the day of the event.

As most volunteers will work for us for a short period over the festival, there will not be a trial period. All volunteers will be invited to comment on their experience after the event.

For any volunteers taken on for an on-going period of time, there will be a trial period of 4 weeks to give the organisation and the volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other. A review will be made midway through the trial period and also at the end.

5. **Expenses**

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. Local travel expenses, if required, will be reimbursed. In order to claim expenses, an expenses form must be completed and given to the General Manager.

6. **Support**

The line manager and other volunteers will offer support to the volunteers. The line manager will support all volunteers and will have regular meetings with the volunteers to discuss any problems or issues that may arise.

7. **Insurance**

The organisation has a valid insurance policy which you are advised to read.

8. **Confidentiality**

This organisation has a confidentiality code, which all workers, which includes Management Committee, volunteers and staff, are obliged to observe.

9. **Resolving Problems**

The relationship between the organisation and its volunteer workers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the organisation is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to the clients who use it, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service.

If your role as a volunteer does not meet with the organisation's standards, here is how it will be dealt with:

1. Initially with a meeting with the line manager who will explain the concerns.
2. If this does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the Chair of the Management Committee will be convened.
3. If your work still does not meet with our standards then we shall have to stop using your services.

At all times you will be able to freely state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your work you should:

1. Initially explain your dissatisfaction with the line manager
2. If that does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the line manager should be convened
3. If that does not resolve the issue then a formal meeting with the Chair of the Management Committee should follow.
4. If after this, your dissatisfaction remains unresolved, and we are unable to resolve your grievance, then it would be inappropriate for you to continue to be a volunteer.

At all times you will be freely able to state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

10. **Review**

This procedure will be reviewed and updated in line with relevant legislation, case law and emerging good practice.