

Halton Send Carer's Forum

Volunteer policy



Approved by:	HSCF Committee Officers
Approved on	14th March 2022
Reviewed on:	
Next review due on:	March 2025

Halton Send Carer's Forum (HSCF) recognises that volunteers can make an important contribution to the organisation and is positively committed to using volunteers in the work of HSCF. The general policy of HSCF is:

- To recruit volunteers as a representation of a cross-section of the community and to especially encourage parent carers to volunteer
- To endeavour to reduce or remove barriers to volunteering
- To ensure that the work of the volunteers complements and enhances the work of paid staff
- To provide clear guidelines regarding the roles and responsibilities of volunteers
- To provide adequate support, supervision and training of volunteers

What volunteers can expect from HSCF

Volunteers can expect to:

- receive a clear description of their role and the tasks they are being asked to perform
- receive an induction on the work of HSCF
- receive any information and/or training they need to meet the responsibilities of their role; they can also access [webinars and other training](#) for parent carer forums provided by the charity Contact
- receive as much advance warning of meetings as possible
- have a named person to whom they are responsible and who will provide ongoing support and supervision (volunteer, coordinator, mentor, Forum Officer)
- be invited to at least two volunteer meetings per year
- receive reimbursement for any reasonable out-of-pocket expenses in accordance with HSCF's Expenses and Remuneration Policy
- be provided with adequate insurance cover whilst undertaking work approved and authorised by HSCF (does not include motor insurance). (HSCF does not accept responsibility for loss of staff or volunteers' property, including cash)
- be treated in accordance with HSCF's Equal Opportunities Policy and Health and Safety Statement
- be treated with understanding of their carer status, and not made to feel bad if they have to reduce or pause their involvement to focus on their family
- have their views and opinions heard
- receive references on the basis of their work for HSCF (regular volunteers only)
- refuse a task they are not comfortable with
- receive a prompt and fair response to any problems, grievances and difficulties they raise in relation to their work, in accordance with HSCF's Comments and Complaints Policy

What HSCF expects from volunteers

HSCF expects its volunteers to:

- work within the vision and values of HSCF
- work within the agreed role description, undertake relevant training and be clear what is expected of them
- abide by HSCF's policies and procedures, including:
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Confidentiality Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Health and Safety Statement
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Expenses and Remuneration Policy
 - Conflict of Interest Policy
 - Password Policy
 - Comments and Complaints Policy
 - Social Media Policy
- be punctual and reliable, and promptly inform the named person when they become aware that they will be unable to attend an appointment or a meeting, or carry out a piece of work assigned to them
- be honest about the amount of time they are able to commit
- log their volunteering hours via email to haltontsendcarersforum@gmail.com
- maintain professional boundaries and avoid giving their home address, email address or phone number in their work
- be polite
- avoid criticism or endorsement of named individuals, schools, organisations or services whilst undertaking work on behalf of HSCF
- respect other cultures, religions, parenting styles, political opinions etc.
- refrain from championing one approach (e.g. specific therapy or medical intervention) over another
- be clear that any opinions they express outside their work for HSCF are their personal views and should not be regarded as being the official HSCF line
- be aware that any information they post on social media, whether through their personal account or an HSCF account, could affect how people perceive HSCF, and refrain from posting comments on social media that could negatively impact on working relationships with HSCF's partners
- be clear at third-party events and meetings (e.g. consultations organised by the local authority) whether they are there as an individual parent OR as an authorised HSCF representative
- if approached by organisations to be a volunteer for HSCF, to refer back to HSCF for approval to ensure attendance meets our key priorities
- wear identification whilst attending public events and meetings as an authorised HSCF representative
- not talk to the press or radio or other media on behalf of HSCF without prior authority

- inform the named person or a member of the Committee Officers if they are having any difficulties with their work
- inform the named person or a member of the Committee Officers of any personal circumstances which may affect their ability to exercise their responsibilities appropriately. This includes:
 - any allegation that the volunteer may have committed, or is being investigated in relation to having committed a crime
 - any child protection or safeguarding concern relating to children and/or vulnerable adults
 - any conflicts of interest (see Conflict of Interest Policy)
- not be under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substances whilst undertaking work on behalf of HSCF
- treat offers of gifts, favours or hospitality with caution in order to avoid the risk of damage to public confidence which could result from accepting such things. In particular, volunteers should
 - only accept gifts which are of a token value or nature (e.g. gifts of a promotional or insignificant nature, tokens of thanks)
 - only accept hospitality where it is on a scale appropriate to the circumstances, reasonably incidental to the occasion, and not extravagant

Breach of these requirements may constitute a disciplinary offence and your role within HSCF will be subject for review.