

PROJECT WEST VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTION

Including Person Specification

Role status

This is a voluntary role and is not a job or contract of employment. Volunteers are not paid for their time and are not promised paid work. An agreed Volunteer Role Agreement will describe the placement, supervision, training and any approved expenses. Either Project West or the volunteer may end the arrangement.

1 ROLE SUMMARY

Role title	Project West Volunteer
Service area	Allocated according to suitability and service need. This may include centre support, supervised activities, family-support assistance, mentoring support or administration.
Responsible to	Named Project West Coordinator, Manager or allocated supervisor
Location	Project West centre and, only where expressly authorised and risk assessed, an approved community, education or family setting
Commitment	Mutually agreed availability and placement period. Regular attendance and reasonable notice of absence are expected, but the arrangement is voluntary.
Expenses	Reasonable, necessary and pre-authorised out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed in line with Project West's procedure and on production of receipts. No wages, allowance or reward is payable.

2 PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

To contribute safely and positively to Project West's work with children and families while gaining experience, developing skills and supporting the effective running of services. Volunteers complement the work of trained staff and do not replace employees, sessional workers or qualified practitioners.

Allocation

The exact activities offered will depend on the volunteer's skills, checks, training, experience and the needs and risks of the service. No volunteer is automatically authorised to undertake every activity listed in this document.

3 POSSIBLE VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

- ☐ Help prepare welcoming, safe and age-appropriate rooms and resources before sessions.
- ☐ Support staff with approved play, creative, educational or practical activities for children and families.
- ☐ Welcome visitors and assist with routine centre information under staff direction.
- ☐ Assist with organising resources, activity packs, displays and non-confidential materials.
- ☐ Support approved community or group activities alongside an authorised Project West worker.
- ☐ Help with basic administrative, filing, data-entry or telephone tasks where access has been authorised.
- ☐ Contribute ideas and feedback through supervision while maintaining confidentiality.
- ☐ Attend induction, training, team briefings and supervision relevant to the placement.
- ☐ Carry out other suitable and agreed activities within the Volunteer Role Agreement.

4 ROLE BOUNDARIES: WHAT VOLUNTEERS MUST NOT DO

Volunteers must remain within their role

Unless separately recruited, checked, trained and formally authorised for another position, a volunteer must not:

- ☐ supervise Family Time, conduct an assessment or take sole responsibility for a child or family;
- ☐ work alone with a child or accompany, transport, collect or return a child without explicit written authorisation and suitable checks;
- ☐ undertake home visits, community work, personal care, medication or physical intervention independently;
- ☐ give legal, social-work, therapeutic or other professional advice, or make promises about case outcomes;
- ☐ intervene in adult disputes except to seek immediate staff assistance or respond to an emergency within training;
- ☐ use a personal phone or device to photograph, film or record a child, family member, document or Project West information;

- ☐ exchange personal contact details, connect through social media or communicate privately with service users;
- ☐ give or accept money, gifts, lifts or personal favours, or enter private arrangements with a family;
- ☐ access, copy, remove or share records beyond what is necessary and authorised;
- ☐ represent themselves as an employee, qualified practitioner or spokesperson for Project West.

5 SAFEGUARDING AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- ☐ Place the safety and welfare of children first and follow Project West safeguarding procedures at all times.
- ☐ Report any concern, disclosure, allegation, injury, incident or change in risk immediately to the allocated supervisor or Coordinator.
- ☐ Never investigate a disclosure, promise secrecy or delay reporting because information appears uncertain.
- ☐ Maintain appropriate, child-focused and impartial professional boundaries.
- ☐ Follow staff instructions, individual risk assessments, safety plans and emergency procedures.
- ☐ Use respectful, inclusive and anti-discriminatory practice with every child, family member, colleague and professional.
- ☐ Keep personal and case information confidential and use only authorised systems and communication routes.
- ☐ Complete any authorised record promptly, factually and without assumptions or unnecessary personal information.
- ☐ Disclose any conflict of interest, prior connection, complaint, investigation or change that may affect suitability.
- ☐ Do not attend while impaired by alcohol, drugs, medication, illness, fatigue or any condition that may make the role unsafe.

6 SUPPORT, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

Named support	A Coordinator, Manager or allocated supervisor will provide day-to-day direction and be the first point of contact.
Induction	Project West induction, safeguarding, confidentiality, professional boundaries, health and safety, equality and relevant local procedures.
Role-specific preparation	Additional briefing, shadowing or training will be provided before activities requiring it.
Supervision	Regular check-ins and planned supervision proportionate to the placement. Concerns must also be raised immediately rather than waiting for supervision.
Insurance and safety	The placement is subject to confirmation that the agreed activities are covered by Project West's insurance and risk-management arrangements.
Development	Reasonable opportunities to reflect, receive feedback and develop relevant skills, without any guarantee of a paid role or qualification.

7 ATTENDANCE, CONDUCT AND ENDING THE PLACEMENT

- ☐ Agree realistic availability and inform the named supervisor as early as possible if unable to attend.
- ☐ Be punctual, appropriately dressed and ready to follow the agreed role and safety arrangements.
- ☐ Follow Project West policies, including safeguarding, confidentiality, complaints, equality, health and safety, information security and professional conduct.
- ☐ Return keys, identification, documents, devices and all Project West property when requested or when the placement ends.
- ☐ Understand that Project West may pause or end volunteering immediately where there is a safeguarding, conduct, performance, confidentiality, attendance or service concern.

8 PERSON SPECIFICATION

Criterion	Essential	Desirable	How assessed
Commitment to safeguarding children and following reporting procedures	✓	—	Application / interview / references / checks
Warm, respectful and non-judgmental approach to children and families	✓	—	Application / interview / observation
Ability to maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries	✓	—	Application / interview / references
Reliable, punctual and able to communicate promptly about attendance	✓	—	Application / references / placement
Able to follow instructions, risk assessments and supervision arrangements	✓	—	Interview / induction / placement
Clear spoken and written English appropriate to the allocated activities	✓	—	Application / interview
Respect for equality, diversity, culture, faith, disability and identity	✓	—	Application / interview / placement
Able to reflect, receive feedback and ask for help when unsure	✓	—	Interview / supervision

Criterion	Essential	Desirable	How assessed
Experience with children, families or community services	—	✓	Application / references
Relevant study, training, language, activity or administrative skills	—	✓	Application / certificates
Basic digital skills for authorised communication or record keeping	—	✓	Application / practical assessment
Ability to travel to the agreed placement location	✓	—	Application / discussion

9 SAFER RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT CONDITIONS

Checks are proportionate to the activities

No placement involving children or confidential information will begin until Project West is satisfied that the necessary safer-recruitment and role checks are complete. The level of DBS and any Children's Barred List check will be determined lawfully from the actual activities and frequency of the role.

- ☐ Completed Project West Volunteer Application Form and satisfactory informal interview.
- ☐ Proof of identity and, where relevant, evidence of permission to volunteer in the UK.
- ☐ Two satisfactory references, including relevant children's-work information where applicable.
- ☐ Appropriate DBS check and Children's Barred List information where the role is eligible or regulated activity.
- ☐ Overseas, qualification, professional-registration or driving checks where relevant to the agreed activities.
- ☐ Completed induction, signed Volunteer Role Agreement and confidentiality undertaking.
- ☐ Approved risk assessment, named supervisor and clearly recorded role boundaries.

10 HOW TO APPLY

Complete the Project West Volunteer Application Form and return it securely to admin@projectwest.co.uk. Please do not send medical history or detailed criminal-record information unless Project West requests it through the appropriate confidential process.

Project West's commitment

Project West welcomes applications from people with varied backgrounds and experience. Selection decisions are based on the requirements and safety of the role. Reasonable adjustments are available for the application and selection process.

Project West Assessment & Contact Services

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