



VOLUNTEER POLICY

**Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is available in Welsh**

DATE DOCUMENT PUBLISHED	March 2022
APPROVED BY	SMT
APPROVAL DATE	March 2022
DOCUMENT OWNER	ER Team

CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE NUMBER
Introduction	4
Policy Statement	4
Scope	5
Definition of a Volunteer	5
Safeguarding	6
Recruitment and Selection	6
(a) Regulated Activity	7
(b) Commissioned/ contracted services	8
(c) Integrated/collaborative services	8
Equality and Diversity	9
Induction	9
Training	10
Support and Supervision note on frequency of supervision	10
Trial Period	10
Rotation	10
Health & Safety	10
Insurance	11
Clothing and ID Cards	11
Confidentiality and Data Protection	11
Social Media	12
Reimbursement	12
Volunteer Drivers	12
Dealing with Concerns	13
Trade Unions	14
Whistleblowing	14

Alcohol Drugs and Substance Misuse	14
Evaluation and Review	14
Appendix A - DBS checks & Safeguarding Information for VOLUNTEERS Guidance for Managers and Volunteers	15
Appendix B - Induction of volunteer	22

	Effective Date	Amendment
Version 1	March 2022	
Version 2	June 2025	Minimum age added

Introduction

1. Cardiff Council (the Council) recognises the important and valuable contribution made by volunteers who give freely of their time to add value to the services provided by the paid workforce, with the ultimate aim of enhancing services for citizens and communities within Cardiff.
2. This policy describes the role of volunteers in service delivery and sets out the terms governing their engagement and ongoing relationship with the Council.
3. A volunteer is not an employee of the Council and there is no binding contractual relationship between volunteers and the Council. Volunteers are not a replacement or substitute for paid employees.
4. The role of volunteers is complementary, not supplementary to the role of paid employees. Volunteers will not undertake the work of paid employees, nor will they cover vacant posts. Volunteers will not be employed in times of industrial action to cover the work of paid employees but may continue with their regular volunteering role should the appropriate support / supervision be available.

Policy Statement

5. The Council acknowledges the significant role that volunteers play both in supporting service delivery and in promoting community wellbeing. The Council offers a wide variety of volunteering opportunities across numerous services for people with particular skills, experience or interests.
6. Volunteers are expected to comply with relevant Council policies and procedures whilst engaged in volunteering with the Council. This applies to a variety of policies but specifically and not limited to the Council's safe recruitment policies, safeguarding, and health and safety policies. A supportive and comprehensive induction will be provided to all volunteers by the relevant service area in which they are engaged to ensure they are aware of the Council's expectations in this respect.
7. All Directorates using the services of volunteers will be expected to comply with the procedures set out in this policy.
8. Schools are required to have their own register of volunteers and a policy that reflects the details herein. The Council's internal audit department will audit all volunteer registers.
9. Through its application, this policy seeks to ensure that there is no discrimination against volunteers either directly or indirectly on grounds prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. This Policy and Procedure applies to all permanent employees of the Council (except school employees who have a separate policy) irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment/affirmation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and Welsh language.

Scope

10. This policy applies to all volunteers engaged in supporting the delivery of Council services. This includes services delivered on behalf of the Council, including contractors and schools. The minimum age for a volunteer within the Council is 16 years old.
11. It is expected that all commissioned providers/contractors have volunteer policies and practice of equivalent standard to the Council policy. This will be checked for compliance during contract monitoring meetings.
12. This policy does not apply to volunteers who are active within communities, or indirect voluntary groups such as friends groups, and not managed by Council services, or Council employees volunteering for other groups and organisations. Indirect voluntary groups are defined as groups of volunteers that the Council has not formally inducted into a Council volunteering role, but who work with the Council to deliver shared priorities. The Council's responsibility for the group can differ depending on the level of control, location of the activity taking place and whether the activity is the Council's undertaking.
13. The Council is required to keep a record of the contact details of the indirect voluntary groups and the activities they carry out. This will be the responsibility of the service area that is working with this group. These details will not form part of the central database of volunteers referred to in this policy. The Council should provide support with relevant information, policies and guidelines however, it is the groups own responsibility to ensure relevant policies and procedures are adhered to.

Definition of a Volunteer

14. Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship and an essential component of democracy. It is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community and can take many forms. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.
15. The volunteer relationship is binding in honor, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise will be imposed on volunteers. Likewise, the Council does not undertake to provide regular volunteering opportunities, payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken.
16. The Manager responsible for the relevant service area has overall responsibility for the engagement and support of volunteers.
17. The DBS definition of a volunteer is defined in the Police Act 1997 (criminal records) Regulations 2002 as:
'Any person engaged in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party and not a close relative'.

18. It is important that the differences between volunteers and work experience placements are clear.
 - Volunteers actively support the service delivery either by bringing their own skills / expertise or being developed / trained in the service to deliver an aspect of the service that could not be delivered without volunteers.
 - Work experience placements attend the organisation to develop work related skills primarily for their own benefit as the organisation does not rely or depend on them to deliver a service.

Safeguarding

19. Safeguarding children, and adults at risk, is everybody's responsibility. Part 7 of the Social Service and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 makes clear the individual responsibilities and accountabilities of the whole workforce, including the volunteer workforce for the safeguarding of children, and adults at risk.
20. The Council is committed to ensuring that people living in the City are safe and protected and that its statutory duties to safeguard and protect children, young people and adults at risk are properly discharged.
21. The Council's workforce shares a responsibility, both collectively and individually, to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected from harm. Council employees, Elected Members, volunteers and contractors who come into contact with children, or adults at risk, in the course of their duties are required to understand their responsibility and where necessary take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable people. As a minimum, this means understanding their duty to report concerns.
22. The Council's [Corporate Safeguarding Policy](#) applies to all volunteering opportunities. This must be covered in the initial induction, and the required training is provided by the service area wherever appropriate.
23. For additional guidance, please see AppendixA.

Recruitment and Selection

24. Volunteers who are engaged with the Council, including within schools, will be subject where necessary to the same safe recruitment processes as the paid workforce albeit proportionate to the nature of the activity being undertaken.
25. The engagement of volunteers must adhere to safe recruitment principles as established through the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy safe recruitment processes.
26. Volunteer opportunities can be advertised in a variety of ways and part of the engagement process will include the completion of an application form and attendance at an informal interview as a minimum. The interview will explore

volunteer skills, experience, interests and suitability for roles as well as volunteer motivation.

27. The responsibility for the safe recruitment of volunteer's rests with the recruiting Manager.
28. Should a volunteer require additional support to enable them to fulfil a volunteering role, this will be explored and discussed with the Manager.
29. The Manager must register the volunteer using the appropriate application on DigiGOV to ensure that there is a central record kept. A National Insurance Number is required to register the Volunteer This will record how often the individual volunteers and record the roles that they are undertaking. This will then determine whether they are in regulated activity and the recruitment checks to be followed in line with the Council's [DBS Policy](#).
30. The Council has a duty to ensure that it is not unnecessarily undertaking checks which could result in a breach of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) 1975. The Manager must therefore ensure that a DBS check is only required when it is lawful to do so. The DBS Policy provides detailed advice which will assist the manager in determining if a check is required and whether it is at a Standard or Enhanced level. If an Enhanced level check is required, it may also be appropriate to request the DBS undertakes a Children's or Adults Workforce check or both.

(a) Regulated Activity

Regulated activity is defined as unsupervised activity in a limited range of establishments with the opportunity for contact with children and young people or adults at risk. The scope of regulated activity includes unsupervised activities such as:

- Teaching
- Training
- Instructing
- Caring for or supervising children and young people or adults at risk
- Providing advice or guidance on wellbeing
- Driving a vehicle only for children or adults at risk.

In addition, to be regarded as regulated activity, this unsupervised activity enacted within a specified place must be done regularly. Regularly means carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on four or more days in a 30-day period (or in some cases, overnight).

One-off volunteering

Unless a volunteer is involved or will be involved in regulated activity with children or with adults at risk, there is no requirement for a volunteer to have a DBS check

for a one-off event and we legally cannot request one. However, if the one-off event

falls under the definition of Regulated Activity then a volunteer will require a DBS check (even if the parent/guardian is present). This is because some activity is classed as Regulated Activity even when it occurs once. For example, taking a child to the toilet, personal care, physical help with eating or drinking due to illness or disability. Further information is provided under the full definition of Regulated Activity available in the DBS policy.

Safer recruitment

Risk Level	Description of role	Safe Recruitment Requirements
High	Volunteer role within regulated activity	Application Form DBS Check (at correct level) Two character references Safeguarding Training E-Learning or face-to-face equivalent
Medium	Volunteer role may involve frequent supervised contact with adults at risk, young people and children.	Application Form Two character references Safeguarding Training E-Learning or face-to-face equivalent
Low	Volunteer role, which does not include frequent activity with adults at risk, young people and children.	Application Form One-character reference Safeguarding Training E-Learning or face-to-face equivalent

(b) Commissioned/ contracted services

In commissioning or contracting any service that utilises volunteers as part of its service offer, the commissioning manager will need to ensure there is robust policy for engagement of volunteers, which is of equivalent standard as the Council Volunteering Policy. Specifically, the terms of the contract will require as a minimum that there are robust and effective policies and practice in place for safeguarding, including training and volunteering.

(c) Integrated/collaborative services

The Council provides a number of services through partnership arrangements with other organisations, for example, the NHS. The partnership agreement, which provides the formal governance arrangement for integrated services, will make clear which organisation's policies are used to support the recruitment of volunteers. In entering into such agreements, the Council will need to assure itself that partner's volunteering policies are of equivalent standard as Council policy.

The Council where appropriate, will support and use volunteers in partnership with other organisations. In these cases, relevant safe recruitment evidence must be in place.

Equality and Diversity

31. The Council is committed to equal opportunities and abides by the Equality Act 2010. The Council's Equality Framework applies to the paid and unpaid workforce.
32. The Council will actively encourage volunteering through promotion to relevant networks and support groups and all literature will be written in English and Welsh.
33. Equality monitoring forms will be included with volunteer application forms.
34. The Council expects all volunteers to subscribe to and adhere to the principles and practices of the Council's Equalities Policy.
35. The Council welcomes people with disabilities and additional needs who want to volunteer. The Council will make reasonable adjustments where possible for people with disabilities/additional needs who volunteer with us, additional risk assessments may be required to safely manage any risks involved. The Council would encourage any potential volunteers with additional needs or disabilities to discuss their individual circumstances with their line manager for any potential volunteering opportunity.

Induction (also refer to appendix B)

36. Line Managers must ensure that all volunteers shall receive an induction into the organisation and into their role in advance of, or on, the first day of the volunteering activity.
37. As part of their induction, volunteers will receive the following information:
 - General information about the Council and the service area they are volunteering within
 - The Volunteering Policy
 - Employee Charter, which outlines standards of behaviour that volunteers are expected to comply with.
 - A letter which sets out the terms of the engagement, to be signed by both parties on start date.
 - Details of tasks and expectations.
 - A documented named supervisor.
 - Confidentiality agreement
 - Cardiff Council Corporate Safeguarding Intranet page.
38. Volunteers are also welcome to attend the Council's Corporate Induction delivered regularly to newly appointed paid employees.
39. Volunteers should be given a copy of this policy and assistance with accessing other policies and guidance referred to within this policy.

Training

40. The Council will match the time, skills and experience of volunteers to suitable volunteering opportunities and ensure appropriate information, training and support is provided to enhance the relationship, including safeguarding training.
41. It is expected all volunteers undertake the basic safeguarding e-learning module as part of the corporate induction and minimum training requirements. Further training needs will be identified by the line manager commensurate with the volunteer role.

Support and Supervision note on frequency of supervision

41. All volunteers will have a named manager or supervisor with responsibility for agreeing the scope of their role, providing an induction and appropriate ongoing support, ensuring that volunteers are aware of and operate within the scope of relevant Council policies and procedures involving any issues that arise during the course of the volunteering relationship.

Trial period

42. A review of the volunteering placement will be undertaken after 3 months, or before should any issues arise.

Rotation

43. Where there is a high demand for volunteering in certain areas, or demand for particular volunteering activities, these opportunities may be time limited. In order to ensure all opportunities with the Council are accessible, all volunteer opportunities are subject to regular review, looking at the quality of the experience and any potential for development.

Health and Safety

44. The Council has a responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers to provide a safe environment in which volunteers can carry out their activities effectively with minimum risk to themselves, the public or the Council.
45. Line Managers or those co-ordinating volunteers must ensure that individuals understand the health and safety issues surrounding their roles as part of a documented induction process. Information provided to volunteers will be in a form that can be easily understood.
46. Risk Assessments will be undertaken on volunteering activities identifying hazards, assessing the risk and putting in place control measures to reduce the

level of risk for an activity to an acceptable level. Further advice on completing a Volunteer Risk Assessment can be sought from the Council's Health and Safety Department.

47. Volunteers will be provided with appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision relevant to their volunteering activities. Appropriate equipment will be provided for reasons of health and safety when undertaking their volunteering role.
48. Volunteers will be encouraged to ask questions and seek advice on any aspect of the activity they are not sure of.
49. Volunteers would not be subject to health surveillance; however all volunteers should be physically capable of undertaking the activities they are assigned and be free from health conditions which would place them or others at increased risk while undertaking volunteering activities.
50. Any accidents/incidents involving volunteers should be reported to the Health and Safety Department in the normal way.

Insurance

51. Volunteers operating on behalf and under the control of the Council are covered by the Council's public liability insurance policy. This protects volunteers against loss, injury caused by accident, negligence or assault whilst carrying out activities on behalf of the Council. It also protects the public against any loss or damage to property by the negligence of anyone acting on the Council's authority, including volunteers.
52. Where required, insurance cover needs to be confirmed with the Council's Insurance department prior to volunteer engagement.

Clothing and ID Cards

53. All volunteers, as a minimum, will be issued with a volunteer's badge and where there is a business need they will be provided with branded clothing and/or a security card.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

54. During the course of their volunteering with the Council, a volunteer may become aware of confidential information about the Council, its employees, customers /clients/ service users and / or suppliers. Volunteers must not disclose this information or use it for their own or another's benefit without the consent of the parties concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain (unless it has been made public by the volunteer's breach of confidentiality), or where the law permits or requires disclosure.

55. In addition, information and management (storing, handling and use) of personal data needs to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations.
56. When dealing with DBS checks, managers will only record the DBS number and date issued. A copy of the DBS certificate must not be taken.

Social Media

57. Volunteers are actively encouraged to consider the use of digital communications to complement other traditional communication methods.
58. The Council's [Social Media Policy](#) applies to volunteers and outlines the standards expected of people when using social media, how the Council monitors use and what will happen if used inappropriately.

Reimbursement

59. Volunteers are unpaid. However, in certain circumstances, the Council will reimburse volunteers for approved out of pocket expenses, which are appropriately receipted in accordance with the Council's [Travelling and Subsistence Policy and Procedure](#).
60. The Council has a consistent approach to the reimbursement of expenses, which is the same for volunteers and employees and is as approved by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.
61. Information on volunteers receiving gifts or gratuities can be found in the [Code of Conduct](#).

Volunteer Drivers

62. Volunteers should not be encouraged to use their own vehicles unless necessary as expense and insurance issues will need to be considered.
63. If a volunteer does use their own vehicle on Council business they must comply with the Council's Occupational Road Risk Policy, regardless of whether they claim mileage or not. Line Managers must ensure that they have seen the relevant documents as outlined in the Policy. The mileage for use of a vehicle for volunteering activity will be in line with that paid to employees. Volunteers claiming mileage expenses will be required to ensure that they have business car insurance.

Dealing with Concerns

64. Volunteers should initially discuss any problems associated with their placement with their named manager or supervisor. The manager will normally try to resolve the concerns informally but if this is not possible, the volunteer should write to the

manager clearly stating what the concern is. The manager will endeavor to resolve the problem, however if the volunteer is not satisfied with the outcome, they may raise the matter with the manager's manager who will make a final decision on the outcome.

65. If a complaint is made about a volunteer, including non-compliance with Council Policy, this will be notified by the person in writing, and the manager will decide whether any action should be taken. If the volunteer is dissatisfied with the decision, it may then be raised with the manager's manager.
66. The Safeguarding allegations/concerns about Practitioners and those in Positions of Trust procedures set out arrangements for responding to safeguarding concerns about those whose voluntary work brings them into contact with children, or adults at risk. These procedures support internal disciplinary processes and provide guidance on dealing appropriately, fairly and consistently and in a timely manner with any concerns or allegations of professional abuse, neglect or harm. The main factor to consider when considering the application of these procedures is whether the individual subject to the allegation or concern, occupies a position of trust – this is where a volunteer is in a position of power or influence over a child, or adult at risk, by virtue of the nature of the volunteering activity being undertaken.
- A child is a person who has not reached its 18th birthday and the definition of a child at risk is set out in section 130(4) of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
 - An adult is a person 18 years of age and older and the definition of an adult at risk is set out in section 126 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
67. If matters are deemed by the manager to constitute serious or gross misconduct on the part of the volunteer, the Council may end the volunteering arrangement with immediate effect. Any suspected criminal activity or matters related to safeguarding may be referred to the police for investigation and, in safeguarding situations, to Social Services designated officers for safeguarding (DOS). If the volunteer wishes to appeal against the decision they should do so in writing to the Director
/ Assistant Director / Chief Officer for the relevant area, whose decision will be final.

Trade Unions

68. Volunteers have a right to be a member of a trade union in line with the regulations of each individual trade union and therefore can be represented during the process set out in paragraphs 64 to 67.

Whistleblowing

69. Although volunteers are not protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which covers whistleblowing as part of employment law, volunteers can

	Issue 2	Page 13 of 22
--	---------	---------------

access and use the Council's [Whistleblowing Policy](#) where they feel necessary to do so; but they will not receive statutory protection or compensation, as they are not Council employees.

70. If a volunteer has a concern about the running of a project or the organisation, they should speak to their manager.

Alcohol Drugs and Substance Misuse

71. The Council has in place an Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy in which the consumption of alcohol immediately prior to or during the working day is not permitted on health and safety grounds. All volunteers will be expected to comply with this policy and should be made aware of this as part of their induction.

Evaluation and Review

72. This policy will be reviewed considering operational issues / changes or legislative / Policy changes.

DBS checks & Safeguarding Information for VOLUNTEERS

Guidance for Managers and Volunteers

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was established under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The primary role of the DBS is to help employers in England and Wales make safer recruitment decisions by issuing criminal records checks and to prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups including children.

It is a way for an employer to check the background of a prospective or current employee's or volunteer's suitability to work with children, young people or adults at risk. It helps employers to check your response to the question "Do you have any criminal convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings?"

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act of 1974, criminals who have served a prison sentence of less than two and a half years and do not re-offend during a set 'rehabilitation' period after their release may have their conviction spent, which means it doesn't show up anymore and is no longer relevant when a person is being considered for most jobs.

Normally organisations are not allowed to ask applicants about spent convictions, but for roles that require a DBS check this rule does not apply.

What is a volunteer?

The DBS definition of a volunteer is defined in the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002 as:

"Any individual engaged in any activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out of pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party and not a close relative"

To undergo a DBS check a volunteer must also satisfy the eligibility requirements for a standard or enhanced DBS check.

Put simply, this means the volunteer role must involve working with children or adults at risk in regulated activity.

DBS Checks for volunteers are **usually free of charge** and are processed in exactly the same way as for a paid worker. To qualify for a free-of-charge DBS disclosure check, you must not benefit directly from the position the DBS application is being submitted for.

When is a volunteer NOT a volunteer?

In some cases, an individual may be undertaking unpaid work but will not be classed as a volunteer for DBS purposes. Individuals are not classed as volunteers if a volunteer:

- benefits directly from the position for which the DBS application is being submitted

- receives any payment (except for travel and other approved out of pocket expenses)
- is on a work placement
- is on a course that requires them to do this job role
- is in a trainee position that will lead to a full time role/qualification
- is a paid foster carer or a member of a foster care household?

In these cases, the individual will not be eligible for a free of charge DBS disclosure check, but may still require a DBS disclosure check.

Do I need a DBS check?

Generally speaking, if the voluntary work you undertake is with children or adults at risk you will probably need a DBS disclosure check. You will need a check BEFORE commencing any work or training. Employers use the DBS eligibility guidance tool, which provides information on roles that are eligible for a DBS disclosure check. If the DBS deems the role ineligible, it will decline to process the check.

Managers must tell the volunteer why they have to undertake a DBS check.

What is Regulated Activity?

Regulated Activity is work which involves close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups including children, and which cannot be undertaken by a person who is on the Disclosure and Barring Services' Barred List.

Regulated activity is broken down into two separate groups 'Activity with Children' and 'Activity with Adults'

The DBS provides guidance that describes the types of activity, and certain frequency tests, which determine if the role can be classed as Regulated Activity. This information is contained within Cardiff Council's DBS Policy.

DBS APPLICATION PROCESS

Volunteers cannot apply for DBS disclosure checks themselves – this must be done by the organisation they are volunteering for.

If you require a DBS disclosure check the Council will give you a DBS application form to complete. You will meet up with your manager and bring along with your documents proving your identity such as a passport, current driving licence and proof of address.

Your completed DBS application form will then be sent to the HR People Services Team who will process it and send it off to the DBS.

Managers arrange DBS disclosure checks for volunteers in line with the following:

Step 1:

Establish whether the role is eligible for a DBS disclosure check. You can use the DBS eligibility guidance tool as a starting point.

Step 2:

If the role is eligible, consider whether it meets the DBS definition of a volunteer
“Any individual engaged in any activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out of pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party and not a close relative”

Step 3:

If the individual is considered a volunteer in accordance with the definition at Step 2, arrange for the volunteer to complete the DBS application form.

Managers need to note that on the DBS application form it states ‘By placing a cross in the ‘yes’ box (at section 68) you confirm that the post meets the DBS definition for a free of charge volunteer application. Please note that DBS may recover the application fee if box 68 is marked in error and this could result in cancellation of the DBS registration.

When a DBS application has been processed by the DBS, the individual (not the Council) will receive a DBS certificate.

As part of our safe recruitment processes at Cardiff Council, a volunteer is required to show their DBS certificate to their Manager prior to commencing any voluntary work. The Manager will record the DBS number and date of issue for record purposes.

If circumstances change or a volunteer receives a criminal conviction, caution, or reprimand then a volunteer is obliged to inform Cardiff Council.

DBS UPDATE SERVICE

The DBS Update Service is an online subscription service that lets you keep your DBS certificate(s) up to date and allows employers to check a certificate online, with your consent. You can use your certificate again when you apply for a position in the same workforce, where the same type and level of check is required. The three workforces are Child, Adult and Other. Registration lasts for one year and starts from the date your DBS certificate was issued. There is no charge for volunteers! Only applicants who apply for a DBS check can join the Update Service. You can join with your DBS application form reference number when you apply for a DBS check or during the application process – you can find this number in the top right hand corner of the front page of the application form.

If you join with your application form reference, the application form must be received by the DBS within 28 days of you joining. When your DBS certificate is issued, the DBS will automatically add it to your account.

FAQ's

Can I track my DBS disclosure check?

You are able to track your DBS check. When you apply for the DBS check, you are given a DBS Application Form Reference number. You enter this number and your date of birth in the search fields provided on the DBS website – under DBS TRACKING.

What if there is a mistake on my DBS disclosure check?

It is best to get in contact with the DBS directly. Details can be found on their contact page. If you need any support, please contact HR People Services (02920 872222).

Do I need a DBS check to volunteer in a school?

Whether you are required to have a DBS check or not depends on whether you will have regulated activity with a child and how often you will be volunteering. If you will be volunteering with children once a week or more, on 4 days within any 30-day period or overnight you will be expected to agree to an enhanced DBS check. However, if you are volunteering for a one off event, checks are subject to the Council's discretion, depending on the particular circumstances.

There are some exceptions where you will also have to have an enhanced DBS check and the barred list consulted. These include, if you will be helping an ill or disabled child eat, drink, and go to the toilet wash or dress and if you will be providing health care to children. If you will have unsupervised contact for any period of time, or opportunity for contact with children you will also be required to have an enhanced DBS check with a check against the barred list to make sure you haven't been banned from working with children or young people. Volunteers who will be communicating with children by telephone or internet on a regular basis will also need these checks undertaken.

Why do I need to complete an application form?

As a volunteer, you are important to us and we are interested to know about the skills and experiences you bring to the Council. We also need to be aware of your personal details in case we need to correspond with you and we need to be aware of your next of kin/emergency contact details just in case something happens to you whilst you are volunteering with us.

Do I need a new check if I already have one?

If you volunteer for the first time for Cardiff Council and your activity comes under regulated activity or the activity is deemed by us (and the DBS) to require a DBS check, then you will probably be required to have a new one. This rule applies to our paid workforce too – when an employee commences work with us.

Our thoughts are that it doesn't matter whether you are a paid or an unpaid worker - if you come and work for the Council and undertake regulated activity the most important

thing is that we check to make sure all our workers (paid and unpaid) are suitable and that, as such, we look to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place.

If you are volunteering in sectors where DBS checks are required, the best way to avoid having to complete numerous DBS application forms is to immediately subscribe to the DBS Update Service when you complete your next DBS application. In this way an employer can easily make a status enquiry (with your permission) to undertake the suitability check.

If you change the volunteering activity you undertake which results in a change from one workforce to another – for example if you change from Adult to Child – you will be required to have another check if both Adult and Child Lists have not been checked previously.

These are DBS requirements.

If I am a paid employee with a DBS, do I need a new DBS check to volunteer?

Depending on the activity, you undertake as a volunteer you might be required to have a new check. For example, if you work as a paid employee in the adult sector (workforce) and want to volunteer in the Child sector (workforce).

If you volunteer and have a DBS certificate and become a paid employee, you will be required to have another DBS check as this is a requirement of all our new starters to Cardiff Council (if the post you have been appointed to is subject to a DBS check).

Do I need other checks before I start my volunteer role?

Depending on the activity, you undertake as a volunteer you will be required to provide at least one reference as a minimum.

SUPERVISION: DFE STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON SUPERVISION

Statutory guidance: Regulated Activity (children) - supervision of activity with children that is regulated activity when unsupervised.

1. This document fulfils the duty in legislation that the Secretary of State must publish statutory guidance on supervision of activity by workers with children, which when unsupervised is regulated activity. This guidance applies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It covers settings including but not limited to schools, childcare establishments, FE colleges, youth groups and sports clubs.
2. For too long child protection policy has been developed in haste and in response to individual tragedies, with the well intentioned though misguided belief that every risk could be mitigated and every loophole closed. The pressure has been to prescribe and legislate more. This has led to public confusion, a fearful workforce and a dysfunctional culture of mistrust between children and adults. This Government is taking a different approach.

3. We start with a presumption of trust and confidence in those who work with children, and the good sense and judgment of their managers. This guidance applies when an organisation decides to supervise with the aim that the supervised work will not be regulated activity (when it would be, if not so supervised). In such a case, the law makes three main points:
 - There must be supervision by a person who is in regulated activity;
 - The supervision must be regular and day to day; and
 - The supervision must be “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children”.

The organisation must have regard to this guidance. That gives local managers the flexibility to determine what is reasonable for their circumstances. While the precise nature and level of supervision will vary from case to case, guidance on the main legal points above is as follows.

4. Supervision by a person in regulated activity / regular and day to day: supervisors must be in regulated activity themselves. The duty that supervision must take place “on a regular basis” means that supervision must not, for example, be concentrated during the first few weeks of an activity and then tail off thereafter, becoming the exception not the rule. It must take place on an ongoing basis, whether the worker has just started or has been doing the activity for some time.
5. Reasonable in the circumstances: within the statutory duty, the level of supervision may differ, depending on all the circumstances of a case. Organisations should consider the following factors in deciding the specific level of supervision the organisation will require in an individual case:
 - Ages of the children, including whether their ages differ widely;
 - Number of children that the individual is working with;
 - Whether or not other workers are helping to look after the children;
 - The nature of the individual’s work (or, in a specified place such as a school, the individual’s opportunity for contact with children);
 - How vulnerable the children are (the more they are, the more an organisation might opt for workers to be in regulated activity);
 - How many workers would be supervised by each supervising worker.
6. In law, an organisation will have no entitlement to do a barred list check on a worker who, because they are supervised, is not in regulated activity.

EXAMPLES

Volunteer, in a specified place

Mr Jones, a new volunteer, helps children with reading at a local hub for two mornings a week. Mr Jones is generally based in the hub library, in sight of the substantive employee. Sometimes Mr Jones takes some of the children to a separate room to listen to them reading, where Mr Jones is supervised by a paid employee, who is in that room most of the time. The substantive employees are in regulated activity. The Hub manager decides whether their supervision is such that Mr Jones is not in regulated activity.

Volunteer, not in a specified place

Mr Wood, a new entrant volunteer, assists with the coaching of children at his local cricket club. The children are divided into small groups, with assistant coaches such as Mr Wood assigned to each group. The head coach oversees the coaching, spends time with each of the groups, and has sight of all the groups (and the assistant coaches) for most of the time. The head coach is in regulated activity. The club managers decide whether the coach's supervision is such that Mr Wood is not in regulated activity.

Employee, not in a specified place

Mrs Shah starts as a paid activity assistant at a youth group. She helps to instruct a group of children, and is supervised by the youth group leader who is in regulated activity. The youth group managers decide whether the leader's supervision is such that Mrs Shah is not in regulated activity.

In each example, the organisation uses the following steps when deciding whether a new worker will be supervised to such a level that the new worker is not in regulated activity:

- consider whether the worker is doing work that, if unsupervised, would be regulated activity. If the worker is not, the remaining steps are unnecessary;
- consider whether the worker will be supervised by a person in regulated activity, and whether the supervision will be regular and day to day, bearing in mind paragraph 4 of this guidance;
- consider whether the supervision will be reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children;

Induction of volunteer

The induction should include:

- General information about the council and the service area they are volunteering within
- Employee Charter – which outlines standards of behaviour that volunteers are expected to comply with
- A letter which sets out the terms of the engagement to be signed by both parties on start date
- Details of tasks and experience
- A documented named supervisor
- Health & Safety arrangements
- Confidentiality Agreement
- Taking sight of a valid DBS noting DBS number and date issued

The following policies must be shared with the volunteer

- The Volunteer Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Social Media Policy
- Travel & subsistence policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Alcohol, Drugs and Substance misuse policy