Twyford Playgroup EY484175

Student and Volunteer Policy

Date Reviewed: September 2026
Manager Signature: Rachel Knott
Chair of Committee Signature: Pamela Lawrence
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Students are crucial to Twyford playgroup as they provide another means for the local schools to reflect on their practice as well as contributing to the provision of high-quality professionals within early year's education and related fields. Volunteers equally offer valuable support and enhance service provision by filling a wide variety of roles, which may involve working with early year's practitioners and children. Neither students nor volunteers can take the place of a member of staff.

2 Scope of Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to cover students and voluntary workers undertaking duties on behalf of, and in support of, the activities of Twyford playgroup. These guidelines set the minimum standards expected.

Expected Standards of Conduct for Students and Volunteers

Principles:

Students and Volunteers provide valuable assistance to Playgroup and the local community and as such are responsible for their own conduct.

The following are some of the key standards in which Twyford playgroup expects its students/volunteers to conduct themselves while undertaking tasks/placements.

Twyford Playgroup therefore expects the following from its students/volunteers:

1. As the first point of contact to the public it is necessary to always be polite and courteous.

2. All students and volunteers are expected to adhere to these values and always support them in setting:

3. To read, sign and adhere to Playgroups Child Protection Policy and Section 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, always following the procedure.

4. To read and support our Behaviour Policy, alongside staff members.

5. To attend the setting at the times/days agreed by both the student/volunteer and their mentor (usually the Manager)

6. To maintain the security of any confidential or personal information you become aware of while on placement/volunteering at Twyford Playgroup.

7. No mobile phones may be used in the setting except at allocated break times.

Failure to comply with any of these standards may result in your student placement/volunteering role being terminated.

Use of Students/Volunteers

If the student/volunteer is a relative of a child or staff member, or member of the committee, they can still work in the setting, however, consideration will be given to separating the personal and professional relationship.

The committee or management team may choose to end the placement and will inform the student/volunteer immediately.

If a volunteer wishes to end their relationship with Twyford playgroup, they should inform the Manager and chair of committee immediately.

Recruitment of Volunteers

Volunteers

We carry out DBS and pre-start vetting checks appropriate to the post and require regular volunteers to provide details of two referees when they apply to volunteer.

References are taken up as detailed in this policy. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis (e.g. trips) are supervised, in accordance with the legislation.

Students on Placement

When volunteers are working in the setting as part of a recognised training course (such as PGCE, LETTA, UCL and NVQ etc.) references and completion of an application form will not be required. However, we will require proof of DBS enhanced clearance with a barred list check and will carry out identity checks when the student arrives at the setting.

Students on Work Experience

Students on work experience will always be supervised.

The manager and Committee must ensure that opportunities to undertake a placement should be available to all so long as the candidate does not compromise the quality or safety of its children or staff.

The Manager should undertake a form of selection to ensure a person is suitable for the role. The process will be less formal than that used for paid employment; however, it is still important that the Manager conduct a form of vetting and assessment of skills and suitability. The process should include:

● Volunteer expresses an interest in working for Twyford playgroup. The manager explains safeguarding procedures and expectations and roles of volunteers within the playgroup.

● Volunteers complete a contact form so that the setting has their contact details.

● The manager and chair of committee conducts an informal face to face interview.

● The Manager/ Chair of committee contacts two referees if required

(see below in Section 6).

5. **INTERVIEWING**

VOLUNTEERS/STUDENTS

Interviews should be less formal than for paid staff, however, it is important that the Manager checks that the person is able to undertake the role and understands what will be expected of them. The face-to-face interview is an important part of the risk assessment process.

The Manager should make every effort to place a person in a role that would be suitable and safe for them, and safe for anyone else encountering them (such as other volunteers, children, employees, and members of the public).

The Manager should also probe into the motivation to undertake their chosen work, especially if they have no previous experience. The interview should also promote the role and explain how the individual is likely to benefit from working at Twyford playgroup and the positive input they can make.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

The Manager/ chair of committee should take up two references for all adult volunteers who are not known to Twyford playgroup. These can be personal or professional references. Students will require a letter from their institution verifying their position and purpose for the placement.

Enhanced DBS checks will be required for placements (students/volunteers) who are

aged 18 and over. The Manager is to explain the reasons for the check and reassure the student/volunteer that such checks are a standard procedure when working within early years settings. We should also give reassurance that all information will be treated with the strictest confidence and provide information on how the process will work. A criminal record will not be an automatic bar to volunteering, as only relevant convictions will be considered. A risk assessment will be undertaken by the Manager with the chair of the committee.

Some volunteers, such as a parent volunteering to help support on a playgroup day trip, fete or sports day will not require DBS checks. However, a person who regularly or frequently has contact with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to DBS checks. Regular contact is defined as three times or more in a 30-day period. A DBS check will be undertaken for all volunteers.

A person volunteering in a post working with children will not be permitted to start until appropriate checks have been undertaken.

Volunteers/students who have an unsatisfactory DBS check or reference will be automatically refused the role and will be advised of the reason for the decision by the Manager.

Volunteers/students who do not agree to the checks will be refused the opportunity to work/be placed at Twyford playgroup.

INDUCTION

All volunteers/students should be subject to a local induction to ensure that they know what is expected of them and what they can expect from Twyford playgroup. This will take the form of a tour and discussion with the manager/ setting supervisor.

A copy of the student/volunteer policy will be provided to the student/volunteer.

All students/volunteers are valued for their contribution and some of the standards we expect from our contracted employees will apply, such as demonstrating motivation, enthusiasm and a commitment to enhancing the learning for all our children.

Students/Volunteers will also be required to be courteous and professional, including being punctual and conscientious.

Any student/volunteer working at playgroup will receive a briefing on safeguarding procedures and the Manager will keep an up-to-date file of all volunteers/students placed in the cupboard at the playgroup. Emergency contact

details will be kept in Playgroup cupboard in the Emergency Contact File as per General Data Protection Regulations.

Mentoring

All students/volunteers will be provided with a mentor. The mentor will discuss with the student/volunteer on the frequency of meetings to ensure they are progressing effectively. The support and time provided by the mentor will be such that it does not impede on their role within the setting. The student/volunteer should initially see their mentor as the first point of contact for any questions/queries.

Twyford playgroup values the importance of investing in high quality training for students. All placements are considered with the children at the centre.

Twyford playgroup reserves the right to end any placement if the needs of the children are compromised.