

Volunteer Philosophy

Our aim is to help young people and vulnerable adults 'look forward to tomorrow in greater confidence'.

Volunteers play a major role in helping to deliver services alongside paid staff within the Organisation. They make a unique contribution to the success of the many different and varied activities offered by Catholic Care. The combination of enthusiasm, diversity of skills, range of experience and creativity ensures that volunteers make a very valuable contribution to all existing services and help shape future projects.

Catholic Care is committed to attracting, welcoming, supporting and developing volunteers in their work with and achieving high standards throughout the Organisation making its work more effective, exciting and dynamic.

Definition

Volunteering:

- Is based on personal motivations and choices freely undertaken
- Is a way of furthering active citizenship and community involvement
- Takes the form of individual or group activities carried out within the framework of the Organisation
- Is a contribution of time, energy and skills without monetary reward

Mission Statement

In everything we do, we strive to show how the teachings of Christian love, charity and justice can shape the way we live together.

We aim to achieve this by taking the Caring Church into the Community and offering practical services and support for anyone who is weak and vulnerable, regardless of their faith.

Volunteer Charter

This policy sets out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers at Catholic Care.

Catholic Care recognises the valuable contributions made by volunteers and makes the following comments:

- 1/ Volunteers will be made aware of the tasks they are being asked to perform and of the responsibility that goes with these tasks.
- 2/ Volunteers will be told who is designated as having responsibility for their support and supervision. Volunteers will have regular access to this person, who will ensure that each volunteer is adequately supported.
- 3/ To ensure fair representation of the needs and interests of volunteers, they will have access to, and play a part in, the decision making process of Catholic Care via the staff members.
- 4/ Volunteers will be protected against exploitation of their interests, both as individuals and as volunteers. They will not be put under any pressure to do work for which they feel unsuitable, unqualified or which is inconvenient for them.
- 5/ Volunteers will be adequately protected against any risks that may arise from their involvement in Catholic Care's activities. Catholic Care will carry appropriate insurance to protect volunteers against personal injury or loss and also against claims from third parties arising from the activities of volunteers.
- 6/ Volunteers will not be expected to incur financial loss through doing voluntary work. Volunteers will be reimbursed reasonable out of pocket expenses and be provided with appropriate equipment, tools or materials to enable them to carry out their tasks.
- 7/ Volunteers should not accept gifts from people they help. Similarly, if someone wishes to make a donation, guidance is available from a staff member.

- 8/ The relationship between paid workers and volunteers will be complimentary and mutually beneficial. Each will be made fully aware of the other's role and responsibilities with Catholic Care and of the respective areas of work undertaken. Catholic Care will expect the same commitment, reliability and integrity from volunteers, as it does from its paid staff.
- 9/ Catholic Care is committed to providing services that are complimentary to those of the statutory agencies and volunteers will not be asked to undertake work that is the responsibility of those agencies.
- 10/ Catholic Care will provide appropriate induction and basic training to enable volunteers to carry out their work within the Organisation and they can expect to operate in a safe and healthy working environment. On-going support, training and appraisal will aid volunteer's personal development by assisting them to expand or change their area(s) of work, thereby achieving a fulfilling and worthwhile contribution to the services of Catholic Care.
- 11/ Catholic Care expects volunteers to support and promote the mission, aims and core values of the Organisation and work within any agreed practise and quality assurance standards laid down by the Organisation.
- 12/ If Catholic Care is unable to accept an offer of help from a potential volunteer (i.e. due to insufficient work, lack of support etc) all efforts will be made to refer that person to an alternative agency, if appropriate.
- 13/ All volunteers will be expected to contribute constructively to the resolution of any disputes, problems or conflicts, and where necessary, will have access to the appeal procedures laid down for complaints, grievances and disciplinary matters.

Safe Recruitment and Selection

- Applicants will be expected to follow the same process as paid workers within the Organisation and as set out in the 'Safe Recruitment and Selection' policy.
- People will be asked to complete an application form.
- References will be taken up from at least two people who are not relatives and who have known the candidate for at least two years. No volunteer will proceed to training until satisfactory references have been received and these references have been verified.

- Applicants will be required to complete a DBS application for a search of the Criminal Records Bureau, in line with recommendations when working with young people and vulnerable adults. No start date will be agreed until this has been returned.
- All applicants will be interviewed to assess their motivation and suitability and will be informed of the outcome of that interview.
- Start dates will not be approved until the above procedure has been completed.

Induction and Training

- Each new volunteer will be provided with an induction programme outlining the history, policies and services of the Organisation and their role and responsibilities within it.
- Appropriate training will be given to ensure that the service offered meets the necessary legal and professional standards, the best service is provided to the users of Catholic Care services and that the value of the volunteer work is enhanced and acknowledged.
- No volunteer will carry out any task or be involved with any user until induction and basic training have been completed.

Confidentiality

All prospective volunteers must read the policy of confidentiality. They must sign a statement that confirms that they understand the importance of the policy and that they will adhere to it.

Health and Safety

Catholic Care recognises its responsibilities as a service provider and as an employer of volunteers. Health and Safety will be addressed in detail on induction to the Organisation, appropriate training offered and each volunteer will be issued with a copy of the policy document to read, and which is always available as a reference.

Volunteers choosing to use their own vehicle whilst undertaking Catholic Care business should check with their insurers that this type of use is covered by their policy. Catholic Care will require volunteers to sign an undertaking, confirming that they have done so.

Equal opportunities

Catholic Care is committed to policies and action to ensure that volunteers and employees and the people it serves are not discriminated against or excluded from services on the basis of disability, ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, political beliefs and marital status.

Statement of Intent

It is our intention to ensure that:

- within Catholic Care are open to all without discrimination.
- Access to services is open to all without discrimination.
- Access to membership, committees and groups is open to all without discrimination. The Charity expects all staff, volunteers, trustees and committee members, to abide by and promote this policy.

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