



SGSS Volunteering Policy

Introduction

Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility; good practice has to be built into routine practice and procedures. Nowhere is this more important than in the recruitment and vetting of people who have contact with children. Volunteers are seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults and therefore it is vital that [Faith Institutions] adopt robust recruitment and vetting procedures for volunteers that minimise the risk of using a volunteer who might abuse children or is otherwise unsuited to work with them.

Recruiting Volunteers

Volunteers fall into four categories and this document provides guidance on the process which should be followed:

1. Individuals not known to the Sri Guru Singh Sabha Hounslow (SGSS Hounslow)
 - a. If SGSS Hounslow is actively seeking volunteers, and is considering candidates about whom it has little or no recent knowledge, it should adopt the same recruitment measures as it would for paid staff.
2. Individuals known to the SGSS Hounslow
 - a. If for example a school approaches a parent who is well known to SGSS Hounslow to take on a particular role, a streamlined procedure can be adopted:
 - i. Seeking references;
 - ii. Checking to ensure others in the school community know of no concerns and can make a positive recommendation;
 - iii. Conducting an informal interview to gauge the person's aptitude and suitability;
 - iv. Undertaking a Disclosure & Barring Check (where applicable).
 - v. Ensuring that the individual has a legal right to live and work in the UK (Asylum & Immigration check)
3. One off volunteers
 - a. In circumstances where a volunteer's role will be 'one off' – e.g. helping at an event, the measures shown above will not be necessary provided that the person is not to be left alone/unsupervised in charge of children.
4. Volunteers recruited by other organisations
 - a. Where volunteers recruited by another organisation work in schools, eg sports coaches from a local club, the school should obtain assurances, in form of written confirmation from that organisation that the volunteer has undergone the appropriate clearance checks.

Vetting

Application Form - All volunteers should be required to fill in an application form in order to obtain basic information about the individual.

Verification of Identity - It is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, SGSS Hounslow must see proof of identity, which should include photographic proof and proof of address.

DBS Check

All unsupervised volunteers in school, other than where specified must undergo a DBS check prior to commencement. There is no charge to the school for checks for volunteers, as long as the criteria laid down by the DBS is met.

It is important not to rely solely on a DBS check to screen out unsuitable volunteers. This is an essential safeguard, but will only pick out those abusers who have been convicted or come to the attention of the Police.

References

Two specific references should be sought for a volunteer, by SGSS Hounslow. Reference enquiries should include a request for a specific statement about whether the referee knows of any reason why the person might be unsuitable for work relating to children, and if so details of those concerns. The school must not accept a testimonial for example, a to whom it may concern letter. Under no circumstances should a reference from a relative be accepted.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

All volunteers requiring a DBS Check will be informed that the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 is not applicable to them and will be asked to detail any convictions or cautions on their application form, even if these would in other circumstances be considered spent.

Record Keeping

SGSS Hounslow must include details of checks made on volunteers in their single central record.

Post Appointment Induction

There should be an induction programme for all volunteers; the purpose of induction is to:

1. Provide training and information about SGSS Hounslow policies and procedures;
2. Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for their role in the SGSS Hounslow;
3. Provide opportunities for the volunteer to discuss issues or concerns about the role;
4. Enable the institution to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

Health and Safety

SGSS Hounslow have a duty of care to avoid exposing volunteers to risks to their health and safety. Senior staff should ensure that volunteers are made aware of the institutions health and safety policy and practical safety issues as part of their induction.

Grievance and Disciplinary

There should be a clear procedure in place to deal with complaints by or about volunteers. These procedures should be separate to the procedures for paid staff to maintain a distinctiveness between staff and volunteers.

Confidentiality

Volunteers should be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff and the institution must ensure that this is explicit when using volunteers.

Expenses

SGSS Hounslow can choose to pay reasonable expenses to volunteers; these must only be out of pocket expenses e.g. travel for which receipts must be provided, approved purchases, etc.



Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha
 Alice Way, Hounslow, TW3 3UD

Volunteer Application Form

Application form for voluntary workers with children and/or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect.

Application for the post of:

Full Name:

Date of Birth: **Former Name:**

Home Address:

..... **Post Code:**

Telephone No(s) **(M)** **(L)**

How long have you lived at the above address:

If less than 12months, previous address:

..... **Post Code:**

Place of Worship attended:

Name of Faith leader:

Relevant Qualifications/Training:

Please provide 2 referees, one of which must be current/previous employer/place of worship

Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Tel:

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Previous experience of working with children or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect – continue overleaf if necessary:

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Signed: **Date:**