



HOPE For Paediatric Epilepsy

L O N D O N

Volunteer Policy



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Purpose:

HOPE for Paediatric Epilepsy: London (also referred to in this document as 'us', 'we', and 'the charity') is entirely volunteer led. There are no paid members of staff. This policy is not intended towards board members – advisors and trustees – please see separate policies and guidance regarding these roles.

This volunteer policy is intended for those who attend HOPE for Paediatric Epilepsy: London in the capacity of helping the running of the support sessions at Oakleigh School and helping look after the children and young people who attend.

Volunteers who offer their time and skills to help us are under no obligation to do so, having this policy is intended to help volunteers and the charity work better together and reduce the risk of problems occurring.

Definition:

Volunteers may be described as individuals who put their experience, knowledge, and skills at the disposal of the charity, free of charge, with the primary aim of helping HOPE for Paediatric Epilepsy: London to achieve its aims and objectives and/or with the primary aim of bringing some benefit to the local community.

In this sense, Volunteers are to be distinguished from student and other work placements where the primary aim is usually for the student to obtain certain work experience or to carry out work or research in certain areas.

Volunteering is non obligatory; a volunteer is allowed to refuse hours of work.

Rights and Responsibilities:

HOPE or Paediatric Epilepsy London recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- *Know what is (and what is not) expected of them
- *Have adequate support in their volunteering
- *Volunteer in a safe environment
- *Know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
- *Receive appropriate training



*Be free from discrimination

HOPE for Paediatric Epilepsy: London expects volunteers to:

- *Be reliable and honest
- *Respect confidentiality
- *Make the most of support opportunities
- *Carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the charity
- * Have knowledge of the charity's confidentiality and safeguarding policies

Recruitment:

At HOPE for Paediatric Epilepsy: London we have a Volunteer Co-ordinator who also holds a Trustee role. They help maintain contact and communication between volunteers who help at sessions and the board of Trustees. They can also act as their voice in Trustee meetings. This encourages feedback and helps the sharing of opinions and ideas.

They also help to liaise and co-ordinate which volunteers will be present at each session.

The Volunteer Co-ordinator also researches and contacts new places where the charity can potentially look for prospective new volunteers.

Role:

Volunteers who attend HOPE for Paediatric Epilepsy: London's support sessions at Oakleigh School are vital in helping the smooth running of these sessions. This ranges from helping out with refreshments and tasks in the kitchen to supervising children. The latter helps their parents/carers have a brief period of respite and attend any information sessions that we put on or take advantage of beauty and massage therapy activities that also take place.

It is important that volunteers have a basic understanding of epilepsy, seizures and how they can present (see support and supervision section below) so that they are confident in their ability to supervise the children that attend support sessions.

Support and Supervision:

Due to the specific needs of some of the children and young people who attend HOPE for Paediatric Epilepsy: London's support sessions in Oakleigh School information and training is given to volunteers as early as possible in their role.

In conjunction to this policy is our 'Volunteer Information' sheet which gives relevant advice in what to do in case a seizure occurs in a session. This also signposts to further advice



regarding different forms of seizures and how they present. This can be given before a volunteer attends HOPE.

HOPE for Paediatric Epilepsy: London also gives a briefing to volunteers, and there are always more established and long-serving volunteers, trustees, and a named first aider at sessions should further support be required.

Confidentiality:

The families who attend the charity's sessions have the right to expect confidentiality and for any of their personal and sensitive information to remain confidential.

HOPE for Paediatric Epilepsy: London has a related Confidentiality Policy.

Resolving Problems:

Volunteers are encouraged to voice any concerns they have without fear of judgement. If there is anything that a volunteer is unsure about within the support sessions, there are experienced volunteers and trustees present for them to immediately speak with. If it is an issue that cannot be dealt with immediately, it will be dealt with as soon as possible. Records of any concerns will also be kept.

Edited and reviewed by Louise Miller – Trustee – Nov 2022

Checked by Andrea Ryan – Trustee and Volunteer co-ordinator – Nov 2022

Checked by Nadine Gurr – Chair of Trustees – Dec 2022

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