

# Chance UK Volunteer Policy

## What we do

Chance UK is a registered charity that provides mentoring programmes for five to eleven year olds with behavioural difficulties who are at risk of developing anti-social or criminal offending behaviour later in life. Our innovative, individually tailored programmes are delivered by carefully screened and trained volunteer mentors who are closely supervised and supported in their work. We also offer in depth support to the parents of the children we work with.

The aim of Chance UK is to intervene early in the lives of vulnerable children to help them, and their families, begin to build a brighter future. We seek to achieve this goal by:

- Introducing more stability into the children's lives
- Reducing the isolation the children and their families may experience
- Supporting the children as they find the motivation and life skills they need to move forward
- Channelling the children's disruptive energy into projects that encourage a sense of personal achievement
- Engendering in the children a sense of self-discovery and self-worth.

## Recruitment

- Chance UK advertises for mentors in a range of ways including advertising in the national press, leafleting, direct approaches to relevant employers e.g. of male dominated professions.
- Prospective volunteers are required to complete an application form and participate in a 3 day training course; this is part of the screening process.
- The training takes place over three consecutive Saturdays and all three days must be completed. The aim of the training is to give volunteers enough information to decide whether this programme is the right one for them and to prepare them to start a mentoring relationship with a child.
- All volunteers will be interviewed by 2 members of staff. In some cases a second interview may be requested if further information or clarification is needed.
- After day 1 of training, references and DBS checks will be sent out. A criminal record, if declared will not necessarily prevent you from becoming a mentor with us. Mentors are often surprised at what shows up on their DBS (including cautions received as a teenager for minor offences) so if in doubt declare everything.
- All volunteers will be notified of their acceptance or otherwise. Those volunteers not accepted will be informed of the reasons behind the decision made and where appropriate will be directed to other organisations.
- In extreme cases mentors may be withdrawn from the programme for non-compliance with Chance UK rules and if volunteers are subsequently felt to be not suitable.

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

The Volunteer Mentor reports to his or her Programme Manager.

### The volunteer mentor will:

- Participate in initial training.
- Meet with a child on a weekly basis for a period of one year.
- Participate in compulsory supervision meetings with the Programme Manager at least once a month.
- Complete mentor session reports for monitoring and tracking purposes.
- Work with the child to identify goals, objectives and to help them work towards these.
- Provide support, guidance and encouragement to the child.
- Work in a solution focused way.
- Use own initiative to identify and access relevant resources.
- Exchange information regarding the child and their family with the Programme Manager.
- Maintain confidentiality in accordance with the Chance UK confidentiality policy.
- Report any concerns about the child in accordance with the Chance UK child protection policy.
- End the mentoring relationship in a positive way and cease contact with child and family following graduation.
- Participate in the evaluation of the scheme.

### **Interview**

All volunteers must attend an interview before they can be accepted onto the programme. Interviews are conducted by 2 members of the staff team after all 3 training days have been completed. The interview lasts for between an hour and an hour and a half.

Volunteers may be required to attend a second interview if clarification, information or further questions are deemed necessary.

### **References**

Two professional references need to be provided before a volunteer can be fully accepted.

### **DBS**

All volunteers need to have an enhanced DBS check before being accepted as a volunteer on our programme.

### **People not right for role**

Volunteers not accepted onto our programme are informed of this decision. Where possible and if appropriate the names of alternative organisations or suggestions for gaining experience of working with children are made.

### **Training and induction**

Once matched with a child, volunteers are given an induction held at Chance UK offices. This serves both as a reminder of policy and procedures as well as an opportunity to ask any outstanding questions about the programme or other issues. Following induction, usually on the same day but in some cases a few days later, the volunteer and Programme Manager will visit the child's home to meet the family and set up the first mentoring sessions

### **Supervision & support**

Once recruited the volunteer mentor will be required to have regular monthly supervision sessions with the Programme Manager. These sessions will enable the organisation to monitor the development of the child and the mentor, and also address any other issues raised by the volunteer mentor. It also provides the volunteer with the opportunity to

receive feedback about the child's progress from school or other sources. Support will also be provided by your Programme Manager as and when needed.

### **Expenses**

Mentors can be refunded up to £30 for session costs - the maximum budget for a month of mentoring sessions. Claims can be only made after being spent by providing receipts for all activities. Travel costs are treated separately, but also refundable up to a maximum of £40.

### **Commitment**

The nature of the mentoring role is to develop a relationship with a child so that specific skills can be developed, such as anger management and communication skills. It is expected that volunteer mentors will give a commitment to the mentoring relationship for 12 months. The actual times of meeting with the child can be negotiated, but it is expected that you would meet on a weekly basis, for approximately two to four hours per week. Commitment is also expected with regards to regularly attending supervision & support sessions held with your Programme Manager.

### **Procedures to protect clients and volunteers**

#### **Mentor Contract**

All volunteer mentors are expected to sign a Mentor Contract (see below) before beginning the mentoring. This is to ensure that individuals are aware of the requirements of the organisation and that volunteers will adhere to its processes.

#### **Health and safety**

It is the policy of Chance UK to comply with the terms of the Health and Safety at Work legislation and to provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment.

Chance UK recognises and accepts their duty to protect the health and safety of all visitors to the organisation, including volunteers.

All volunteers are expected to co-operate with safety officers and to accept their duties under this policy. Disciplinary action may be taken against any volunteer who violates safety rules or who fails to perform his or her duties under this policy. In extreme cases volunteers may be withdrawn from the programme.

Volunteer mentors are asked to provide a named individual and their contact details who will act as their point of contact ('buddy') should there be an emergency whilst you are out mentoring.

A copy of the Health and Safety policy is available to all volunteers from the Chance UK office.

#### **Child Protection**

Copies of documents:

- Child Protection 1: Recruitment and Employment
- Child Protection 2: Disclosure and Discovery
- Child Protection 3: Policy Statement

are available to all volunteers either through Chance UK office and are contained in the Volunteer Hand Book.

## **Grievance and disciplinary procedures**

The Grievance Procedure applies to all employees of the organisation including volunteers.

The aim of the Grievance Procedure is to settle grievances fairly and without unreasonable delay. Every effort will be made to resolve a grievance at the earliest possible opportunity and amicably.

If appropriate, you should first try to resolve any grievance you may have by discussing it informally with your Programme Manager. However, if you are unable to resolve a grievance informally with your manager there is a formal procedure to be followed:

- You should write in the first instance detailing your grievance to the Senior Programme Manager who will conduct a thorough investigation and will then write to you formally outlining the results of the investigation.
- Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome, you may pursue your grievance further by writing to the Chief Executive.
- Should your grievance fail to be resolved by either the Senior Programme Manager or Chief Executive you may write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

## **Insurance**

Chance UK has public liability insurance that covers both staff and volunteers.

## **Equal opportunities**

Chance UK strives through its policies and practices to achieve equality of opportunity in the involvement of volunteers and service delivery, and the fair treatment of all volunteers and service users, regardless of age, disability, race, colour, religion, belief, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation or marital status.

All volunteers have access to Chance UK Equal Opportunities policy.

## **Diversity**

Chance UK is firmly committed to diversity in all areas of its work. We believe that we have much to learn and profit from diverse cultures and perspectives, and that diversity will make our organisation more effective in meeting the needs of all our stakeholders.

We are committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing needs are fostered and valued, and where those diverse backgrounds and experiences are able to participate and contribute.

We will regularly evaluate and monitor our progress towards diversity.

Male mentors and mentors from BME communities are currently under-represented in our organisation. We are specifically encouraging those members to come forward. We will continue to monitor underrepresented groups in our organisation and redress the balance where necessary.

## **Confidentiality**

Any identifying information about the child and their family should be kept confidential within the mentoring relationship.

Chance UK respects the confidentiality of the volunteers with respect to information contained on the application form, during interviews and subsequently during the mentoring year.

At the end of the mentoring year Chance UK will require you to return all documents relating to the child and mentoring in your possession. This will include the Health and Safety Card, ID card, plus mentor session reports.

### **Complaints**

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the immediate line manager of the person about whom you are making the complaint. This is explained below. A list of Chance UK staff can be found on the pages 62-63.