

Name	Volunteering Policy
Approved by	<i>Karen Edwards CEO</i>
Last updated	December 2022
Date for review	December 2025
Owner	Director of Children & Young People
Intended Audience	All employee and volunteers

Purpose of Policy

The Volunteering Policy aims to reflect the value that Bolton Lads & Girls Club (BLGC) places on its volunteers, providing a foundation on which to base BLGC's involvement with volunteers. BLGC recognises that the scale of our volunteer involvement requires its own policy and procedures to ensure the welfare of young people, staff and volunteers. Our volunteers bring a range of invaluable life experiences to the organisation, which benefit the needs of the young people who attend the Club, and this policy aims to ensure fairness and consistency. It also sets out the principles by which BLGC works with volunteers recognising the value they bring to the club and the benefits they should expect to gain in an inclusive, supportive and friendly environment.

Who the Policy Applies to

The policy is for staff that work with and provide support to volunteers at BLGC and for volunteers themselves.

Who is a Volunteer at BLGC?

A volunteer is someone who freely chooses to give their time to help BLGC achieve its mission. Volunteers do not receive financial compensation, except for payment of expenses when appropriate (see section 3.4), but perform tasks at the request of BLGC to help the charity achieve its aims.

The volunteer relationship is binding in honour, trust and sharing mutual understanding and values. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise can be imposed on volunteers to attend, however certain roles do need a certain level of commitment.

Our volunteers are:

Programme:

Volunteers that are involved in programme delivery means direct face to face work with young people.

Office:

Volunteers that are involved in the office means assisting with the administration that is necessary to support our programme delivery.

Fundraising:

Volunteers that are involved with our Fundraising means helping us with an agreed activity or event. It could also mean assisting with fundraising related administration which would be office based.

Students:

Volunteer Students often gain their volunteering experience at BLGC as part of their educational course.

Trustees:

Volunteer Members of the Board oversee the governance of BLGC.

Any fundraising by individuals or groups outside these parameters in aid of BLGC are outside of volunteering. Anyone who is involved in a BLGC event or challenge is not classed as a volunteer. Young volunteers called Young Leaders (under 18 years old) are not covered by this policy.

1.Our Commitment

Our Commitment to Volunteering

Volunteers have always been integral to how BLGC works with children and young people. The involvement of volunteers is crucial in ensuring that BLGC can maintain its commitment to open its doors every day and evening of the week for its young people. Volunteers bring a wealth of skills, knowledge, experience and expertise to the club. As such BLGC fully commits to developing and maintaining the special and unique relationship between itself and its volunteers. BLGC is committed to best practice and recognises the high profile its volunteers give to the organisation, the funding which volunteers generate and raise, but most importantly the direct positive impact made to the children and young people.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

BLGC is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity. BLGC does not permit discrimination of any kind against any person in respect of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. BLGC endeavours to recruit volunteers from a diverse background that responds to the needs of our young people.

BLGC encourages volunteers from all sections of the community to volunteer and will not discriminate against any volunteer in the selection procedure. BLGC welcomes volunteers of all ages over 18 years (21 for mentoring), and we do not specify an upper age-limit, as we believe that all volunteers have knowledge and experiences to share.

2. Data Protection

We take seriously our obligation to keep all personal data secure and confidential. As a volunteer at Bolton Lads & Girls Club you agree to provide the Bolton Lads & Girls Club with certain personal and sensitive personal information, which we will process in accordance with all applicable data protection laws to:

Provide you with services and carry out administration in relation to your role as a volunteer

Communicate with you about your volunteering

Provide information about you as a volunteer of Bolton Lads & Girls Club (registered charity 1051292) to our suppliers, funders and/or sponsors as required for the purposes of the development, co-ordination and support of Bolton Lads & Girls Club.

For further information about how we process your personal information and your rights, please read our Privacy Policy, which can be found on the BLGC website @<https://boltonladsandgirlsclub.co.uk/privacy-policy/>

3. Volunteer Recruitment

Each volunteer applicant will need to complete a volunteer application form; assistance can be given with this if necessary. Each activity will have an accompanying role description to explain the tasks and expectation of the role. The volunteer will meet a member of the volunteering team for an informal interview. This is an opportunity for both the volunteer and BLGC to assess suitability for the role. We base our selection on the ability of each applicant to fulfill the role concerned, taking into account any potential effect a volunteer may have on the safety of all parties, our brand and reputation.

New volunteers are required to give details of two referees who they have known in any capacity but not family members for a period of 1 year. When an existing volunteer takes on a new role or a member of staff becomes a volunteer, no additional references are required. Current or previous members of BLGC can use BLGC staff members as a referee.

A criminal records check with the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made for every volunteer. Volunteers are required to disclose any spent or unspent criminal offences during the application stage. All recorded offences will be subject to scrutiny from BLGC. If required, a DBS safeguarding discussion will be held and recorded with a member of SLT and a decision made to allow the volunteer into BLGC or not. A criminal conviction will not automatically preclude someone from becoming a BLGC volunteer.

4. Training & Development

All volunteers will receive an induction which will familiarise them with BLGC and provide a framework within which they can develop a full understanding of the values and work of BLGC and their role within it. This will include an introduction to relevant organisational policies; safeguarding training; BLGC's Vision and Values and training specific for their role.

All volunteers must attend the statutory training outlined for their particular role. Relevant training will be discussed during the informal chat and correspondence will be sent advising

of upcoming training dates. Failure to attend statutory training may jeopardise a voluntary position with BLGC.

BLGC is committed to the ongoing training and development of its staff and volunteers. Training needs will be identified through supervision and need. We endeavour to offer a range of training and awareness sessions over the calendar year.

5. Supervision, Support and Recognition

BLGC adheres strictly to both local and national safeguarding procedures around working with children and young people. In response to such policies, all volunteers will have a clearly identified person, commonly referred to as a Volunteer's Line Manager, who will be responsible for the management and guidance of each volunteer. They will be provided with regular opportunities to meet to discuss any problems and to give feedback on their progress. These meetings may take the form as a group or 1:1 session and will be appropriate to their volunteering role.

We recognise the valuable contribution that our volunteer's gift to us. We have a range of ways to ensure that as a Charity we can acknowledge this. This can be a simple thank you being nominated for an award.

6. Expenses

Payment of certain out of pocket expenses will be paid to volunteers with prior agreement from the Line Manager who may be the Department Manager. Valid receipts must be produced or no monies can be reimbursed. See Expenses Policy for more information.

7. Health and Safety

BLGC has an up-to-date Health and Safety Policy which volunteers have to adhere to. As an organisation, we are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for a volunteers and to giving appropriate instruction, training and supervision for our volunteers 'welfare.

Your Line Manager will share and conduct risk assessments with you when necessary to keep both you and young people safe.

All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner and not act in a way that would put themselves or other at risk of injury. Volunteers regardless of their location within the organisation should report any accident, to their line manager or a paid member of staff.

8. Insurance

Bolton Lads & Girls Club has public liability insurance to cover all BLGC volunteer activities on and off site.

Mentors and IVs only - BLGC does not provide motor insurance for volunteers using their own vehicle. Appropriate and relevant car insurance documents and a current driving licence will be checked by the Volunteer Coordinator prior to being matched to a young person. Coordinators will ensure this is kept up to date. BLGC will help with any additional charges for car insurance, if they are required for volunteering. See Volunteers Driving Policy for further information. Mentor/IV Coordinators will ensure that Mentor/IVs have the correct insurance on an annual basis and keep copies on file.

The Volunteering Team will check your car is roadworthy by checking your car registration details.

9. Problem Solving and Complaints Procedure

BLGC wants all volunteers to enjoy their involvement with us and through regular contact with their respective staff member, feel supported to discuss and resolve any day-to-day problems which may arise. Every effort will be made to settle any dispute or volunteer grievance fairly. In the first instance a volunteer should take their grievance to their Line Manager. If the matter is about their Line Manager or is not settled satisfactorily, a volunteer may escalate this complaint to a member of the Senior Leadership Team, and if no satisfactory resolve is made, this may then escalate to the Chief Executive.

10. Volunteers Conduct

If there are concerns about a volunteer's conduct, behaviour or contribution, the matter will be raised and steps agreed to address it. This may include close supervision or additional training. However, there may be areas of concern which cannot be resolved and may be deemed more serious in nature, such as contravening of safeguarding policy, and a decision to cease the volunteer's involvement may be enforced. More serious breaches of safeguarding policy may have to be referred to outside agencies such as the Police or the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer for further investigation.

BLGC must protect its reputation in all circumstances and where a volunteer's actions bring the good name of Bolton Lads & Girls Club into disrepute, the volunteer's involvement with BLGC will be stopped immediately. This also applies to any improper conduct towards staff, fellow volunteers, children and young people.

11. Safeguarding

All volunteers are required to have an Enhanced DBS before starting their volunteering role. All volunteers are required to renew their DBS every three years they continue to volunteer with BLGC. Football Coaches are also required to undertake an FA DBS. All volunteers are required to complete BLGC Safeguarding training and to refresh this every three years. Again, Football Coaches are also required to complete FA Safeguarding.

All volunteers are required to have their ID Badge on their person whilst volunteering. Volunteers in the Club are required to wear their ID badge at all times whilst volunteering unless it is a Health & Safety Issue.

12. Confidentiality

All volunteers are required to follow the BLGC Confidentiality Policy. Volunteers must not disclose any information obtained in the course of their activity with BLGC to any third party without prior consent from the Organisation. For some roles you may be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. Personal information recorded about volunteers is stored and maintained with appropriate safeguards for confidentiality.

13. Volunteer Engagement and feedback

BLGC runs a Volunteers Focus Group multiple times a year. Volunteers are invited to take part and have a say into the development of the volunteering experience at BLGC and be included in the discussion on how the organisation develops. Your voice is important to us and we believe that as key stakeholders in Bolton Lads & Girls Club you are vital in the development and indeed success of the Club.

Every year we aim to conduct a Volunteer Survey to touch base with you on your volunteering experience and help us to improve our services. We will share these results with all volunteers in a timely manner once all responses have been collected.

It is important to BLGC that our volunteers feel valued and so all staff are invited to be involved in the volunteer recognition programmes.

14. Moving on

The retention of volunteers is of great importance and while it is understandable that volunteers must eventually move on, BLGC would like to explore the reasons for the volunteer leaving so that it can be established if something could have been done better, to gain feedback, share learning points and establish whether the volunteer wishes to return in the future. To help us improve we will ask you to complete a volunteer exit questionnaire. This will also be the Volunteer's opportunity to return their ID badge and loaned uniform.

On occasions it may be necessary for BLGC to end a volunteer's involvement. This may be due to their current role being no longer needed, or because the volunteer is no longer able to carry out a role to a satisfactory level. In all cases relating to a volunteer leaving, BLGC will treat them fairly and with dignity and respect.

Volunteers are central to BLGC's vision and operations. We would like to thank all our volunteers and endeavour to continuously improve our volunteering delivery.