

Family Friends in Windsor and Maidenhead

Volunteer Role Description

Main Tasks

Volunteers are matched with a family in need to offer support to help them through difficulties and to help the families improve their circumstances. Volunteers visit families in their homes. The nature of the support can be varied and will include some of the following:

- Practical help with the children – playing with them, taking them out with or without the parents/ carers (with the parent's consent), helping at meal times etc.
- Practical help for the parents – this could include helping to apply for benefits, form filling, helping to motivate parents, looking after the children to give parents respite.
- Emotional support – spending time with the family, befriending them, listening.
- Enabling people to access more specialist support such as counselling.
- Helping people to meet others locally through joining groups or making friends.
- Encouraging families to spend time together and help parents enjoy spending time with their children.

Time Commitment

A volunteer typically visits for no more than 2 hours per week for six weeks. After this, the support is reviewed and either extended or completed.

At times we are asked to support families in more flexible ways such as more regular, visits over a shorter time period. We agree this with the family and volunteer on an individual basis. Although we appreciate having volunteers who can be flexible in this way we know that it is not possible for everyone.

It is at the volunteer's discretion whether or not they support a family when invited to. The volunteer should decide whether or not the role, location, timing etc is suitable for them at that point.

Training and Development

Volunteers need to:

- Attend essential training sessions including first aid, child protection and domestic abuse.
- Attend other training sessions as and when available including the training provided by Family Friends.
- Have a commitment to learning and self development.
- Be willing to meet the Volunteer Co-ordinator on a regular basis to reflect on families supported and discuss development, issues arising, training and feedback.

Commitment to Safeguarding Children

All volunteers:

- Work in an open, honest way that is open to scrutiny and feedback
- Are alert and aware of child protection issues.
- Raise any concerns with the Volunteer Co-ordinator when they arise.
- Are subject to reference and criminal record bureau checks.

Commitment to Family Friends

Volunteers are expected:

- To be reliable, punctual and committed to completing the six sessions of support
- To keep the Volunteer Co-ordinator informed about progress and / or any issues throughout period of support
- To work within Family Friends policies, guidelines and boundaries

To agree to working within the standards and ethos of Family Friends:

- to respect the rights of individuals
- to respect confidentiality
- to support people in a way that is non-judgemental and non-discriminatory
- to refuse personal gifts from families
- to avoid entering into a personal relationship with any client e.g. maintaining contact with the family after the support has ended

Family Friends Volunteers - Person Specification

Essential Skills and Experience:
Good listening and communication skills
Empathy towards those facing difficulties
Caring and enthusiastic disposition
Ability to relate to children, young people and their families
Good interpersonal skills
Desirable Skills and Experience:
Experience of supporting children and families
Essential Personal Attributes and Attitude to Volunteering:
Reliable and good at time-keeping
Non-judgemental and respectful approach to people
Non-discriminatory approach towards people
Ability to be flexible
Open to developing skills and knowledge
Ability to use own initiative
Commitment to safeguarding children
Prepared to work within the guidelines and boundaries of Family Friends