

Volunteer Guidance and Procedures

The City of Edinburgh Council: Outdoor Learning Unit

Supplementary Guidance and Procedures for
Outdoor Learning Volunteers
(Incorporates The City of Edinburgh Volunteering Policy)

Implementation Date: 01 December 2018

Control Schedule

Senior Responsible Officer	Andrew Bradshaw
Authors	Fraser Robertson, Caroline Wilson and Andrew Bradshaw Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit
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Version Control

Version	Date	Authors	Comment
0.1	01 August 2018	Fraser Robertson, Caroline Wilson and Andrew Bradshaw	New supplementary guidance And procedures to support The CEC Volunteering Policy



KEY INFORMATION



This supporting guidance and procedures applies to **The City of Edinburgh Council Outdoor Learning Team and approved volunteers**. It incorporates The City of Edinburgh Volunteering Policy and has considered good practice and content from external resources including:

- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Volunteer Management Toolkit.
- Investing in Volunteers Standards.

This guidance applies to volunteers **directly** recruited, inducted and managed by the Outdoor Learning Team, which includes The Risk Factory. This includes:

- Bangholm Outdoor Centre, including DofE volunteer roles recruited and managed by the Awards and Achievement Development Officer;
- Open Award DofE Groups registered via The City of Edinburgh Council licence;
- Benmore Outdoor Centre;
- Lagganlia Outdoor Centre; and
- The Risk Factory.

All CEC Communities and Families schools, establishments and services are expected to follow The City of Edinburgh Volunteering Policy. For volunteers recruited and managed by individual CEC schools, establishments and services, their supplementary guidance and procedures will normally apply.



The main text is taken directly from The City of Edinburgh Volunteering Policy.

Additional text in dark orange is supplementary guidance and procedures from the Outdoor Learning Unit or other CEC guidance.

KEY CONTACTS

Duke of Edinburgh's Award (Fraser Robertson)	Fraser - EMAIL or 07824 526 492. General phone number: 0131 551 4370
Bangholm Outdoor Centre (EH6 4RJ)	0131 551 4368
Benmore Outdoor Centre (PA23 8QX)	01369 706 337
Lagganlia Outdoor Centre (PH21 1NG)	01540 651 265
The Risk Factory (EH14 1RL)	0131 455 8930
Principal Officer for Outdoor Learning (Andrew Bradshaw)	EMAIL or 07718 660 549
Strategic Development Manager (Robin Yellowlees)	EMAIL or 07796 313 169

Important: Orb (Council Intranet) links are only normally available to Council staff. Volunteers should contact the relevant person at the centre to access any relevant documentation and resources.



Key Amendments and New Information

Must not be read and used in isolation. Use the links to locate each section.

Key Amendments or New Information	Links
N/A in this version.	

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Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Volunteering with the City of Edinburgh Council

1.1.1 The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) is a lead signatory to 'Inspiring Edinburgh's Volunteers: Building on Success 2012-2017' and is committed to its vision of:

'a city where Edinburgh's population is inspired and supported to volunteer'.

1.1.2 The central objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Make volunteering a strategic force for change;
- Increase the number and diversity of people volunteering; and
- Maximise good practice and quality standards.

1.1.3 In line with this, the Council has a commitment to support and promote volunteering throughout the city (*Benmore and Lagganlia too*), working closely with partners.

1.1.4 This document sets out the City of Edinburgh Council's Policy on Internal Volunteering – i.e. how the Council will meet the above objectives where it is the agency responsible for the recruitment and engagement of within its own services. The document has built upon the earlier volunteering policy adopted by the Council and has been signed off by the Volunteering Strategy Implementation Group.

1.1.5 Good practice guidelines are also provided to assist Council staff when recruiting, managing and supporting volunteers within their service areas.

1.1.6 The main aims of the guidelines are as follows:

- To establish a framework for the continued involvement of volunteers in the Council that provides additional benefit for clients/customers and which is safe, compliant with legislative requirements and upholds the principles of good practice in Volunteers Management (in line with the nationally agreed 'Investing in Volunteers Standards');
- To encourage and enable the involvement of volunteers within the City of Edinburgh Council's services and to support staff to implement this;
- To protect volunteers from exploitation and maintain their distinct role within the organisation; and
- To ensure important safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable people who may be in the care of Council volunteers.

1.2 Implementation and Monitoring

1.2.1 The implementation of this policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Volunteering Strategy Implementation Group (VSIG) in the Council. A full review of the policy will be undertaken every two years. Council policy commitments were set by Council decision and any change to them will need to be authorised at that level. For other advice and guidance, the VSIG will set the documentation.

1.2.2 Council services are required to continue to incorporate policy into their own arrangements and ensure that appropriate staff are informed of, understand and implement the good practice guidelines contained in this document.

1.2.3 The Outdoor Learning Team will monitor the effectiveness of the Volunteering Policy, and supplementary guidance and procedures annually (July of each year).

1.3 Definition of Volunteering

1.3.1 This policy uses the definition of volunteering provided within the City Strategy. This supports the principles endorsed by the United Nations, recognising volunteering as an activity that should:

- not be undertaken primarily for financial reward, although the reimbursement of expenses may be allowed.
- be undertaken voluntarily, according to an individual's own free-will.
- be of benefit to someone other than the volunteer, or to society at large, although it is recognised that volunteering brings significant benefit to the volunteer as well.

Section 2 City of Edinburgh Council's Policy Commitments on Volunteering

2.1 The Council:

- will seek to increase the range and number of appropriate volunteering opportunities in Council services, and to ensure that its policies do not adversely affect volunteers involved in the delivery of its services;
- will seek to ensure that all volunteering opportunities within the City of Edinburgh Council are set up, supported and managed in line with the 'Investing in Volunteers' Standards;
- will ensure that the role of the volunteer complements but does not replace that of paid staff. Volunteers will have a role description which is clearly defined and will not be used simply to assist paid workers;
- will ensure that the involvement and duties of volunteers will be communicated to staff members so that all concerned are sure of their respective responsibilities;
- members of staff who recruit, manage or supervise volunteers will have this responsibility stated in their job description and reflected in the grading of their post. They will also be given appropriate training and support;
- will ensure wide access to its volunteering opportunities; in particular it will seek to ensure that access to volunteering is open to groups under-represented as volunteers;
- will ensure that volunteers will not be asked to take on tasks formerly undertaken by paid workers or to work in ways which facilitate a decrease in paid employment;
- will not use volunteers in times of industrial action other than in ways that are well established;

- recognises that volunteering is a cost-effective way of providing enhanced services but equally that it is not cost free: resources are needed to meet administration, training, supervision and insurance costs as well as volunteers' out-of-pocket expenses;
- will pay volunteers out of pocket expenses – arrangements will be confirmed with volunteers prior to starting; and
- recognises that it has a role to play in supporting and encouraging volunteering among employees and will seek to ensure that its policies and procedures reflect The Council's commitment to this.

Section 3 The City of Edinburgh Council's Good practice guidelines on Internal Volunteering

3.1 Volunteer Roles

3.1.1 *Volunteer Roles and task descriptions* will be identified in line with the principles stated above so that volunteer roles compliment rather than supplement or replace those of paid staff. Appendix 2.

3.1.2 Identified Volunteer Roles should be designed to enhance and extend the Council's aims and objectives. Wherever possible the language and terminology used should reflect the distinct role of volunteers within the organisation and terminology equated with paid employment should be avoided as far as possible. (eg 'Volunteer placement' rather than 'work').

3.1.3 For each Volunteer Role clear lines of accountability and responsibility should be identified, sufficient resources should be made available and suitable recruitment, selection and management processes should be in place prior to any recruitment taking place. Differences between volunteer opportunities will need to be taken into account (eg types of role and tasks, length of involvement, levels of responsibility, lone or supervised working) however appropriate risk assessment and risk management measures must be in place for all Volunteer Roles.

3.2 Identifying Volunteers

3.2.1 All Council volunteering opportunities will be publicised widely, in ways that are accessible to all sections of the community. The publicity material will specify the task to be undertaken and will draw attention to the benefits and experience to be gained from participation in volunteering.

3.2.2 Written descriptions will outline the duties of the volunteer, the time commitment required and skills needed. These will be reviewed as tasks and responsibilities change.

3.2.3 Recruitment and selection processes may vary according to the nature of the identified volunteering opportunity but should adhere to the Council's Equal Opportunities Strategy. Differences between one-off and longer term arrangements will need to be considered as will appropriate risk assessment and risk management measures.

3.2.4 For all on-going volunteering roles within the Council, potential volunteers will be asked to complete an application form and, depending on the nature of the tasks to be undertaken, may also be asked to provide references and PVG scheme membership (See Appendix 1 for details of recruitment procedures for volunteers supporting vulnerable adults and/or children). **Outdoor Learning Staff must follow this procedure for all volunteers.**

3.2.5 Specific service areas within the Council may have, or may need to develop, more detailed guidelines about recruitment and selection process appropriate to their service area. Attention should be paid to the Investing in Volunteers Standards and applications to volunteer should be considered fairly and equitably.

Volunteers must go through a safe recruitment procedure before commencing work. CEC Outdoor Learning Team staff must follow The City of Edinburgh Guidance on safe recruitment of school volunteers (Appendix 1).

Key CEC Orb website link (safely recruit volunteers):
CLICK HERE

3.2.6 For individuals who are accepted as volunteers with the Council, the volunteer's organiser will attempt to match the volunteer's skills, talents and interests with identified Volunteer Roles, designed to enhance and extend the Council's aims and objectives. Written role descriptions should be provided and agreed and the volunteer should be asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement, incorporating the 'Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers' list (below and Appendix 2 - template).

3.2.7 Key policies and procedures should be communicated to Volunteers before placement, including policies for their protection and any relevant Codes of Conduct.

3.2.8 Where the Council is not able to accept an individual's offer to volunteer, this fact should be communicated to the person in a sensitive and appropriate manner and reasons for the decision should normally be provided.

3.3 Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers

3.3.1 The Council recognises that its volunteers have the right to:

- know what is expected of them;
- have clearly specified lines of support and supervision;
- be shown appreciation;
- have healthy and safe working conditions;
- be insured;
- know their rights and responsibilities;
- be paid out-of-pocket expenses;
- be trained to undertake the identified function(s);
- be free from discrimination;
- experience personal development through participation;
- request a reference in relation to their voluntary work; and
- have their confidentiality respected.

3.3.2 The Council expects that Volunteers will:

- be reliable and honest;
- to respect confidentiality;
- carry out their agreed role and tasks in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of the authority;
- attend training, supervision and support sessions where agreed; and

- work within agreed policies, guidelines, remits and legal requirements.

3.4 Support for Volunteers

3.4.1 The Council will:

- Invest financial and staffing resources for the adequate management of volunteers;
- will ensure appropriate training, supervision and support to volunteers;
- make provision for an induction period and an early review session to assess the progress of the placement and to resolve any problems at an early stage;
- implement the practice of ongoing review to monitor the progress of the placement and carry out an evaluation at the end of the placement;
- ensure that appropriate procedures are put in place for volunteers who feel they are not being properly treated in their volunteer role; and
- provide funding for the payment of out-of-pocket expenses. Volunteers will be given clear information about expenses that can be claimed and how to make a claim. In areas of service where there are units with devolved responsibility for budgets, e.g. schools and community centres, it will be the responsibility of each unit to identify the funding involved.

3.5 Insurance and Health & Safety

3.5.1 The Council's Public Liability and Employers liability insurance policies cover volunteers who are assisting the Council with its activities.

3.5.2 Volunteers will be provided with the same basic health and safety and safe working practices training as Council staff. Where requested by Council staff undertaking line management, volunteers will be required to provide a medical certificate confirming they are fit to carry out the volunteer work specified.

3.5.3 Volunteers need to be able to carry out their duties in a way that is safe for them and safe for those they work with. The Health and Safety issues relevant to each unit/project must be explained to volunteers and they should be aware of current policies/practice guidelines designed to keep people safe in your work setting.

3.5.4 Additional Health and Safety training required by individual volunteers will vary according to their agreed tasks.

The City of Edinburgh Health and Safety Statement

Key CEC Orb website link:
CLICK HERE
Key CEC Contact
healthandsafety@edinburgh.gov.uk

Protecting the health and safety and welfare of our employees, and our third parties including members of the public, contractors, service users and pupils, is the starting point to delivering a thriving, sustainable capital city.

Accordingly, we will manage health and safety and welfare in a way that:

- **takes all reasonable steps to protect the health and safety and welfare of our employees and third parties;**

- demonstrates our commitment to continually improve health and safety performance; and
- complies with health and safety statutory and regulatory requirements, and all relevant approved codes of practice and guidance.

3.6 What Happens if Things Go Wrong

3.6.1 The Council will ensure that appropriate procedures are established in relation to managing any conflict arising either between a volunteer(s) and staff or between volunteers.

The Outdoor Learning Team welcomes the involvement of volunteers and tries to ensure that the volunteering experience is a rewarding and enjoyable one. On the rare occasion something goes wrong, there are clear and fair processes which try to find a resolution:

3.6.1.1 Complaints Procedure

If a volunteer wishes to make a complaint, the Communities and Families complaint procedure will apply.

If someone makes a complaint about a volunteer, the Communities and Families complaint procedure will apply.

Most complaints can be resolved locally by a CEC manager/officer at the centre, or a delegated person (Stage 1).

Key CEC Orb link (Record Frontline Resolution):
CLICK HERE

If a volunteer considers a complaint not to have been resolved locally to their satisfaction, they should use the contact details below.

Key CEC Orb link:
CLICK HERE
Key CEC Contact
cf.complaints@edinburgh.gov.uk

3.6.1.2 Volunteer Conduct and Capability

Effective recruitment, induction, training and guidance, combined with clear roles and functions/responsibilities normally ensures effective, successful and enjoyable volunteering.

If there are concerns about volunteer conduct and/or capability, the following process will be applied to ensure consistency and fairness:

- A CEC manager/officer from the centre or delegated person will discuss any concerns with the volunteer. This will be in relation to their role. Any concern/s, future actions and support will be identified and agreed within an appropriate timescale. This must be recorded. The CEC manager/officer from the centre or delegated person will review these with the volunteer over an agreed timescale.

- **If concerns are not resolved, the Outdoor Learning Principal Officer will meet with the volunteer and manager/officer from the centre or delegated person. Any concern/s, future actions and support will be identified and agreed within an appropriate timescale. This must be recorded. The Principal Officer will review these with the volunteer over an agreed timescale.**
- **If concerns are not resolved, the Outdoor Learning Team reserves the right to end a volunteer's involvement. In this eventuality the volunteer will normally be informed of the reason.**

A volunteer's involvement can be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party; The City of Edinburgh Council and/or the volunteer. The Council may be required to refer any concerns to a statutory body/authority.

3.6.2 If the services of a volunteer are no longer appropriate, the Council, after following due process, reserves the right to end his or her involvement. In this eventuality the volunteer will normally be informed of the reason.

3.7 Volunteering with Vulnerable groups - Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and Disclosures

3.7.1 The City of Edinburgh Council regards the safety and wellbeing of the children and protected adults for whom it is responsible as being paramount. As a provider of regulated services, the Council is under a statutory obligation to implement and maintain procedures for checking the suitability of its volunteers to be involved with children and/or protected adults.

3.7.2 The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 requires the Council to ensure that volunteers involved in certain aspects of the provision of services to children and/or protected adults are not listed as being barred from working with Children and/or Adults. For volunteer roles which meet the definition of 'Regulated Work' under the terms of this Act, a PVG Scheme Membership for the appropriate part of the PVG Scheme is therefore a requirement.

3.7.3 The Council will establish and maintain a formal framework to ensure full compliance with legislation and regulations designed to protect vulnerable members of society whilst treating all its volunteers in a fair and consistent manner. The application of this framework will conform to the robust standards recommended by the Care Commission and the Scottish Social Services Council.

3.7.4 The Council is clear that a PVG Scheme membership/ update can only be obtained for a post or function where legislation allows this. To determine if a disclosure is allowed reference should be made to the legislative framework. The disclosure required for a specific post or function should be at the highest level allowed by legislation. Where there is uncertainty as to whether a disclosure can be requested, HR should be requested to seek guidance from Disclosure Scotland, the Council Solicitor or the Council Chief Social Work Officer.

3.7.5 Where a risk assessment indicates a degree of risk and the existing legislative and regulatory framework does not allow a disclosure to be obtained, the line or service manager should consider the steps that can be taken to eliminate, reduce or manage the risk, e.g. training, supervision, other checks.

3.8 Essential Induction, Learning and Training for Volunteers

Essential induction, learning and training for volunteers:	
Duke of Edinburgh's Award (recruited, inducted and operated via Bangholm Outdoor Centre)	The Risk Factory
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General induction (meeting). • Key information (research via reading – specific handbook). • Key policies (research via reading). • Child Protection – Level 2 (course). • Introduction to DofE (research via reading). • Group Leader Training (course). • General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR (part of meeting/research/course). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General induction (meeting). • Key information (research via reading – specific handbook). • Key policies (research via reading). • Child Protection Awareness (course).
Bangholm Outdoor Centre (non-DofE), Benmore Outdoor Centre and Lagganlia	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General induction (meeting). • Key information (research via reading – specific handbook). • Key policies (research via reading). • Child Protection – Level 2 (course). 	

3.9 General Data Protection and Regulation (GDPR)

CEC Outdoor Learning Team staff are required to comply with CEC GDPR and related policies and procedures. Each centre is expected to maintain their GDPR toolbox, which provides more detail about local GDPR processes.

Centres must record volunteers on the volunteer spreadsheet, or an equivalent resource. This must be password protected and stored on the CEC server. Each centre must operate a separate spreadsheet and passwords maintained by CEC managers/officers and delegated staff. The Principal Officer will retain each password.

Key CEC Orb link (GDPR):
CLICK HERE
Key CEC Website link (Privacy Notice):
CLICK HERE
Key CEC Orb link (Volunteer List):
CLICK HERE

3.10 Volunteer Driving

CEC Outdoor Learning Team staff must follow the latest guidance in the Communities and Families Excursions Policy – Section 4. Any queries must be checked with Fleet Services.

Key Orb link (Excursions)
CLICK HERE

3.11 Equality and Diversity

The City of Edinburgh Council values the diversity and inclusion of all people and communities. **CEC Outdoor Learning Staff are required to comply with the Council’s Equality and Diversity Policy, and related policies.**

Key CEC Orb link (Equality):
CLICK HERE

3.12 Support for Staff Working with Volunteers/Further information

3.8.1 The Volunteering Strategy Implementation Group is made up of officers from Council service areas who manage volunteers. The Group’s meetings are a forum for discussing and dispersing good practice and advice on volunteering matters.

3.8.2 If anyone have a question for the group, in the first instance please contact volunteering@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Appendix 1 Four Step Recruitment Process

Centres must follow the four-step recruitment process.

Key CEC Orb website link (safely recruit volunteers):

CLICK HERE

Appendix 2 Volunteer Agreement Template

Outdoor Learning Team Volunteer Agreement

Volunteer Role:	[Text box will expand]
Centre/Service Area:	[Text box will expand]
Version:	1 July 2018

Role description:	[Text box will expand]
Key tasks/ functions/ responsibilities:	•
Additional information:	[Text box will expand]

The Council recognises that its volunteers have the right to:

- know what is expected of them;
- have clearly specified lines of support and supervision;
- be shown appreciation;
- have healthy and safe working conditions;
- be insured;
- know their rights and responsibilities;
- be paid out-of-pocket expenses;
- be trained to undertake the identified function(s);
- be free from discrimination;
- experience personal development through participation;
- request a reference in relation to their voluntary work; and
- have their confidentiality respected.

3.3.2 The Council expects that Volunteers will:

- be reliable and honest;
- to respect confidentiality;
- carry out their agreed role and tasks/responsibilities/functions in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of the authority;
- attend training, supervision and support sessions where agreed; and
- work within agreed policies, guidelines, remits and legal requirements.

This agreement is binding in honour only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract between The City of Edinburgh Council and you. This agreement may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party.

Volunteer:	
Signed:	
Date:	
Allocated OL member of staff (contact point):	