



# JSENSE

# VOLUNTEER POLICY

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## Introduction

JSENSE exists to deliver positive services for Jewish children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEND), their families and carers.

This is achieved through:

- Education, training, information, advice, communication support and other services
- Responding to the diverse needs of the SEND community including different language preferences.
- Representation of the Jewish SEND community to the wider community
- Campaigning in the Jewish community and the wider community
- An accessible facility as a focus for SEND children in Greater Manchester and the surrounding area.

## Purpose of Document

- To provide a foundation on which our involvement of volunteers will be based.
- To offer staff a step-by-step guide for how to involve members of the local community in our work.
- To give a cohesive and consistent set of guidelines to ensure that volunteers are fully supported during their volunteer work.
- To help ensure fairness and consistency when involving a diverse group of people.
- To ensure that volunteers know where they stand. They will know what they can expect and where they can turn to if they feel things are going wrong.
- Being able to refer to a written policy ensures that decisions are not made on an ad-hoc basis and that all volunteers are treated equally and fairly.

## Definition

A '**Volunteer**' is defined as someone who commits time and energy for the benefit of others, who does so freely, through personal choice and without expectation of financial reward, except for the payment of actual out of pocket expenses.

## Why Include Volunteers?

There are many reasons to involve volunteers, including:

- Bringing a different perspective to our work, often one that reflects the views of the local community.
- Bringing credibility to our organisation – giving their time for free suggests that the work must be of value.
- Helping to extend services we currently offer.
- Bringing a fresh approach, which includes diversity of knowledge and experience.

## Recruitment

A variety of culturally sensitive approaches will be used to recruit volunteers to encourage a wide range of people from different backgrounds. We will:

- Raise awareness of volunteering opportunities through local voluntary, community groups and organisations.

- Use personal contact networks.
- Use internet sites including our own site
- Use email networks.
- Use publicity through the press
- Include information about volunteering in our marketing materials

### **Selection & Screening of Volunteers**

It is essential that our system for recruiting volunteers is transparent and robust. From the perspective of the potential volunteer, it should be seamless.

Anyone wishing to be a volunteer shall be interviewed by the staff member who will be responsible for their day-to-day supervision. They will be judged against the criteria on the person specification. We may need to run a DBS check, depending what role they take on as a volunteer. This will be decided on a case by case basis.

### **Induction and Training of Volunteers**

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by the nominated staff member. This will include:

- The role of the volunteer.
- A list of staff members and volunteers.
- Copy of JSense structures including details of the Trustee Board.
- Copies of all the relevant policies including this Volunteer policy, Confidentiality, and Data Protection Policy, Equal Opportunities, Anti- Bullying Policy and Safeguarding Policy .
- Essential procedures, i.e. time keeping, rota etc.
- Induction training and details of ongoing training.

There will be a 3 month trial period, extendable to 26 weeks where further issues are identified and need to be resolved. This will give the organisation and the volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other.

### **Expenses**

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. All out-of-pocket expenses, if required, will be reimbursed, including expenses for travel and, when the work demands that they are volunteering for a period over 3 hours, meals.

### **Support**

It is essential that volunteers are made to feel welcome and that their contribution is recognised.

- A nominated member of staff will be identified to offer direct support to each volunteer. All staff will be expected to support volunteers where they are able.
- The nominated member of staff will agree specific times to meet and give support to volunteers. This will normally be every 2 weeks during the probationary period and, thereafter, every 2-3 months.
- Where a volunteer requests a specific meeting, the nominated member of staff will arrange to see them as soon as is practicable after the volunteer request.
- It is essential that the volunteer knows what is expected of them and works within the boundaries of their Volunteer Agreement and job description at all times

## **Insurance**

JSENSE covers all volunteers through insurance policies whilst they are in JSENSE office space or engaged in any work on JSENSE's behalf.

## **Confidentiality**

JSENSE requires that all staff, members of the Trustee Board and volunteers observe our confidentiality policy, which will be supplied to you during your induction.

## **Resolving Problems**

The relationship between JSENSE and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the JSENSE is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to the beneficiaries who use it, and also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to JSENSE. To this end, we ask that volunteers sign a Volunteer Agreement, which outlines the expectations of JSENSE and the Volunteer.

If your role as a volunteer does not meet with the JSENSE 's standards, here is how it will be dealt with:

- Initially a meeting with the nominated staff member who will explain the concerns.
- If this does not resolve the concern, then a meeting with one of the Co-Chairs will be convened.
- If your work still does not meet with our standards, then we shall have to stop using your services.

At all times you will be able to freely state your case. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your work, you should:

- Initially explain your dissatisfaction with the nominated staff member.
- If this does not resolve the concern, then a meeting with a JSENSE Co Chair should follow.
- If, after this, your dissatisfaction remains unresolved, and we are unable to resolve your grievance, then it would be inappropriate for you to continue to be a volunteer.

This volunteer policy is freely accessible to all that require it. This policy is kept in the JSENSE Office and will be made available upon request. It will be reviewed on a yearly basis to adopt or improve it.

## JSENSE VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FORM

This Volunteer Agreement describes the arrangement between JSENSE and you. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

Name of volunteer .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Post Code .....

Telephone ..... Mobile .....

Your role as a volunteer is .....

and starts on .....

### You can expect JSENSE:

#### Induction and Training

- To provide induction on the work of JSENSE, its staff, your volunteering role and the induction and/ or training you need to meet the responsibilities of this role.

#### Supervision, support and flexibility

- To explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them;
- To do our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us.

#### Expenses

- To pay out-of-pocket expenses for travel to and from home and, when the work demands that you are volunteering for a period over 3 hours, meal allowance.

#### Health and Safety

- To provide adequate information on health and safety policy.

#### Equal Opportunities

- To ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with our equal opportunities, a copy of which is set in the Employee's Handbook.

#### Problems

- To try to resolve fairly any problems, grievances and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us;

- In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to discuss the issues in accordance with procedures set out in the **JSENSE Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure Policy**

**The Volunteer**

We expect you:

- To help JSENSE fulfil its objectives;
- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability;
- To follow the organisation's procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities, in relation to its staff, volunteers and users;
- To maintain confidential information of the organisation and of its users;
- To meet time commitments and standards agreed to and to give reasonable notice so that other arrangements can be made when this is not possible;
- To provide details of referees who may be contacted, and to agree to a Disclosures and Barring Service check being carried out.

I ..... am familiar with JSENSE's standards of practice and will adopt these in my work. I accept the responsibilities outlined in the attached job description.

For JSENSE

Signed: ..... Name: ..... Date .....

The Volunteer

Signed: ..... Name: ..... Date .....

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intend any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.