

# Involving Young Volunteers

## Tool kit from Volunteering Kingston

## What's in this tool kit

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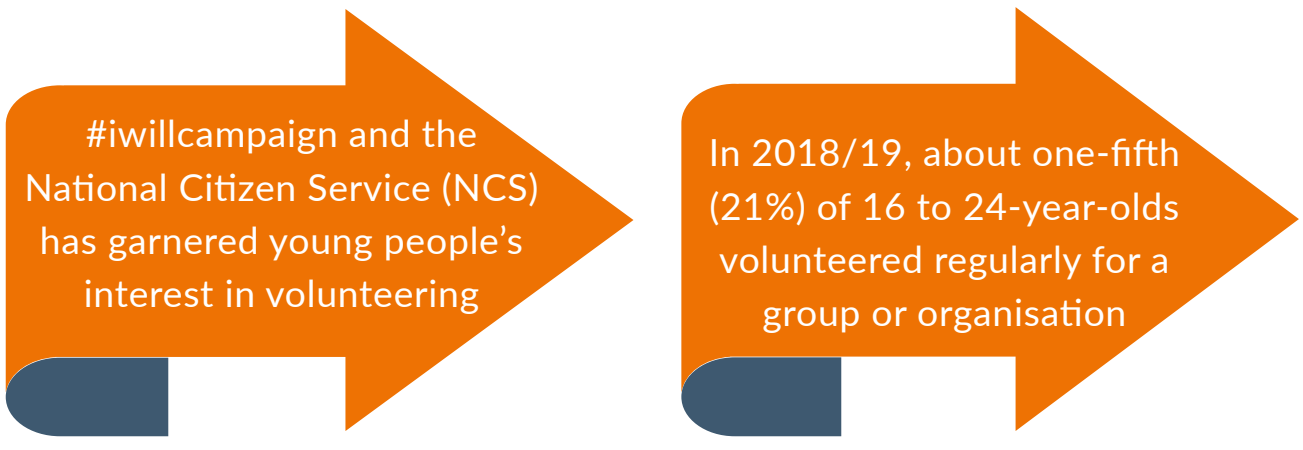
## Introduction

At Volunteering Kingston we often receive enquiries from young people aged between fourteen to eighteen years, looking to volunteer in their local community.

Volunteering Kingston supports people from fourteen years upwards who want to volunteer, as well as organisations that involve young volunteers.

This guide covers involving people under 18 as volunteers.

## Background



#iwillcampaign and the National Citizen Service (NCS) has garnered young people's interest in volunteering

In 2018/19, about one-fifth (21%) of 16 to 24-year-olds volunteered regularly for a group or organisation

The Community Life Survey provides some figures on volunteering rates for young people.

\*<https://data.ncvo.org.uk/volunteering/demographics/>

## Why involve younger volunteers?

- Young people can bring a fresh perspective, energy, enthusiasm and new ideas.
- To develop young people - their skills, understanding, and aspirations as your potential future.
- Volunteers for life - Young volunteers can be very committed and develop a long-term connection with your organisation.
- Access to a wider pool of volunteers.
- Young volunteers may bring special skills with regards to social media, computer science and other areas.
- If the service supports young people, service users will appreciate young people volunteering.
- Increased social cohesion from intergenerational volunteering.
- Positive reputation - other volunteers, service users and supporters will be pleased you are giving opportunities to younger people.
- To benefit the young person! Volunteering allows younger people to gain skills and confidence, as well as make new friends.

## Where younger volunteers aren't suitable

People under 18 are allowed to volunteer however young volunteers may be more vulnerable than adult volunteers. There are therefore some tasks that may be inappropriate for young volunteers. Areas where younger volunteers may not be suitable include:

- Roles supporting people who display challenging behaviour or supporting very vulnerable people.
- Volunteering late at night, roles which involve serving/selling alcohol.
- Roles with a significant amount of responsibility. Skilled roles, such as accountancy.
- Roles that involve volunteering alone or one-to-one with service users or members of the public.



## Keeping young volunteers safe

Regardless of the age of your volunteers organisations have a legal duty of care towards everyone that comes into contact with them.

The duty of care is a general legal duty to do everything reasonable in your power to protect people from harm. Your organisation should carry out a thorough risk assessment which covers the risk of involving young volunteers.

Under 18s may be more vulnerable to risks due to may lack experience, training and awareness. They need good training, inductions and support and supervision.

A separate risk assessment should be completed for younger volunteers. Parental permission should be sought for all volunteers under 18.

Double-check your insurance policy mentions volunteers explicitly and that it covers volunteers aged under 16. Some have a minimum age of 16 or 18.

Younger volunteers should never be left alone for long periods or allowed to volunteer with service users or members of the public alone.

Clear safeguarding instructions and advice should be shared with everyone.

Encourage a culture of openness and mutual respect.

## Under 16s

Staff working with 16 to 17 year old volunteers do not need a DBS check. In the case of Regulated Activity with under 16s, staff will need an Enhanced DBS check. Consult the Regulated Activity Consult the gov.uk website for more information on what constitutes Regulated Activity, but with regards to volunteer management “teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising a child who is under the age of 16 in relation to their employment” for “more than 3 days in any 30-day period” is a regulated activity ([source](#)). For example, consider these two roles for a 14 and 15 year old volunteers:

- One-hour long training ahead of a one-off volunteer opportunity supporting a community festival - **Enhanced DBS not required for volunteer manager**
- Ad-hoc and formal training and supervision for a two-days a week volunteer opportunity at a charity shop - **Enhanced DBS and Children’s Barred List Required**

Under 16s cannot have a DBS check carried out on them and may need more supervision and support.

Under 16s are prohibited from making house-to-house collections for charities.

You should always get the consent of the parent/guardian for under 16s before they start volunteering. It is also good practice to obtain permission from the parent/guardian for 16 to 17 year olds.

It is important to get contact details of a parent or guardian for volunteers in case of emergencies.

### Volunteering hours

There is no legal restriction on the number of hours a young volunteer can do, however, it is best practice to follow employment law limits for your volunteers.

Volunteers still in education should not miss school to volunteers (although it can be a part of their school's curriculum).

For under 18: volunteering should take place between 7am and 7pm.

If volunteering for over 4 hours, an hour break should be given. Young volunteers should be allowed to have at least a 2 week break from volunteering a year.

Under 15s can volunteer for 2 hours per day on school days and Sundays and 12 hours per week in school term-times. Up to 5 hours per day on a non-school day and 25 hours a week during school holidays.

16 and 17 year olds have no restriction on volunteering hours as long as they remain in part-time training or education until the legal minimum age requirement.

The Department of Work and Pensions states that no-one under 14 can either work or volunteer for a profit-making organisation.

### Opportunities based in Surrey

If you are involving volunteers under school leaving age (the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they turn 16) in the county of Surrey the rules are different. If they are doing any activity that involves making a profit, even it is for the purposes of charity fund raising, they must get a work permit. This includes volunteering at a charity shop, a café and shop in an attraction. Applying for work permits is free and straight forward. Consult [Surrey County Council's website](#) for more information.

### Safeguarding and child protection

Before you start introducing young volunteers it's important to assess your safeguarding culture. Make sure you have the following in place:

- An up to date safeguarding policy which is reviewed regularly.
- An opportunity for staff to undertake safeguarding training.

- A code of conduct for adults and young people.
- A named person who is trained and able to respond to child protection concerns.
- A separate risk assessment for volunteers under 18 and under 16.
- A separate child and young person safeguarding policy that is reviewed regularly.

Any volunteers and staff who are in a supervisory role for volunteers under 18 will require DBS checks as they will be in regular contact with a young person.

NCVO has advice on DBS procedures and safeguarding on their Safeguarding section of Know How Non Profit: <https://knowhownonprofit.org/organisation/operations/safeguarding>

The council has a responsibility for safeguarding young and vulnerable people within the borough and can provide support and training for volunteer organisations.

NSPCC has a statutory role in safeguarding and lots of useful information and resources on their website.



## Key policies and procedures for volunteer involving organisations

- Code of conduct - for working with young people
- Health and safety including a risk assessment for all volunteer activities
- Correct insurance
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Expenses policy
- Problem solving and raising concerns procedure
- Confidentiality and whistleblowing policy

## Recruiting young volunteers

### Designing volunteer roles suitable for young people

Rather than trying to match volunteers with limited set roles and time slots, try to match the skills and interests of the young person with opportunities, with options to change role at a later stage. If a young person wants to volunteer with you but you don't have anything suitable for them, ask them what skills they have that they may be able to offer and try to create a role for them. They may be an expert in making video making but can only volunteer two hours a week, could this be an opportunity for you to create some engaging content for your website and social media?

### Example roles

- Social Media Co-ordinator - this could be done from home.
- Trustee (over 16s only).
- Admin volunteer - for young people to gain office experience.
- Entertainment/Well-being volunteer - coming up with fun activities for your clients or volunteers to get involved with e.g. quizzes, running dance groups, crafts.

## Application process

Make applying for the role short and simple if possible. Avoid asking volunteers to complete complex application forms or send in CVs.

When a volunteer applies get back to them as soon as possible as many young people will move on if they haven't heard back from you within 48 hours.


### Top Tips!

- 💡 Ask them to send you a short video of them explaining why they want to volunteer for you. You can then follow this up with any clarifying questions by phone or text before inviting them in.
- 💡 When interviewing young volunteers, consider having at least one young person on the interview panel if possible.
- 💡 Consider holding group interviews or allow young volunteers to bring a parent with them if they wish.

## Role descriptions

Try using emotive language and calls to action such as 'join us', 'get involved', 'help others', 'make a difference'.

Use eye-catching images and open and welcoming language.

 Why not ask one of your young volunteers for their opinion on your publicity materials?

Young people may not associate volunteering as being beneficial to them so be clear on the benefits of volunteering. For example in charity shops they can gain valuable work experience, as event volunteers they can meet new people and have fun.

## Recruitment

When recruiting younger volunteers the same principles of good practice apply as when recruiting all volunteers.

Advertise on the [Volunteering Kingston](http://www.volunteeringkingston.org.uk) website - we will promote the role to younger volunteers.

Word of mouth is still the most common way volunteers will find out about your roles. Encourage your adult volunteers to suggest it to young people/parents/carers they know. Once you have younger volunteers encourage them to suggest it to their friends.

Publicise your volunteer roles in places that young people go to such as youth clubs, local parks and community spaces.

Develop good links with their networks e.g. schools, colleges, youth clubs, scout and guide units and promote your opportunities via presentations and visits, and through attendance at events related to volunteering or freshers and careers fairs.

Use your in house social media to recruit using engaging graphics and messages.

If you have budget for it consider paid promotions on social media platforms that young people use.

## Engaging with young people



1. Engage young people with socio-political issues they are concerned about, for example, homelessness, racism, homophobia/transphobia, the environment.
2. Be clear how their volunteering will make a difference.
3. Hold drop-in events and taster days so that young people can try before they commit.
4. Connect with schools and colleges - offer to do an assembly, attend Kingston College's freshers' fair and connect directly with teachers of vocational courses (e.g. Childcare courses).
5. Make sure the roles are fun, younger people may get bored more quickly so make sure you keep volunteer activities short and interesting.
6. Allow young people to volunteer in groups with friends and family.

## Make the most of established schemes

Consider creating opportunities that fit within established schemes. Especially if you require volunteers for a short term period you might want to create a discrete project that the volunteer can complete the report back would be helpful. Such as writing formal reports, creating a display for a charity shop, planning and leading a session for service users, or running a fundraising campaign. Some established schemes include:

- Two weeks' work experience which is normally organised by schools in year ten (14 to 15year olds).
- [Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes](#)
- Uniformed groups - Scouts, Girl Guides, etc.
- [National Citizens' Service](#)

## Retaining your volunteers

Retention is a big challenge of volunteer management, and this is doubly true with younger people. Of course, there are reasons why a young person will have to end their volunteering e.g. leaving home for work or university, or the demands of exams.

### Support, supervision and mentoring

It is important for young volunteers to have a named contact that they can go to with any questions or concerns. This could be a more experienced volunteer as well as a member of staff.

Young people may also lack the confidence to raise issues with the role or explain that they cannot volunteer at the moment –and so may simply ‘ghost’ the organisation.

Get to know your volunteers, if you understand what motivates them you will be able to keep them engaged for longer.

### Volunteering Kingston’s Top Tips for retaining young volunteers

- Discuss with them when they may be busy and offer to hold the role open, for example, giving them a break during revision and exam periods.
- Make it clear that you are open to hearing their feedback on the role and emphasise that it has to work for them.
- Hold regular reviews of the volunteering, and if suitable, offer them more responsibility or a different role.

- Hold socials and parties for the younger volunteers, for example at festive occasions (Christmas, Eid, Diwali etc.) or at the beginning of summer or after a big project.
- Set a volunteering reward scheme, collecting badges/levels/certificates for a certain number of volunteer hours. Volunteering Kingston can provide certificates and holds (where possible with social distancing guidelines) an award ceremony once a year.
- When advertising the role, while being positive, be clear about any challenges that there are.
- Explain why reliability is important in a non-judgemental way.

## Managing young volunteers

Don't assume too much about younger volunteers, they are varied as people of any age. However, below are some hints to bear in mind.

- Be clear on expectations. You may have to make some matters of etiquette clear that would be obvious to an older volunteer.
- Create a manual with guidance and encourage them to check it first if they have questions.
- Offer an older 'buddy' volunteer to provide advice/mentoring.

- Because we live in a much more digital world, younger people tend to have much less experience in making telephone calls, especially 'formal' ones. If you are asking them to use the phone, let them know that this will be required at the beginning of the process and consider providing 'scripts' to use on the phone.
- If you need to let them go then try and have a mature conversation with them about it. Surely, it will be a valuable learning experience.





## Useful resources

[https://expertsinvolunteering.org.uk/sites/expertsinvolunteering.org.uk/files/resources/eytb-guide-pdf-version\\_0.pdf](https://expertsinvolunteering.org.uk/sites/expertsinvolunteering.org.uk/files/resources/eytb-guide-pdf-version_0.pdf)

<https://www.yor-ok.org.uk/downloads/Involvement/Involving%20Young%20People%20in%20Volunteering%20Handbook.pdf>

<https://blogs.ncvo.org.uk/2019/02/04/10-top-tips-on-recruiting-and-retaining-young-volunteers/>

## Get in touch if you would like one to one support

-  Call 0300 365 9980 to speak to the team, our lines are open from 10am to 4pm every weekday
-  Email at [enquiry@volunteeringkingston.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@volunteeringkingston.org.uk)
-  Join us on Facebook: [@volunteeringkingston](https://www.facebook.com/volunteeringkingston)
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