



Volunteer Policy

FACE – Family and Community Enterprise | Registered charity 1179629 | Working as FAM

Head office: Central Buildings, Richmond Terrace, Blackburn, BB1 7AP | Applies at head office and all FAM outreach sites

REFERENCE	VERSION	OWNER	REVIEW
FAM-PE-18	1.0 (September 2026)	Operations Lead	Annually

Status: approved by the Board of Trustees on 10 September 2026.

Our commitment

Volunteers are at the heart of FAM. They mentor, coach, support trips and help run the charity. We will recruit volunteers safely and fairly, give them a clear role, good training and support, and thank them properly. In return we ask volunteers to follow our policies and help keep young people safe.

1 Purpose and scope

- 1.1** This policy sets out how FACE – Family and Community Enterprise (registered charity 1179629), working as FAM, recruits, supports and manages volunteers. It applies to all volunteers, including mentors, activity helpers, event volunteers, office volunteers and young people who volunteer with us. Trustees are also volunteers, but their role is covered mainly by the Trustee Code of Conduct and Board Responsibilities.
- 1.2** Volunteering is a choice made freely. Volunteers give their time without pay, and FAM does not expect them to do anything that should be done by paid staff. The Operations Lead is responsible for volunteer management, and may delegate day-to-day coordination to a named volunteer coordinator.

2 Why we involve volunteers

- Volunteers bring skills, local knowledge, languages and lived experience that help young people.
 - Volunteering is itself a pathway for young people in our Futures programme, building confidence and experience for work.
 - Volunteers extend what a small staff team can offer.
- 2.1** Volunteers support, but do not replace, paid staff.

3 Recruitment and selection

- 3.1** We aim for a volunteer team that reflects the communities we serve, and we welcome people of all backgrounds in line with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- (a)** Each volunteer role has a written **role description** setting out the tasks, time commitment, who the volunteer reports to, the skills needed, and whether a DBS check is needed.
 - (b)** Applicants complete an application form and have an informal interview or conversation.
 - (c)** We ask for **two references**, at least one of which should not be from a family member.
 - (d)** Roles involving work with children, young people or adults at risk follow the Safer Recruitment and DBS Policy, including an enhanced DBS check where the role is eligible and a self-declaration of criminal records.
 - (e)** The volunteer receives written confirmation of their role, and signs the volunteer agreement and the Code of Conduct.
 - (f)** No volunteer works unsupervised with young people until safer recruitment checks are complete.
- 3.2** Having a criminal record does not automatically stop someone volunteering. Decisions follow the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Safer Recruitment and DBS Policy.

4 Induction and training

- 4.1** Every volunteer receives an induction before they start, covering:
- the charity's aims, programmes and the young people we work with;
 - safeguarding, including how to report a concern and who the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is;
 - the Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries (Staff and Volunteers), including online contact;
 - health and safety, first aid arrangements and emergency procedures;
 - data protection and confidentiality;
 - their role description, who supervises them and how to claim expenses.
- 4.2** Volunteers must complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role before working with young people, and refresh it at the intervals set in the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. Mentors receive additional mentoring training. Training records are kept in line with the Records Management and Retention Policy.
- 4.3** New volunteers usually have a settling-in period of about three months, with a review conversation at the end.

5 Supervision and support

- Every volunteer has a named supervisor, who is a member of staff or an experienced volunteer.
- Volunteers working with young people receive regular supervision, at least every three months, and a debrief after any difficult session.
- Volunteers are never left in sole charge of a group unless the role and risk assessment allow it.
- We hold an annual review to talk about how things are going, training needs and next steps.
- We recognise volunteers' contribution through thanks, certificates, references and celebration events.
- Volunteers are covered by the charity's insurance while carrying out agreed volunteer tasks.

6 Expenses

6.1 We do not want anyone to be out of pocket for volunteering with us. Where we can, we reimburse **actual out-of-pocket expenses only**, agreed in advance with the volunteer's supervisor, such as:

- travel by public transport, or mileage at the HMRC approved mileage rate for volunteers using their own vehicle;
- meals when volunteering over a mealtime, within agreed limits;
- reasonable costs such as materials bought for an activity;
- childcare or care costs needed to allow someone to volunteer, where agreed.

(a) Claims are made on the volunteer expenses form with receipts, normally within one month.

(b) Claims are approved by the volunteer's supervisor in line with the Financial Controls Policy.

(c) Payments are made by bank transfer wherever possible.

6.2 We do **not** pay flat-rate allowances, round sums, or expenses without receipts. Paying more than actual costs could mean the volunteer is treated as a worker or employee, and could affect their benefits or tax. Volunteers using their own vehicle must have business use insurance cover and a valid licence, as set out in the Activities, Trips and Transport Policy.

7 Avoiding an employment relationship

7.1 Volunteers are not employees or workers. To keep the relationship clear, FAM will:

- use the language of volunteering, such as "role description" and "volunteer agreement", not "job" or "contract";
- make clear that the volunteer agreement is binding in honour only, not a legal contract;
- never pay volunteers, except for actual expenses;

- not give rewards or benefits that could look like payment, such as gift vouchers linked to hours worked, or free training that is not needed for the role and is offered as an incentive;
- not require volunteers to work set hours or impose penalties if they cannot attend;
- manage concerns about volunteers through this policy, not the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure.

7.2 Occasional small tokens of thanks, such as a card, refreshments or a celebration event, are fine.

8 Volunteers under 18

8.1 We welcome young volunteers, including young people from our own programmes and others who simply want to help. Extra care applies:

- Volunteers under 18 need written consent from a parent or carer.
- We complete a risk assessment for young volunteers, taking account of their age, experience and maturity, as required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Young volunteers are always supervised by an adult and are never given sole responsibility for other children or young people.
- They are not asked to do tasks that are unsuitable for their age, such as handling medication, driving or lone working.
- DBS checks can only be carried out for people aged 16 and over. Volunteers aged 16 or 17 in eligible roles are checked in line with the Safer Recruitment and DBS Policy.
- Young volunteers remain young people we have a safeguarding duty towards. Boundaries between them and younger participants are explained and monitored.
- Hours are kept reasonable and must not interfere with school or college.

9 Volunteers who are asylum seekers or refugees

9.1 People with refugee status can volunteer on the same basis as anyone else.

9.2 People seeking asylum are generally permitted to volunteer, but must not do anything that amounts to **unpaid work** or job substitution. The Home Office distinguishes volunteering from work. To stay on the right side of this, FAM will make sure that the role:

- is with the charity for a charitable purpose, and is freely chosen;
- does not replace a paid role or fill a vacancy;
- has no contractual obligations or set hours the volunteer must meet;
- involves no payment or benefit in kind other than genuine, receipted out-of-pocket expenses.

9.3 We do not ask about immigration status unless it is needed, and we record only what is necessary, as set out in the Data Protection Policy. Staff and volunteers

must not give immigration advice; if a volunteer is unsure whether volunteering could affect their case, we will signpost them to a regulated adviser, in line with the Referral, Signposting and Immigration Advice Boundaries Policy.

10 Resolving problems

Concerns raised by volunteers

- 10.1** If a volunteer is unhappy about anything, they should first speak to their supervisor. If that does not resolve it, they can raise it with the Operations Lead, and then with the Chair of Trustees, who will decide the matter. Volunteers can also use the Complaints Policy or the Whistleblowing Policy.

Concerns about a volunteer

- (a)** Minor issues are dealt with through an informal supportive conversation with the supervisor.
 - (b)** If problems continue, the Operations Lead meets the volunteer, explains the concern, listens to their view and agrees what needs to change. The volunteer may bring a friend.
 - (c)** If the concern is serious, the volunteer may be asked to step back from their role while it is looked into.
 - (d)** Where problems continue or are serious, the Operations Lead may end the volunteering arrangement and will explain why. The volunteer may ask the Chair of Trustees to review the decision.
- 10.2** Any concern that a volunteer may have harmed, or may pose a risk to, a child or adult is dealt with **immediately under the safeguarding policies**. This may include a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and, where the legal duty applies, to the DBS.

11 Leaving

- 11.1** Volunteers can stop volunteering at any time, although we appreciate notice. We offer an exit conversation to learn from their experience, collect any charity property or records, remove system access, and provide a reference on request.

12 How this policy supports our focus

- Volunteers support young people aged 11 to 25. We welcome volunteers aged 11 and over, including young people who do not use our services, with age-appropriate roles, supervision and consent for those under 18.
- We especially welcome women for girls-only sessions and volunteers with experience of SEND or who speak more than one language.

13 Related policies

- Safer Recruitment and DBS Policy
- Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries (Staff and Volunteers)
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Activities, Trips and Transport Policy
- Lone Working and Detached Youth Work Policy
- Financial Controls Policy
- Referral, Signposting and Immigration Advice Boundaries Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Approval record

Approved by the Board of Trustees on	10 th Sep 2026
Signed (Chair of Trustees)	
Next review due	31st July 2027
Version history	1.0, September 2026. New policy; replaces any earlier FAM or FACE version.