



Volunteer Policy

This policy was agreed by KLS Trustees on 17th April 2013, updated 2016.

All KLS policies are reviewed annually.

This policy will be reviewed again in September 2017.

Katherine Low Settlement Ltd
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Charity Number: 1081248
Company Number: 3814833

1. About Katherine Low Settlement

Katherine Low Settlement is a multi-purpose community and social action centre. Founded in 1924 it is dedicated to fighting poverty and isolation. We strive to provide an opportunity for people to realise their own potential and to understand the contribution they can make to their community.

Visit: www.klsettlement.org.uk and @klsettlement (twitter)

2. Katherine Low Settlement Volunteer Policy

This volunteer policy is in place to explain how we work with volunteers at the Katherine Low Settlement (KLS). It is of relevance to volunteers, staff and trustees. It aims to ensure fairness and consistency, because being able to refer to a written policy will mean that decisions are not made on an ad-hoc basis and that all volunteers are treated equally and fairly – they know where they stand, what to expect and where to turn to if they feel things are going wrong.

The policy is endorsed by the Katherine Low Settlement's Trustees and will be reviewed annually to make sure it remains relevant and appropriate to the needs of KLS and its volunteers.

This Volunteer Policy is freely accessible to all.

3. Commitment

Katherine Low Settlement recognises the benefits of people having the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the life of their communities by volunteering and champions such involvement. It acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many ways, that their contribution is unique and that volunteering can benefit service users, local communities and the volunteers themselves. KLS values the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions and in ways which are encouraging and supportive.

KLS recognises its responsibility to arrange its volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of volunteer's time, skills and experience is best used to the mutual advantage of KLS' service users and the volunteer themselves.

4. Statement of Values and Principles

Volunteering is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The role of volunteers complements but is not intended to replace the role of paid staff. Those responsible for placing and supporting volunteers will ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers and will work to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers.

No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise can be imposed on volunteers to attend or to be set a minimum amount of time to carry out agreed tasks. Likewise KLS is not required to provide either regular work or payment or any other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer. Although volunteers offer their time freely and willingly without a binding obligation there is a reasonable expectation of mutual support and reliability on both sides. Expectations on both sides will be clearly communicated.

5. Recruitment

Katherine Low Settlement is committed to Equal Opportunities. Volunteering at KLS is open to all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or religion. Our volunteer roles are advertised through the local volunteer bureau, by poster around the borough, online, through word of mouth, and in other ways which make them accessible to all members of the community. However, on a rare occasion it may be appropriate for us to only recruit in a specific place e.g. a particular newspaper, if the role in question demands such.

KLS' recruitment procedure includes taking two written references and an informal interview with paid staff to discuss the role and the individual's suitability.

6. DBS Check

Due to the fact that all our volunteer roles have substantial contact with children, young people and their families; and children are described in Section 115 (4) (a) of the Police Act 1997 as 'vulnerable people'. Our work is one of those defined in the 'Exceptions Order' to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, which states that both spent and unspent convictions need to be disclosed. This means that all staff and volunteers require an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly Criminal Records Bureau - CRB) before they can begin to regularly volunteer.

7. Induction and Training

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by one of our staff members. This will include:

- The role of the volunteer, including a role description
- A list of staff and their roles
- Introduction to all the relevant KLS policies including this Volunteer policy, Confidentiality, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding
- Essential procedures i.e. timekeeping, rota
- Induction training and details of ongoing training
- Other information as appropriate

8. Support

Volunteers will have a named person to whom they can take any volunteering concerns and seek guidance and support. The contact details for your main supervisor will be provided to you. Your supervisor will be very happy to discuss any issues you have before or after a session, if you feel you need a longer session a time can be arranged for this.

Volunteers will have access to regular support and supervision. This will enable both the volunteer and the supervisor to identify, monitor and evaluate the volunteer's involvement, to identify achievements and any development needs.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity where appropriate to participate in team / staff meetings.

9. Expenses

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. Out-of-pocket expenses, if required, will be reimbursed, including expenses for travel and resources (if pre-checked with us). KLS volunteers are able to claim these expenses on production of receipts. In order to claim expenses, an expenses form must be completed and sent into the project with receipts attached.

It is the responsibility of the designated person as above to make volunteers aware of the procedure for the reimbursement of expenses.

10. Gifts

On occasion our users like to thank us with a small gift, such as a box of chocolates or flowers. We can only accept these small gifts if they are given to benefit the whole team, not an individual volunteer or member of staff. No cash or vouchers will be accepted.

11. Insurance

Katherine Low Settlement has a valid insurance policy which covers you as a volunteer for activities held on our premises and outside it. KLS does not insure volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage.

12. Confidentiality

Katherine Low Settlement requires an explicit confidentiality policy, which all workers, including volunteers are obliged to observe.

13. Data Protection

Katherine Low Settlement will hold personal data about volunteers in line with its own guidelines and the requirements of current legislation. All personal data will be retained and processed in line with KLS' confidentiality policy and data protection legislation.

14. Resolving Difficulties

The relationship between the Katherine Low Settlement and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the organisation is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to the clients who use it, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service.

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

- An initial meeting with your supervisor who will explain the concerns that we have.
- If this does not resolve the concern then depending on the issue volunteering will cease at this point until you have had a meeting with the Project Coordinator / Director.
- If there continue to be concerns after this then you will be unable to return to your volunteer role or if you have continued until then we will ask you to terminate your role.

At all times you will be able to freely state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

If you have any problems with your role and/or the people you work with you should:

- Initially explain your dissatisfaction with your supervisor, and we'll see if the issue can be resolved. If the problem is linked to child protection issues we will take this very seriously – see KLS' Safeguarding Policy for more details.
- If the initial meeting does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the Project Coordinator / Director will be convened.
- If after this, there are issues which we feel cannot be resolved by changes that are within our control and practical to do it is likely that it will be inappropriate for you to continue to be a volunteer.

At all times you will be freely able to state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

Katherine Low Settlement Volunteer Agreement

Volunteers are an important and valued part of the Katherine Low Settlement. We hope that you enjoy volunteering with us and feel a full part of our team.

This agreement tells you what you can expect from us, and what we hope to get from you. See also the role description for your specific voluntary role. We aim to be flexible, so please let us know if you would like to make any changes and we will do our best.

You start on _____.

This is what volunteers can expect from KLS, to:

- be valued and recognised
- be treated with fairness and consideration
- know what is (and what is not) expected of them including having a clear description of the nature and purpose of their volunteer role
- be reimbursed for appropriate expenses
- have adequate support in their volunteering
- receive appreciation
- be receptive to any comment from the volunteer regarding ways in which we might mutually better accomplish our respective tasks
- have safe and healthy working conditions and to be insured
- receive appropriate training
- have the opportunity to raise concerns and when necessary access to complaints procedures
- be free from discrimination
- be offered the opportunity for personal development

I, _____ agree to do my best to:

- help KLS to fulfil its objectives
- be reliable, honest and respect confidentiality
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the organisation
- work within agreed guidelines and comply with the organisation's policies and standards
- maintain the confidential information of the organisation and of its clients
- make the most of training and support opportunities
- respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute

Staff Supervisor Signature:

Print Name:

Date:

Volunteer Signature:

Print Name:

Date:

Telephone:

Email:

Address + Postcode:

Katherine Low Settlement

Volunteer Supervision Meeting [Template]

Name of Supervisor:

Name of Volunteer:

Date of Supervision meeting:

1. What has been going well?

2. What hasn't been going well?

3. What support and/or training do you need?

4. Are there any areas of our work you'd like to move into?