

Home Support Volunteer

Purpose of Role:

Living with a child's diagnosis can place considerable strain on the whole family and in recognition of this the Home Support Volunteer programme was established in 2008 to help families cope with the demands of providing constant care. Home Support Volunteers aim to provide to provide a range of practical and social support to the families of children with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions in the community.

Becoming a Home Support Volunteer is a serious commitment but it provides a rewarding opportunity to directly support children with life-limiting/ life threatening conditions and their families.

Noah's Ark take their responsibility for safeguarding the wellbeing of children seriously. This role is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Application. 2 references are also required.

Opportunities of the role:

- Gain rewarding experience of working directly with family members
- Build knowledge of working with children, young people and families
- Develop communication sensitivity skills with families in challenging circumstances

The needs of individual families will differ, but each Home Support Volunteering role will be agreed in advance between the family, Noah's Ark, and the volunteer

Depending on the member of the family being supported, a Home Support Volunteer role could involve:

Siblings

- Playing together, sharing hobbies or activities
- Helping with homework or reading
- Going on trips out

Noah's Ark Children

- Playing together, sharing hobbies
- Doing sensory or developmental play activities
- Helping with homework or reading

Parents

- Supporting them with getting out into the community, e.g. attending a parent & child group
- Playing with the child to allow them to get chores done in the home or have a break
- Helping with light housework chores such as laundry & ironing

Whole Family

- Driving the family to medical appointments
- Gardening & mowing the lawn
- Decorating or helping to pack boxes for a house move
- Supporting the family on a day trip out

Qualities/experience/skills needed:

- Ability to work well with others
- A good understanding of the role and of Noah's Ark's expectations of volunteers
- Good communication skills
- Reliability, commitment and engagement
- Initiative and problem-solving skills
- A good level of self-awareness

Experience of working with children, young people or families is desirable but not essential. We welcome volunteers from all backgrounds with all sorts of skills.

PLEASE NOTE: Volunteers will not have sole responsibility for a child with a life limiting or life-threatening condition and will not be expected to undertake any personal care or administer medication.

Interviews and Training:

At Noah's Ark we value volunteer support, but we are also aware that not all roles are suitable for everyone. The interview and training process is in place to ensure that the Noah's Ark staff get to know more about you, to ensure that you are given the correct training for the role and so that you can find out if this is a role you would like to undertake. The training process is as follows:

- **Volunteer Induction** All potential volunteers have to attend one of these sessions before they are able to get involved in any capacity.
- **1st Interview** This will take place at the Noah's Ark Office at a mutually agreeable time.
- **Core Module Training** Any volunteers wanting to work directly with Noah's Ark families are required to attend the training spread across 1 weekday evening and 1 weekend day.
- **2nd Interview** A chance to recap on the training and discuss if both parties feel the role is suitable.
- **Activities Module Training** 1 weekday evening to prepare volunteers for the specific requirements of the Family Activities Volunteer role
- **Safeguarding Module Training** 1 morning or 1 evening, depending on the schedule, this helps to ensure the safety of our service.

Training programmes are run at regular intervals throughout the year.

Availability:

Volunteers would usually commit to visiting a family once a week/ fortnight for approx. 1-2 hours, however the frequency and times will vary dependent on a family's needs and a volunteer's availability. Home Support Volunteer roles are available 7 days per week, between 8am-8pm.

Home Support Volunteers are required to complete and return written Support Records following a visit and to attend Supervision (support groups) every 3 months.

It is hoped that volunteers can commit to supporting a family for a minimum of 12 months.

Location:

Noah's Ark supports families living in Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, Islington & Hertsmere. Volunteers will be matched geographically as much as is possible.

Minimum Age: 18 years

To apply for the Home Support Volunteer role, please return a completed Volunteer Recruitment Form to the People Development Team: volunteering@noahsarkhospice.org.uk