



Volunteer Policy

1. Volunteering at School Food Matters

School Food Matters relies on the work of volunteers. The contribution of volunteers is always valuable to our charity and roles can include supporting our project work, administrative tasks or research. Previous volunteers have helped our cooking teachers and gardeners in schools, supported us at events, researched and written content for our website, set up office systems, helped to develop our social networking skills and raised awareness of SFM in the community. We have a variety of roles and some of these opportunities may be found on the 'Work with Us' page of our website.

2. Policy Statement

Recruitment of volunteers is in line with our Equal Opportunities Policy. Prospective volunteers should complete the volunteer application form on our website and supply details for one reference. Applicants will then be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate member of staff where we will discuss general information about our charity and specific information about the volunteer role(s) on offer.

Where job applicants are not placed in the role applied for, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles.

For volunteer roles which involve '[regulated work](#)', such as direct contact with children, School Food Matters has a legal obligation to ensure that volunteers are not barred from working with children or vulnerable groups. Potential volunteers for such roles will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and will not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work. They will also be required to complete a safeguarding course and to familiarise themselves with the SFM Safeguarding Policy and disclosure reporting procedure.

School Food Matters is only able to work with volunteers who are entitled to work in the UK and cannot assist with work permits, visas or other immigration issues.

3. Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines

Volunteers will receive detailed briefing notes about sessions they are due to attend or will be given a role description containing full information about their chosen area of work and a clear overview of their responsibilities if they are undertaking office based work.

4. Support

Volunteers will be assigned a member of School Food Matters staff who will provide regular support. Support sessions will provide an opportunity to discuss development of the volunteering role and to offer advice and guidance as needed.

5. Records

Minimum personal details will be kept on volunteers. This will include the application form, references, placement details, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with School Food Matters' Data Protection and Privacy Policy.

6. Expenses

Volunteers give their time so we certainly wouldn't expect them to be out of pocket. We reimburse all reasonable travel expenses. For sessions of over four hours or over the lunch period we'll also reimburse up to £5 for lunch. Expenses will be paid on production of receipts and a completed expenses form sent to victoria@schoolfoodmatters.org

7. Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by School Food Matters' insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

8. Health and Safety

School Food Matters will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the volunteers' health, safety, and welfare while at work in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy.

9. Equal Opportunities

School Food Matters is committed to recruiting all staff and volunteers on merit. We will endeavour to make new opportunities available to a wide variety of eligible candidates to promote diversity and equality of opportunity in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy on our website.

10. Concerns

Volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with their assigned member of School Food Matters staff at any time.

11. Leaving School Food Matters

On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other opportunities.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

School Food Matters will systematically monitor and evaluate its use of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy.

Updated April 2025

Next review April 2028