Useful Websites

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)	Support in the area of employment relations - information, advice, training and direct work with employers and employees.	www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1461
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)	Detailed information on Human Resources. You need to sign up (free) to access some resources.	www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/factsheets/
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)	Used as part of your safeguarding - to assess whether your applicants are likely to be able to work with your groups safely.	www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview
GOV.UK	A Government website that gives guidance on a wide variety of issues. Examples include: ■ Employing people - www.gov.uk/browse/employing-people ■ Holidays, time off, sick leave, maternity and paternity leave - www.gov.uk/holiday-entitlement-rights	
National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)	Various guides for groups and charities.	www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support
Volunteering England	A resource covering everything to do with volunteering.	www.volunteering.org.uk/index.php

Section 6 **Policies**

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- Checklist
- Step 1 Create a safeguarding policy and an equal opportunities policy
- Step 2 Create a volunteer policy
- Step 3 Create the other policies you need

Checklist

Step 1 Create a safeguarding policy and an equal opportunities policy

We:	Yes or No?	Actions we need to take	Completed on (date)
Know what a policy is and why it is used			
Understand how to write a policy			
Have a safeguarding policy			
Have an Equal Opportunities policy			

Step 2 Create a volunteer policy

	Yes or No?	Actions we need to take	Completed on (date)
We have a volunteer policy			

Step 3 Create the other policies you need

We have:	Yes or No?	Actions we need to take	Completed on (date)
Chosen from, and created, the following policies (as relevant):			
■ Bullying and harassment			
■ Complaints			
■ Confidentiality			
■ Data Protection			
■ Disciplinary and Grievance			
■ Environmental			
■ Health and Safety			
■ Quality			
■ Training and Development			
■ Whistleblowing			

Step 1 Create a safeguarding policy and an Equal Opportunities policy

A *policy* contains the standards you have decided to set for your group. It explains the actions you will take in different situations - your *procedures*.

The standards may include what your group needs **to do to keep within the law** as well as recognised good practice.

Policies and procedures are important because they help you:

- ■ keep within the law and **avoid prosecution and fines**.
- ■ **raise funds** - the majority of funders will ask for policies.
- ■ offer a **consistent customer service** - your staff and volunteers know what to do.
- ■ Save time and **reduce conflict** - everyone knows the expected standards.

Policies save time and money in the long run but can be time consuming to write. To save time, there are templates online that you can adapt to make them precisely right for you. For example, see **WVSC Policies and Procedures** or Know-How Non Profit's **HR Bank** (NCVO).

What do we need to include?

You need to include:

- ✔ Policy name
- ✔ Organisation name and purpose
- ✔ Why your organisation is creating this policy
- ✔ The main law and guidance that supports the policy (overview)
- ✔ How your organisation is going to meet its responsibility (overview)
- ✔ Who the policy applies and relates to
- ✔ How your organisation will put the policy into action (procedures)
- ✔ Links to your others policies and procedures
- ✔ How your policy will be communicated, including with people with any sensory, physical or mental impairment that affects communication
- ✔ Date of the policy and date of review, to ensure it is kept up to date

Create a safeguarding policy

Use the 'What to I need to include?' list above to create your safeguarding policy. Refer back to page to remind you of your procedures in different areas.

You can also see the **Safe Network Standards, 2012** - their website assessment tool is helpful - and look up any of the website below.

Remember that your group **must take full responsibility for safeguarding** and the policy is here to help.

Children and Young People safeguarding websites

- ■ **Safe Network** - Information and resources to help keep children safe.
- ■ **NSPCC** - Resources, targeted at the work you do.
- ■ **Youth Organisations Wolverhampton** - Expertise in safeguarding as well as providing specific advice and guidance to voluntary and community groups that work with children and young people.
- ■ **Disclosure and Barring Service** (DBS) - This used to be the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) - the DBS now covers criminal record checks to see whether your potential employees are likely to be able to work with your groups safely.
- ■ **NCVO HR Policy Bank: Policies**

Vulnerable Adults safeguarding websites

- ■ Wolverhampton City Council: **Protecting Vulnerable Adults** - Includes examples of abuse that you organisation should understand and recognise.
- ■ **Volunteer Now** - All the relevant information is here.

Create an Equal Opportunities Policy

You need to create a culture of respect and dignity for your employees, volunteers and community. You must comply with the Equality Act 2010.

For help with this policy and with everything to do with equality and diversity, see Wolverhampton's Quick Guide to Equality and Diversity available from the support organisations, page 54.

Step 2 Create a volunteer policy

Write up the answers to the following questions as it applies to your group's situation. You will then have a volunteer policy that you can share with your group for their comment and approval.

Keep the language clear and simple so that all volunteers and others involved can understand it.

Heading in your policy	Question to answer
Group details *So that volunteers know what the group does and where they fit in*	Why does your group exist? What do you do? Why do you involve volunteers?
Benefits of volunteering *To show you value volunteers*	What are the benefits of volunteering ■ to your group? ■ to your volunteers?
How we recruit volunteers *To find the best volunteer talent from across your community. To make sure you are not leaving any group out*	Where do you advertise? How do you make sure your adverts reach all parts of the community? (e.g. not just sent electronically)
Training *Training must be relevant to helping volunteers do their role well. It cannot just be the volunteers personal training interests*	How do you carry out your induction with volunteers when they first start? See page 45. How do you decide who will go on training?
Expenses Volunteers are only re-imbursed against receipts e.g. travel tickets *Otherwise, you may break the law (minimum wage)*	Which items can volunteers claim expenses for? Who do they ask to claim the money? Which forms are needed?
Supervision *Making sure that your volunteers do everything correctly and safely*	Who will be your volunteer's main contact - their supervisor? How often will you meet?
Smoking, drugs and alcohol *Ensuring that your group is protected from potentially harmful behaviours*	Be clear on your position on smoking, drugs and alcohol.
Insurance	What insurances do you have for volunteers?
Equality and Diversity *Not treating anyone differently or unfairly e.g. because they have a disability*	How do you make sure that everyone treats volunteers with respect? How do you deal with any issues?
Health and Safety	What do volunteers need to know, so that they keep themselves and others safe and well?
Complaints from volunteers or about volunteers	What will you do if a volunteer has a complaint about your organisation? Or if someone complains about a volunteer?
Respecting Privacy *This might be called **confidentiality***	Volunteers must keep personal details about the group and individuals private. If volunteers think someone is in danger of being harmed then they must break confidentiality and tell the relevant person or authority.

Step 3 Create other policies

Which policies do I need to have by law?

If you are an employer, you will need to:

- ■ comply with employment law, including employment conditions (e.g. working hours, holiday)
- ■ comply with health and safety law (risk assessment and risk reduction)
- ■ ensure you don't break equalities law - avoiding discrimination and offering inclusive services
- ■ take out the right insurance, depending on your needs, page 13.

If I have the policies I need by law, does this mean I don't need any other policies?

Policies are there to protect you, your staff and volunteers and the people you work with. Your group or organisation must decide what you should have in place and plan to carry this out.

Don't feel overwhelmed by the list of policies - there are plenty of templates to help. You won't write them all in one day, but once you have written one, it will be easier to write the next one.

Here are some of the policies that you should be aware of. Choose the ones that are **relevant to you**.

Name	You use this to...
Bullying and harassment	...protect both children and adults by setting standards and procedures for stopping bullying. There will be links to your Disciplinary and Grievance policy (see below).
Complaints	...make sure any issues are investigated and resolved. ...learn and improve.
Confidentiality	...make sure information is only shared on a "need to know" basis and properly authorised for sharing. Does not apply if there is suspected abuse or knowledge about abuse.
Data Protection	...protect any personal or organisational information you keep.
Disciplinary and Grievance	■ Disciplinary - actions taken if standards of behaviour, attendance and job performance are not maintained. ■ Grievance - issues or complaints from an employee against another employee.
Environment	...ensure you make best use of your resources and are seen as a responsible organisation.
Health and Safety	...ensure everyone involved in your group and their activities stays safe and well (see below)
Quality	...demonstrates your organisation undertakes a continuous process of learning, developing and reviewing your work.
Training and Development	...ensuring staff and volunteers have the knowledge and skills to carry out their role within your organisation.
Whistleblowing	...when a worker needs to report suspected organisational wrongdoing.

Health and Safety - More detail

All groups want everyone to stay safe and well - no one wants to cause other people to get hurt or be unwell as a result of their activities.

A health and safety policy will help you decide what action you are going to take. Don't forget to update it regularly. The **Health and Safety Executive** have a very useful website. One of their tables has been adapted as an example:

Remember that your local support organisation can help with this, page 54.

What are the dangers? Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What else do you need to do to manage this risk?	Who will do this? By when?	✔
Computers and desks - *Avoiding tiredness, eye strain, backache, etc.*	Training - how to use computers properly			
Fire	■ Fire equipment in place ■ Test the fire alarms each week ■ Fire drills every three months	Find out where the fire could start and eliminate any dangers e.g. make sure no rubbish is kept under the stairs		
First Aid emergency	■ Stocked first-aid box ■ A named person to take charge of first-aid arrangements e.g. call an ambulance	Consider first aid training for a staff member		
Food poisoning		Attend **food hygiene** training		
Office safety	■ Adequate heat, light and air ■ Keep emergency routes clear ■ Maintain equipment			
Physical injury - lifting		Attend **manual handling** training		