



Volunteer Handbook



Make a friend, make a difference.
Your journey starts **here**.

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Introduction to Me2 Club

Thank you for becoming a volunteer at Me2 Club. We believe that you will have a rewarding enjoyable experience with your matched Me2 Club young person.

Me2 Club is a Wokingham and Reading based charity set up in 2003 to assist children and young people with additional needs to have an improved quality of life and to provide volunteering opportunities in the local community.

The aim of Me2 Club is to recruit and train volunteers like you to support children and young people with additional needs, so they can access out of school mainstream activities. By encouraging and enabling ALL children to play together and to see each other as part of the same community Me2 Club challenges barriers to inclusion.

As a Me2 Club volunteer you are vital in making this happen.

Me2 Club aims to offer its services to all children and young people with additional needs from all sections of the community and therefore seeks to involve volunteers who will respect and value individual needs and enjoy their role in making Me2 Club a great charity.

We offer a fair service and volunteers are required to challenge any form of discrimination experienced whilst volunteering for Me2 Club.

All volunteers will undergo a DBS check and references will be required.

Volunteers will be trained and then will be matched with a child or young person.

You will be given the name and phone number of your Activities and Volunteer Coordinator (AVC) who will work with you and support you in getting to know your child. Your AVC can always be contact by mobile phone or in the office on 01189 696369 should you need us for anything.

Please don't forget to visit and 'like' our Facebook page.
www.facebook.com/Me2ClubCharity

The Me2 Club Team

At Me2 Club we have a small team of dedicated staff responsible for the day to day activities of the charity, our team of volunteers, children/young people and families. Me2 Club is governed by a board of Trustees who are responsible for the overall control, direction and development of the charity. As well as ensuring they comply with all relevant charity laws and regulations. The board ensure Me2 Club remain solvent and deliver the outcomes for which the charity was set up.

Trustees

Sonia Aulak (Chair of Trustees), Simon Crawford (Treasurer), Kate Sims (Secretary), Sue Woodcock & Giles Cross.

Staff



Chin Davies
Chief Executive Officer



Jess Haycock
Senior Activities &
Volunteers Coordinator



Vicky Fisher
Activities and Volunteers
Coordinator



Nikki Fisher
Activities and Volunteers
Coordinator



Louise Butler
Activities and Volunteers
Coordinator



Jo Ramsay
Senior Fundraising
Development Coordinator



Sabrina Marsh
Core Service Support
Officer



Ramona Bridgman
Participation Officer

Volunteer Role

Volunteers are matched with a child or young person with additional needs to support them to attend a mainstream leisure activity. This activity is usually weekly and will be in the local community.

Volunteers have the right to leave the project at any time, however we ask you to commit to a **minimum of a year** and try to provide Me2 Club with as much notice as possible ideally at least 2 months. This is so that we can continue to provide a volunteer for our Me2 Club children, ensuring they are able to continue the activity they enjoy.

Whilst volunteering for Me2 Club, there may be occasions when a parent wishes to reward the volunteer with a gift. This is not a problem, however if you feel the gift is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable then please speak to your Activities and Volunteers Coordinator (AVC) about it.

Me2 Club has the right to dismiss any volunteer. Grounds for dismissal may include, *but are not limited to*, the following: -

- Gross misconduct
- Being under the influence of drink or drugs whilst volunteering
- Theft of property
- Abuse or mistreatment of clients
- Failure to abide by Me2 Club's policies and procedures
- Failure to perform duties satisfactorily, or meet physical or mental standards for performance
- The volunteer is deemed unsuitable for role by the Activities and Volunteers Coordinator

The Process of Becoming a Me2 Club Volunteer

Attend training & DBS check

All Me2 Club Volunteers must attend Volunteer Induction Training and will be issued with a certificate. We will also require the relevant documentation to begin processing a DBS check.

Informal Interview

After training, you will be invited into the office for an informal interview where you can discuss your availability, transport, experience, health and support needs, preferences etc.

Exchange profiles

Once a suitable match has been identified, your Volunteer Profile will be sent out to the parents of the Me2 Club young person and if they agree we will proceed and send the young person's profile out for you to read and review.

Meet Family

If all parties are happy with the match, your Activities and Volunteers Coordinator (AVC) will organise for you to meet the child and their parents before the activity. This is an opportunity to meet the young person and a chance for everyone to ask questions and get to know one another.

Attend activity

After the home visit, arrangements will be made to start attending the activity with the young person. For the first session your AVC will support you and the young person. After this, your AVC may only visit once a term but is always available to support you through phone and email and can attend further sessions if required.

Volunteer Responsibilities

As a Me2 Club volunteer, there are certain responsibilities that you agree to take on:

- Attending induction training and an initial interview
- To attend a home visit with your Me2 Club Staff Member and your matched child
- To be reliable and attend the activity with your child each week
- To provide support that will enable your matched child's enjoyment, involvement and participation in the activity
- To abide by Me2 Club's policies and procedures (contained in this handbook)
- Respect confidentiality and sensitive information
- To provide good notice to the child's family if you are unable to attend an activity
- To inform the Me2 Club Staff Member of anything that makes you unhappy or uncomfortable

Me2 Club will support you in your volunteering through:

- Providing Induction Training to prepare you for your volunteering role
- Provide information and support about your matched child
- Providing support through your Activities and Volunteers Coordinator
- Reimburse your expenses incurred while volunteering for Me2 Club

You will be asked to sign a volunteer agreement to accept these responsibilities.

Additional volunteering opportunities

In addition to our core service of supporting children at activities we have additional projects that you may choose to get involved in. All activities will be paid for. No further training is required to volunteer at these activities. Staff will discuss your specific role with you prior to you attending. These activities are optional, and you do not need to commit to supporting at them to become a Weekly Activity Volunteer.



Family Events

Me2 Club run's family parties throughout the year for all our Me2 Club children and their families. Me2 Club volunteers are also encouraged to attend these events with their matched Me2 Club young person. We run a party at Easter, Summer and Christmas each year.

For more information on these opportunities visit the events page on our website: www.me2club.org.uk/events/

Me2 Club Teenagers

In 2019, Me2 Club started the 'Me2 Club Crew' project for our teenagers. Me2 Club recognised that there was a lack of youth groups and mainstream activity clubs for our teenagers to take part in and so we set up our own mobile 'youth group' to give our teenagers the chance to socialise and learn life skills in the community. This project is currently being adapted to work with our teenagers to decide the future of the project. Further information about how you may be able to get involved with the new project will be sent out once they have been finalized.

This group is owned and guided by the Me2 Club Teenagers who chose the name and choose what we do for each meeting.

Fundraising Friends

Me2 Club recruits Fundraising volunteers to support us at events in the local community such as fetes and fairs to help us raise valuable funds and spread the word about what we do. Separate guidance is available for this role. If you would like to become a Fundraising Friend, please contact jo@me2club.org.uk.

Aims of the Service

We aim to help our young people increase in independence, confidence and self-esteem by attending a weekly activity with a volunteer and through the support of Me2 Club staff and activity leaders. We also hope that our volunteers can build a trusting relationship with their young person and help the young people learn life skills. As a charity who rely on various funding streams it is essential that we provide evidence of the impact our service has on the lives of the young people we support. For this reason we collect data on how well the young people are progressing at their activity.

Each child will have an individual target child what they would like to achieve through having a Me2 Club Volunteer at their chosen activity. As a volunteer we will let you know what your matched child's individual target will be and will ask you to feedback to us on how they are progressing with it at activity visits.

Useful Sources of Information on Additional Needs

- **ASD** – Autism Spectrum Disorder is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how people perceive the world and interact with others. <http://www.autism.org.uk/about/what-is/asd.aspx>
- **ADHD** - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a group of behavioural symptoms that include inattentiveness, hyperactivity and impulsiveness. <https://aadduk.org/living-with-adhd/>
- **OCD** - Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is a mental health condition where a person has obsessive thoughts and behaviours that they can't control, which can form habits and rituals which the sufferer feels must be completed to ease anxiety.. <http://www.ocduk.org/ocd>
- **Global Development Delay**- Global Development Delay is when a child takes longer to reach certain development milestones than other children their age. <https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/conditions/global-development-delay>

- **Epilepsy-** When someone has epilepsy, it means they have a tendency to have epileptic seizures. A seizure happens when there is a sudden burst of intense electrical activity in the brain causing a temporary disruption to the way the brain normally works.
<https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/>
<https://www.epilepsysociety.org.uk/what-epilepsy>
- **Down syndrome-** Down syndrome is a genetic condition that affects the way that a person develops both mentally and physically.
<https://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/>
- **Dyspraxia-** Dyspraxia is a disorder affecting fine and/or gross motor coordination in children and adults and can also effect speech.
<https://dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk/about-dyspraxia/>
- **Cerebral Palsy** - Cerebral Palsy affects muscle control and movement. It's usually caused by an injury to the brain before, during or after birth. Children with cerebral palsy may have difficulties controlling muscles and movements as they grow.
<http://www.cerebralpalsy.org.uk/>
- **PDA** – Someone with Pathological Demand Avoidance will avoid demands made by others, due to their high anxiety levels when they feel that they are not in control.
<https://www.pdasociety.org.uk/>
- **ODD** - Oppositional Defiant Disorder is a childhood disorder that is characterized by negative, **defiant**, disobedient and often hostile behaviour toward adults and authority figures primarily. To be diagnosed, the behaviours must occur for at least a period of 6 months.
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg158/chapter/Introduction>
- **Dyslexia** - Dyslexia is a common learning difficulty that can cause problems with reading, writing and spelling.
<http://www.dyslexia.uk.net/>
<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/>

- **GAD** - Generalised Anxiety Disorder - is an anxiety disorder characterized by excessive, uncontrollable and often irrational worry over a wide range of situations and issues, rather than one specific event.

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/anxiety-type/generalised-anxiety-disorder/>

- **Learning disabilities**

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/>

- **Basic Signing**

<https://www.makaton.org/shop/shopping/browseStore/Free-resources>

- some downloadable resources about signing.



Yes



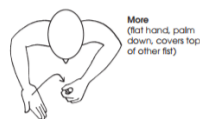
no



Home



Please



Toilet



Top Tips from Training

Please be aware that these are general tips from training and may not be appropriate in all situations. They are included in the handbook as general advice to help volunteers when they are first getting to know their Me2 Club young person.

Autism

- Language – Explain at each stage what you are about to do, what will happen now/next and why
- Processing time - enough time to understand the information you are sharing and wait a few seconds for a response if it is not given immediately
- Questions should be clear and direct using language that is easy to understand and visuals where necessary – do not rely on the person to pick up the meaning of your body language
- Be considerate of literal thinking, try to avoid metaphors and sarcasm
- Maintain a routine by being reliable and on time
- Repetitive behaviours might be a coping mechanism and therefore should be respected
- Try to be aware of the environment and how it could lead to sensory overload
- Give choices - do you want to do X or Y

PDA

- Think about the language you use – avoid direct demands
- Negotiate and be flexible – give a sense of control
- Plant the seed – give warning of things that may be coming up/happening next without pressure
- Give choices – do you want to do X or Y
- Pick your battles – try to avoid unnecessary demands and focus on instructions which need to be followed e.g. for safety

ADHD

- Use routines and timetables
- Provide visual prompts and reminders
- Consider asking parents if they can bring a fidget / fiddle toys
- Give movement breaks (short breaks to jump, run on the spot etc.)
- Break down instructions and give reminders
- Set clear boundaries
- Be one step ahead – distract and divert from difficult situations

Downs Syndrome

- Speak clearly and calmly so they understand instructions
- Use communication aids/signs if necessary
- Use physical support where needed e.g. Hand over hand
- Set routines so they feel more settled
- Set clear boundaries and promote positive behaviour support
- Look for changes in mood or behaviour – they may struggle to tell you something is wrong or they're unwell

Positive Behaviour Support

- Stop and try to think about the situation and what may have been the cause or trigger for the behaviour
- If possible, remove the trigger and/or change the environment
- Adopt a calm, non -threatening stance and use a slow, controlled tone of voice
- Give clear verbal directions with time for the young person to process what you have said.
- Ask for help, if needed, from the activity provider to help you at the activity and contact your Activities and Volunteers Coordinator for guidance and strategies.
- Give the young person time and space to calm down, if appropriate, and be aware of how long it may take for adrenaline levels to return to normal

- Think about the situation and how it could be avoided in future or consider different strategies to help the young person cope with the situation that led to the challenging behaviour – your AVC can help with this
- Remember that challenging behaviour can be a method of communication and try to consider what they may be trying to express e.g. anxiety, upset, frustration

Communication

- Use the young person's name and eye contact to gain attention when starting a conversation and use the young person's name to direct their attention
- Use clear and simple language and try to make instructions as concise as possible.
- Use alternative methods of communication if appropriate e.g. gestures
- Show the young person what they need to do by doing it first e.g. during a complex task show them step by step what they need to do.
- Try to avoid using sarcasm and metaphors
- Use communication aids where appropriate -your AVC can help with this by creating visuals.
- Be aware of your own body language and try to have an open posture while supporting your young person
- Give the young person time to process instructions and questions and then give them time to respond. If they do not show signs that they have understood repeat the request
- If the young person is becoming upset, try to put less demands on them as this can be overwhelming and give them more time to process any requests
- If the young person needs to be given time and space, try to stay nearby and pay attention to them with open body language so that they know they can approach you when they need to

Me2 Club Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Safeguarding is at the heart of all our work with children, young people and adults at risk. Me2 Club has a duty to ensure that it makes arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, and to protect adults at risk from abuse or the risk of abuse.

Me2 Club is committed to providing a safe environment for all children, young people and adults at risk. This policy is to be used by any member of staff working directly with children or young people. The policy also relates to any volunteer, including Trustees, or support staff of the organisation who becomes involved in or aware of a child protection concern in the course of their work.

Designated Safeguarding Officers

The Me2 Club Chief Executive is the Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer. A member of the board of trustees will have a strategic responsibility for safeguarding practice across the organisation and will act as Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer in the absence of the Chief Executive in operational matters. Both will be trained to Designated Safeguarder level.

Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer:

Jess Haycock, Senior Activities & Volunteers Coordinator
jess@me2club.org.uk or 07931 302512

Trustee strategic lead for safeguarding and Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer:
Sonia Aulak, Chair of Trustees sonia@me2club.org.uk

In addition, the following staff are Designated Safeguarding Officers:

Name	Role	Contact Details
Vicky Fisher	Activities & Volunteers Coordinator	07891 610130
Nikki Tee	Activities & Volunteers Coordinator	0753 5277 509
Louise Butler	Activities & Volunteers Coordinator	0753 5699 840

Definitions of Child Abuse and Harm

Child abuse is any avoidable act, or avoidable failure to act, which adversely affects the physical, mental, or emotional well-being of a child.

Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development. This definition was clarified in section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 so that it may include, "impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another".

Significant Harm is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when assessing what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes a single violent incident may constitute significant harm but more often it is an accumulation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, damage or change the child's development.

The concept of significant harm is, therefore, relative to each individual concerned. The determination of what constitutes significant harm in each individual case is made by the Local Authority.

The following are recognised as the areas that children may be in need of or require protection from: Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, including Child Sexual Exploitation, Emotional/Psychological Abuse and Neglect.

Safer Recruitment Practice

Safer Recruitment practice is an important part of our approach to create a safe environment for children, young people and adults at risk. Our Safer Recruitment practice is used in the recruitment of staff and volunteers with the aim to:

- Deter applications from those that are unsuitable to work with children, young people and adults at risk
- Reject unsuitable applicants through the recruitment process
- Attract the best possible candidates to vacant posts

Staff and volunteers do not begin their role until all required pre-employment or pre-volunteering checks are completed. This includes obtaining a minimum of

one satisfactory reference, ideally two, for volunteers and a minimum of two satisfactory references for members of staff and Trustees. All staff and volunteers will not begin in their role until they have completed a DBS check and the results returned to Me2 Club.

In the event of a blemished DBS, the information contained will be reviewed by the Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer on the suitability of the appointment. The outcomes of this review could be:

- Not making the appointment on grounds of suitability to work with children or adults
- Continuing with the appointment following a risk assessment and plan

Training

All staff and volunteers are required to complete an annual Safeguarding Awareness refresher session. Volunteer Induction training includes Safeguarding Awareness for all new volunteers working with children and young people.

Safeguarding Procedures

Generally, concerns about children will arise in one of three ways:

1. Direct allegations of abuse or neglect
2. Observations or information about children which might suggest they are experiencing, or likely to experience, abuse or neglect
3. More general childcare concerns

If a Me2 Club Volunteer is made aware of a safeguarding concern by a beneficiary or is worried about the welfare of a child or young person, their only duty is to pass that information on to:

- The Activity Leader at the child's chosen activity and;
- A Me2 Club Activities & Volunteers Coordinator and/or;
- Me2 Club's Chief Executive Officer

Direct allegations of abuse or neglect

If a child or adult makes a direct disclosure to a volunteer, they should immediately inform the Activity Provider and their Activities & Volunteers Coordinator.

If a child or adult makes a direct disclosure to a staff member, the staff member should:

- Tell them they believe them and reassure them that they will not get into trouble for being honest
- Tell them that they have done the right thing in sharing the information and that in order to keep them safe they may have to share this with another professional
- The member of staff should only ask open questions e.g. Who? What? Where? When? How? These questions should be minimal and only asked out of necessity and to clarify the situation. Care must be given to avoid asking leading questions.
- The member of staff should let them speak freely
- The member of staff will not make assumptions and should not make them feel guilty or embarrassed
- The member of staff will write down, as soon as possible, their account using their language/words
- The member of staff will inform them of the actions they will take, including who they will share the information with
- If necessary, the member of staff should contact the Duty Social Services Team or Out of Hours Emergency Team. They will take advice from Social Services regarding what to do next.
- The staff member will agree what to tell the parents or carers in conjunction with a Designated Safeguarding Officer
- The member of staff will treat this information as confidential and will only share it with authorised personnel

Observations/information about children suggesting abuse or neglect

A volunteer may identify concerns during an activity. In this instance they should speak to the Activity Provider who may contact Social Services.

The volunteer must speak to a member of Me2 Club staff so a formal record can be made.

If a member of staff observes or is made aware of information that might suggest a young person is experiencing harm, abuse or neglect, they should consult with a Designated Safeguarding Officer.

General childcare concerns

Where there are low levels of concerns that a child's physical or emotional needs are not being met to a satisfactory standard, or other concerns about their safety and wellbeing, these should be raised with an Activities & Volunteers Coordinator, who will make a formal record of the concerns and decide on an appropriate course of action proportionate to the concerns raised.

If it is not possible to contact a Me2 Club member of staff, all volunteers have emergency safeguarding phone numbers on their ID cards.

Information Sharing

Me2 Club has the responsibility to share information with the Local Authority (LA's) children's social care department when we are concerned that a child may be suffering or be at risk of harm. Me2 Club has a duty to share concerns relating to a professional's conduct towards a child or young person with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). While, in general, we should first discuss any concerns with the family and inform them of our discussion to make a referral to children's social care, there may be times where we make the decision not to, such as:

- Sharing the information may place a child at increased risk of harm
- Prejudice the prevention or detection of serious crime
- Lead to unjustified delay in sharing information
- Put a Me2 Club employee/worker at risk

Any decision not to inform a child's family should be made in consultation with the Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer and the rationale for not disclosing to the family be recorded.

Allegations against Volunteers, Committee or Staff Members

If an allegation is made against a volunteer or staff member by the Activity Provider or parent this should immediately be notified to Me2 Club's Chief Executive Officer, who will discuss a plan of action with the Trustees. If the allegation is against the Me2 Club Chief Executive Officer, it should be passed to the Trustee responsible for Safeguarding.

The Me2 Club Chief Executive Officer will ask the person raising the concern if they have reported their concerns to the relevant Children's Social Care Department. If not, the Chief Executive may advise them to do so.

Me2 Club Chief Executive Officer will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The Chief Executive will carry out actions proportionate to the situation and concerns raised in order to resolve the concern and ensure that those at risk are safeguarded effectively.

If a member of staff or volunteer does not feel their concerns have been listened to, are worried that repercussions are likely to arise if they do raise a concern, or worried about the safeguarding practice of the organisation they can seek advice through the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice line on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk

Concerns Regarding a Child's Wellbeing

If a volunteer is worried about the safety or welfare of a child or adult at risk, their only responsibility is to share this information with the relevant Activity Provider and their Activities & Volunteers Coordinator.

Internally, if staff are concerned about a child's safety or welfare, this should be shared with a Designated Safeguarding Officer. If Me2 Club are aware that a family has a named Social Worker or lead professional, concerns will be passed to them, initially by phone where possible and followed by email. If the family is not known to have a Social Worker, the staff will contact the Duty Social Work Team.

If the member of staff is unsure whether information needs to be passed on, they may contact the NSPCC helpline, or the Duty, Triage and Assessment Team for advice. Where there is uncertainty, Me2 Club will opt to pass on information rather than not.

Designated safeguarding officers will be the main contact for any ongoing child protection procedures, liaising with the staff member as necessary. The designated safeguarding officer may attend multi-agency meetings if required.

The Chief Executive will provide monitoring information on safeguarding incidents to the Board of Trustees on a quarterly basis. Any safeguarding incidents where there is an organisational failure to safeguard an individual or an incident that would constitute a critical incident this will be reported to the Trustees immediately.

Staff targeted by perpetrators to gain access to children and young people

Me2 Club recognises that perpetrators may specifically target staff or volunteers in an attempt to groom and exploit them in order to gain access to children and young people. In an event of this nature, the Chief Executive Officer should be informed immediately so that an appropriate safeguarding response can be implemented and the member of staff provided with support.

Safer Practice

Me2 Club works to the following guidelines to promote professional boundaries and a culture of safeguarding:

- Volunteers are instructed to avoid being 1-1 with their children in isolation at all times
- Volunteers should only have contact with their child during the weekly activity. Volunteers should not see or spend time with the child they are matched to outside of these sessions, including on the travel to and from the activity
- Where it is assessed that a child's support needs create a higher safeguarding risk two volunteers may be matched to support the child
- Volunteers are given guidance around safe personal care for low level needs (e.g. being in earshot of others/asking activity leader for support)
- On Weekends Away, room sharing is always the same gender. Under 18's and Over 18's will be in separate bedrooms, this applies to children and volunteers
- Children will not share a bedroom with volunteers or staff
- A risk assessment will be undertaken each Weekend Away and if the risk is high of a child becoming anxious at night, two waking night staff will be employed
- All contact with children must be age appropriate, situation appropriate and socially appropriate
- All volunteers carry ID cards, with staff contact details

Young Volunteers

Me2 Club is aware of its responsibility regarding the safeguarding of all volunteers particularly those under 18 years of age. Parental consent is required for young volunteer's involvement.

Volunteers are advised to report any concerns regarding interaction with parents to their Me2 Club staff member.

If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child please phone:

Area	Team	Contact Details
Wokingham	Duty and Triage	0118 908 8002 Triage:Wokingham.gov.uk
Wokingham	Emergency Duty Team	01344 786 543
Reading	Single Point of Access (SPoA)	0118 937 3641
Reading	Emergency Duty Team	0118 937 3641

Other contacts:

Thames Valley Police: telephone 0845 8505 505 FREE

NSPCC 24 Hour Helpline: 0808 800 5000 5000 FREE

Incident and Accidents

All incidents and accidents involving you or the young person should be reported to the Activity Provider as soon as possible as they will be able to help you with any first aid or help that may be needed. Whilst you are your activity the Activity leader/provider is responsible for the young person's safety and wellbeing and they should always be your first point of contact so they can follow their procedures.

You should also contact AVC as soon as possible after the situation has been resolved. If an accident or incident occurs, we ask all our volunteers to complete a Me2 Club Incident/Accident form, which will be sent to you via email.

Your AVC will help you to complete this form, please be aware all information will be shared with parents and activity provider where appropriate.

Me2 Club recognises safeguarding risks related to young people using Facebook and other social media sites. We also recognise the benefits of social media for communication with and between families and volunteers. The following guidelines are in place to make social media usage as safe as possible for all concerned.

Me2 Club Social Media Policy and Procedures

Volunteers

Me2 Club volunteers are discouraged from being Facebook (or other social media) friends with their matched child. However, we recognise the benefits that sites, such as Facebook, have for communication in some situations, particularly with able teenagers.

If Facebook/social media contact is made volunteers must inform Me2 Club immediately:

- Volunteers who use social media will be encouraged to be friends with Me2 Club staff members (Facebook) or follow @Me2Club on Twitter or Instagram
- Staff remind volunteers of the expectation that they will be good role models and advise volunteers to set high privacy settings
- Me2 Club will ensure that the family of a Me2 Club child/young person is aware and that they give consent for the Facebook/social media friendship between volunteer/child
- Me2 Club will advise the family to monitor the young person's Facebook account
- Volunteers are told at Induction Training not to take photo's of their matched child and if sharing any Me2 Club social media not to tag themselves or their Me2 Club matched child

Me2 Club does not recommend that volunteers and parents of Me2 Club Children become friends on Facebook/social media.

Photographs on Facebook

Photographs will be posted on Facebook only if Me2 Club has consent for public usage.

Photographs will not be tagged by Me2 Club and it is explicitly requested that others do not tag themselves in photos with other people/children in them (to avoid names being associated with children and photos being viewed by a wider audience e.g. 'friends of friends').

Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy

Data Protection

All Me2 Club volunteers must be careful about sharing information relating to their matched child and family.

All data or information collected by the Me2 Club volunteer in relationship to individuals and organisations must be used for lawful purposes which relate to the aims and objectives of Me2 Club.

Me2 Club ensures that where information is held on volunteers they are kept informed and will be made aware of when and who this information may be passed onto. Consent to hold this information is sought from volunteers on the volunteer application form.

All hard copy personal records regarding volunteers are kept securely at the Me2 Club office. However, individuals can request to see information stored

and make any corrections when/where necessary. These records are retained for as long as the volunteer remains with Me2 Club and for 3 years after a volunteer has left Me2 Club, they are then shredded.

Electronic records are also kept on a password protected database in accordance with our data protection policy.

Data from volunteer application forms is added to computer databases, all electronic records are password protected. Me2 Club is registered with the Data Protection Commission Agency.

Confidentiality

Both families and volunteers of Me2 Club will need to share information about themselves in order for Me2 Club to provide an effective supportive service. The information shared may be anything from home phone number to personal details about the child's disability. However, all information shared between Me2 Club Staff Members, families, volunteers and service providers is confidential to Me2 Club and must not be shared with anyone else unless requested by Social Services in connection with Child Protection investigations or incidents.

Please be aware that Me2 Club has an obligation to report any suspicion of child abuse to Social Services.

All information is used by Me2 Club Staff Members to ensure that the best possible match between child/young person and volunteer can be made.

Volunteer Expenses

Me2 Club do not expect our volunteers to be out of pocket. As a Me2 Club volunteer you are entitled to claim travel expenses to and from your activity location. This can be for public transport or claimed in mileage if you drive.

If you need to claim expenses this will need to be done within a 3-month period, please contact your Activities and Volunteers Coordinator (AVC) for an expense claim form. Alternatively, you can download a form from our website and submit it to your AVC.

Please keep all receipts of expenses incurred while undertaking Me2 Club volunteering duties as these will be required to claim expenses.

The expenses form can be accessed at:

Me2club.org.uk/volunteers/contact-information-forms/

Volunteer Conduct Policy

There may be occasions where a child's parent/carer or an activity provider raise concerns about a volunteer's conduct or performance. Performance could include if the volunteer is consistently not meeting the needs of the child during the activity session or conduct could include if they consistently turn up late or cancel sessions. If there is a low-level concern, for example an individual incident of a volunteer swearing in front of a child the allocated staff member may not follow the process described in this policy and instead will discuss the concern and make a note of it on the volunteer's record. If the concerns are of a safeguarding nature the process set out in the Safeguarding Policy will apply.

The first step will be for the allocated staff member to fact find. The concerns will be discussed with the volunteer and those involved to give everyone the opportunity to share their views. This could include speaking to the child, their family, and the activity leader. The allocated staff member will decide on whether an Improvement Plan is needed to address the concerns. If there are

serious concerns about the performance or conduct of a volunteer, this could result in Me2 Club formally ending their volunteering.

If required, an Improvement Plan Meeting will take place either by phone or in person. The staff member and volunteer will work together to look at what impact the concerns are having on the child and set clear objectives to address them. The volunteer may be offered further support or training to enable them to achieve the objectives. A review date will be agreed in this meeting, however, if there are any further concerns or if the volunteer isn't making suitable progress against their objectives, a review may happen before the planned date. The child/family/activity leader will be told about what the improvement plan consists of, anything that may be required of them and what the volunteer is working towards in preparation for the review. They will also be consulted to seek feedback prior to the review meeting.

The review meeting will result in one of the following:

- No further action required
- A further period to support improvement
- The volunteer no longer supports the child but is given the opportunity to be rematched
- Formal end to volunteering with Me2 Club

The volunteer, child, parents and activity leader will be informed of the outcome. Details of the concerns raised, any fact finding, the Improvement Plan and the outcome will be saved on the volunteer's record.

Complaints Policy

As a volunteer you may have concerns or you may wish to make a complaint. There may be occasions where a family or activity provider may make a complaint regarding a volunteer. All complaints must be recorded on a complaints form.

Volunteer

- If a volunteer wishes to make a complaint about the Me2 Club Project, this should be made in the first instance to the Me2 Club Staff Member
- If, after this, you do not receive a satisfactory response or your concern is about the Me2 Club Staff Member, you will need to put this in writing to the Me2 Club management committee for discussion and response

The Me2 Club Staff Member will report all complaints and actions taken to the Me2 Club management committee. Me2 Club will continually review and monitor complaints and where necessary make appropriate changes.

If you wish to make a complaint you can download a complaints form from the Me2 Club website at: [Me2club.org.uk/volunteers/contact-information-forms/](https://me2club.org.uk/volunteers/contact-information-forms/)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Me2 Club is committed to encouraging and championing equality, diversity and inclusion among our staff and volunteers and eliminating unlawful discrimination. It is our aim that our staff and volunteers are representative and reflective of our community and beneficiaries.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time as well as those who volunteer their time for us not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender-identity and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, furlough, leave for parents or those with caring responsibilities, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination or harassment against other people is prohibited and this applies in the workplace, and outside the workplace (when dealing with work-related contacts).

The following are some forms of discrimination and harassment that exist:

- (a) Direct Discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views.

(b) Indirect Discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect woman because they generally have a greater childcare commitment than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.

c) Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

(d) Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

Bias: is a prejudice in favour of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another usually in a way that's considered to be unfair. Biases may be held by an individual, group, or institution and can have negative or positive consequences. There are two types of biases:

- i. Conscious bias (also known as explicit bias) and
- ii. Unconscious bias (also known as implicit bias)

It is important to note that biases, conscious or unconscious, are not limited to ethnicity and race. Though racial bias and discrimination are well documented,

biases may exist toward any social group. Protected Characteristics are subject to bias.

Me2 Club strives to take positive action to challenge discrimination in all of its forms, including unconscious bias, preventing harassment and ensuring equality of opportunity for all. Where Me2 Club fails in its responsibility to support individuals fairly or unlawfully discriminates against an employee and the situation is not able to be resolved informally, the employee is able to raise a grievance under the grievance policy. Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with seriously and where appropriate may be resolved in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure.

As an organization that provides services and support, we are also committed against the unlawful discrimination and exclusion of our beneficiaries. Me2

Club will promote positive images of families and volunteers. Complaints against Me2 Club, its staff, volunteers, and Trustees will be dealt with fairly and in accordance with the Me2 Club Complaints Policy.

Volunteers

A fair system is in place for recruitment of volunteers; this includes an application form, DBS checks, references, and interviews. Me2 Club volunteers receive training on the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Me2 Club services may be restricted by the number of volunteers available and the number of families wishing to access the service.

Me2 Club monitors the ethnicity of volunteers and children.

Achieving an equal opportunities workplace is a collective task shared between the Committee and the staff. The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for this Policy and for equal opportunities and discrimination law compliance in the workplace. The Chief Executive Officer has been appointed as the person with day-to-day operational responsibility.

Volunteer Health and Safety Policy

Organisation

Me2 Club management committee recognizes its responsibilities for Health and Safety.

Me2 Club volunteers receive appropriate health and safety training as part of their training package. This includes information and advice on keeping both themselves and the child with additional needs safe.

Me2 Club volunteers are encouraged to report any Health and Safety concerns in the first instance to the activity provider and then to the Me2 Club Staff Member who will raise it at the management committee meeting.

Risk Assessment

A preliminary risk assessment will be carried out at the proposed activity in conjunction with the activity provider, the family, Me2 Club volunteer and

Me2 Club Staff Member. Information sharing about potential risks will be discussed and solutions sought.

Where risk is unacceptable and cannot be minimized for volunteer or child or both, an alternative activity will be sought.

Challenging behaviour will be recorded and volunteers will be encouraged to be aware of safety issues.

Accidents must be reported and recorded in the first instance to the activity provider and then to the Me2 Club Staff Member.

Health and Safety Guidelines

- If unable to attend an activity the volunteer/family should contact the family/volunteer as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements. If necessary, contact the Me2 Club Staff Member
- Volunteers must make sure that they have a contact number and are provided with any necessary information they would need in an emergency
- Volunteers should ensure that someone knows where they are going and when they are expected back

- As the match progresses it will become the responsibility of the parent to update the volunteer of any changes to the safe support of the child/young peers their own safety and the safety of others involved in the activity. This means that any concerns should be reported as soon as possible, to the activity provider or Me2 Club Staff Member as appropriate
- If an accident occurs and the volunteer is injured, first aid should be sought from a qualified person. An accident/ incident report form should be completed as soon as possible, and contact made with the Me2 Club Staff Member
- If the child/young person has an accident first aid should be sought from a qualified first aider. If necessary, call 999 emergency services. The parents and Me2 Club Staff Member should be contacted, and an accident form completed
- For any other kind of emergency, the parents/carers, appropriate emergency service and Me2 Club Staff Member should be contacted.

The group leader at the activity must be informed of the situation. If for any reason the parent/carers are unavailable the emergency services must be contacted if necessary

- Under no circumstances should volunteers drink alcohol, smoke or use illegal substances whilst volunteering with Me2 Club or before an activity with their matched child
- For a matched child with sensory needs the smell of smoke can potentially be a problem, please do not smoke before an activity to reduce the smell of smoke on your clothes.

It is critical from a children's rights perspective that Me2 Club should:

- Actively involve the child or young person and the person assisting them, in the risk assessment and decision-making processes if necessary
- Review the moving and handling plans with the child or young person and the person assisting them, in accordance with the Me2 Club volunteer's ability and the child's or young person's physical and emotional development
- Ensure that preserving the dignity of the child or young person is a key consideration.

The responsibility of a volunteer is to:

- Follow the child's or young person's individual support plan recommendations and moving and handling plan and use the equipment identified
- Co-operate with their AVC and let them know of any problems
- Take reasonable care to ensure that actions do not put themselves or others at risk
- Think about how the child/young person's wellbeing can be improved

Our responsibility as a charity is to ensure the safety of our volunteers and others affected by their work by:

- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out by Activity leaders and, where applicable, Me2 Club staff, who have had the relevant training and understand the individual child or young person's needs
- Providing a detailed and clear moving and handling plan when necessary
- Ensuring volunteers are adequately trained

Useful Contacts

As a volunteer you will need to communicate with the parents of your matched family and the Me2 Club Staff Member.

Please list all your Me2 Club contacts in the table below. Don't forget to also save these important contacts details to your Phone. We also advise that you pass on these contact details to a parent, partner or family member in case of emergency.

Me2 Club:

Address	Me2 Club, Unit 9, Indigo House, Fishponds Road, Wokingham, RG41 2GY
Phone number	0118 969 6369
Email address	info@me2club.org.uk

Matched family details:

Name of child	
Name of parents	
Address	
Phone number	
Email address	

Me2 Club AVC details:

Name	
Phone number	
Email address	

Testimonials from Volunteers, Children and Parents

"I worried I was not the 'right type' of person for this role, that maybe I was too shy or not confident enough, or that it wouldn't work for this or that reason. But at training I remember a child's mum talking of the 'very special' friendship that develops between the child and their volunteer, and it was great! I wanted that to happen for me too. There is really no special knowledge that is really important to have apart from what you've have learnt so far in life and what the training will teach you! There is no 'volunteer' type person. Everyone can be a great volunteer and enjoy a great experience with Me2!" - Me2 Club Volunteer

"I support a 17 year old girl with Asperger Syndrome and the fact that I am able to help lift a little of the weight off her shoulders by lending an ear is amazing to me. Also, being the reason why she is able to do the activity that she loves is what makes me love this charity so much." – Me2 Club, Volunteer

What score out of 10 would you give the trip? (a child's rating on the Weekend Away)
"10 or 2030" - Me2 Club Young Person

"I always love my Me2 Club trips, they are always great fun!" – Me2 Club Young Person

"Me2 Club gives my son an invaluable chance to stay in a mainstream activity, he wanted to leave because he found it too hard. I have found it so hard to find a group C. loves and feels happy to take part in. To see C., go out and have fun, fills me up with joy as many people take this for granted. It's not so easy for my young lad. Me2 Club staff and volunteers service had given my lovely son a chance to enjoy normal things in life. Thank you for making C. so happy!"- Me2 Club Parent

"My son has got a diagnosis of Autism and ADHD. He always struggles to access mainstream activities with his problems. He is very happy to be going to a badminton club. The volunteer is amazing. He helps my son in every way he can. My son looks forward to Wednesday so he can meet his volunteer and play with him. Every week I see progress in him. I am very happy with how it is going. Thank you very much Me2 Club for making my son happy" – Me2 Club Parent