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Section 1: Welcome

Welcome to your Volunteer Handbook

Thank you for becoming a Whizz-Kidz volunteer! As a member of the volunteer network your help is vital to ensuring disabled young people gain the mobility equipment, training and support they deserve. Whether it’s through spreading the Whizz-Kidz message locally, raising funds, supporting a young person to gain life skills or any other contribution, your input is invaluable.

The Network
As part of the volunteer network, you will be kept informed of developments within the organisation, gain opportunities for personal development and get invited to “thank you” events. You will receive a monthly volunteer e-bulletin which will inform you of upcoming volunteering opportunities in your area.

Essential Information
This Handbook explains how Whizz-Kidz works and how the charity is organised internally. It outlines the main volunteering opportunities and includes the Volunteer Policy for guidance.

Now that you are part of the charity, it is important that you know about Whizz-Kidz’ work and how to tell people about what we do as you may be representing the charity publicly and will need to follow Whizz-Kidz’ policies and guidelines.
Dear Volunteer

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Whizz-Kidz.

If you have just joined us, I extend a warm welcome to you and hope that volunteering with us will be both rewarding and enjoyable. Those of you who have been giving your time and energy to us for some time will know that our volunteers are invaluable to us and we couldn’t carry out all the work we do without your support, thank you so much.

Whizz-Kidz is a national charity which operates out of our London HQ and our NHS partnership centres, we simply cannot cover the whole country by ourselves.

As a volunteer, you are given the opportunity to gain new skills and make a really positive impact in your local area by highlighting the importance of independent mobility for children.

You are a valued member of the Whizz-Kidz team working towards our goal of helping every disabled child to achieve their full potential in life.

Please refer to this handbook during your time with Whizz-Kidz and feel free to contact your named supervisor or the Volunteer Manager with any questions. Please do give any feedback you have about your voluntary work with us to the Volunteer Manager as we are eager to hear about your experiences and opinions in order to ensure our volunteers have a great experience with us.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your hard work to date. Your continued enthusiasm and support is greatly appreciated and your contributions in time are invaluable. By working together, we can increase our capacity to support and change the lives of disabled children and their families across the UK; let’s take this chance to move young lives forward!

Best wishes

Ruth Owen
CEO, Whizz-Kidz
Section 2: About Whizz-Kidz

What is Whizz-Kidz?
Set up in 1990, Whizz-Kidz is a national charity and the leading provider of mobility equipment outside the NHS.

By providing children and young people with vital mobility equipment, training, advice and life skills, we actually give them something much more important; the independence to be themselves. We make an immediate and life changing difference to their lives and their families.

Who Whizz-Kidz support?
We support children and young people who have mobility impairments and primarily those from families on low income who would otherwise be unable to access appropriate equipment to meet their child’s individual needs.

Whizz-Kidz provides mobility equipment and wheelchair skills training to children and young people up to the age of 18, but our Ambassadors are aged up to 25.

Why is there a need for Whizz-Kidz?
There are around 70,000 disabled young people in the UK who could benefit from customised mobility equipment. This is partly because the NHS does not take into account social, educational or developmental needs when assessing applicants. As a result, an enormous number of young people are held back needlessly from fulfilling full active lives by their mobility. Whizz-Kidz also plays an important role in influencing public policy around disability by engaging in government consultations and providing a platform for disabled young people to articulate their views.

How many young people has Whizz-Kidz supported?
Whizz-Kidz has changed the lives of over 14,000 disabled children since 1990 – often literally overnight. They have benefited from equipment, advice and support, as well as through wheelchair skills training, work placements, life-skills training and by getting involved with our growing Ambassador Network.

How is Whizz-Kidz funded?
Whizz-Kidz relies almost entirely on voluntary funding raised through sponsored events, charitable trusts, companies as well as individuals, schools and local groups. Fundraising is vital for Whizz-Kidz and the children and families that benefit from our services. Without it, the organisation could not continue its daily work.
How much does it cost to help a child?
On average it costs £2,200 to give a child the right mobility equipment which might be a powered chair, manual chair or a trike (excluding a full assessment) and £2,500 to run a wheelchair skills training programme for ten children.

Is there a waiting list?
Yes, we currently have 500 children on our waiting list. On average, a child is on our waiting list for twelve months. Some children are waiting for two to three years on their local NHS wheelchair service waiting list and we have even heard of some families waiting five years or more for equipment.

What services does Whizz-Kidz provide?

Provision of Vital Mobility Equipment
In 2012 we provided mobility equipment to 2,025 disabled children across the UK, ensuring they have the chance to gain greater independence. We have a network of qualified Therapists who cover the country, visiting children and their families and running “clinics” to assess their needs and offer advice.

Wheelchair Skills Training
Whizz-Kidz Wheelchair Skills Training is designed to improve the freedom, and crucially, the independence of disabled children and young people by ensuring they get the maximum use possible from their mobility equipment. In 2012, 1,700 children benefitted from our added value services which include Wheelchair Skills Training schemes, Ambassador Clubs and Work Placements.

The Kidz Board
The Kidz Board is made up of 12 beneficiaries aged 13 -18 who are consulted on all major decisions facing the charity. They are actively involved in the charity’s work and campaign to raise awareness of the importance of mobility and related issues affecting their lives.

Ambassadors’ Club Network
The Ambassador Club Network is all about fun and friendship; it aims to bring disabled children and young people together to make friends, try out new activities and, in turn, increase their confidence and independence. We currently have over 1000 young Ambassadors signed up across the UK who attend ambassador clubs in their local towns.

Life Skills
Whizz-Kidz provides formalised life skills training through its Ambassadors Clubs and Camp Whizz-Kidz. The training covers a number of life skills including those described by UNICEF as the essential skills young people need in order to make a successful transition into adulthood.
Section 3: Volunteering with Whizz-Kidz

Volunteering Opportunities

By joining the Whizz-Kidz volunteer network you will have many different opportunities to contribute, regardless of your location, age, experience or ability. Your involvement will be of great value to us, whether it's one hour, one day or a more regular commitment. Whizz-Kidz is committed to recognising the input of our volunteers and we ensure that all volunteers receive the support and training required. Our volunteer network currently consists of 350 volunteers and we are keen to keep growing! Whizz-Kidz works to help children across the whole of the UK and as we don’t have staff or offices in every part of the UK, we aim to encourage volunteers to take on leading roles in their area.

Volunteers are crucial to the delivery of our services and Whizz-Kidz strives to give you a great volunteering experience!

Please find below an outline of the main volunteering opportunities that we can offer, which include:

- Strategic Projects and Internships
- Campaigning and Awareness-raising
- Fundraising
- Volunteer ‘Buddys’ at Wheelchair Skills Training
- Volunteer ‘Buddys’ at Ambassador Clubs

Strategic Projects and Internships
There are often three month internships available at our HQ in London, which can be flexible to suit the volunteer and will offer a challenge and opportunity for personal development to the volunteer. We are also looking for skilled volunteers to use their experience and help us in various areas of the organisation. We may have a strategic project available depending on the skills of the volunteer, which can be worked on from home or within the office. Past projects have included volunteers working on the rebranding of Whizz-Kidz and examined our key messaging and how we communicate with different audiences.

Campaigning and Awareness-raising
Whizz-Kidz is committed to campaigning on behalf of disabled young people and to raising awareness about mobility issues across the country. We need volunteers to support us in influencing key decision-makers by strengthening our campaigns. Volunteers can contribute by lobbying their MPs or engaging local media.

Fundraising

Fundraising is extremely important to Whizz-Kidz as without it, we wouldn’t be able to help so many disabled children and young people. Becoming a Fundraising Volunteer helps you understand the important work Whizz-Kidz does and you get to play a key role in supporting and helping us to raise awareness of mobility issues, as well as funds, across the UK. It tends to work on an ad hoc, local basis which is great if you want to help but cannot commit to volunteering every week or every month. Not to mention, it’s good fun!

We have nine Regional Fundraisers spread across the country and you will be put in touch with your local contact. They will be able to support you throughout your volunteering journey with Whizz-Kidz and will be on hand for any questions you may have. Here are some examples of activities you could get involved in:

- Placing or picking up a collection box in a local shop or pub
- Collecting money at your local supermarket
- Marshalling at a sports event being held for Whizz-Kidz
- Putting up posters or handing out flyers
- Helping your Regional Fundraiser with research and mailings
- Talking to local Clubs and Schools about Whizz-Kidz
- Picking up big cheques and representing Whizz-Kidz

Organising Your Own Event

Once you have been involved in fundraising activities, you might decide you want to hold your own event! Whether it’s a coffee morning, cake sale, golf day or a new event you would like to try, your Regional Fundraiser will be able to guide you with step by step support and help you raise lots of money for Whizz-Kidz. We will provide you with all necessary tools and Whizz-Kidz branded resources to help make your events the best they can be!

We guarantee any money you fundraise will be used efficiently and effectively to make a real difference to the lives of disabled children.
Section 3: Volunteering with Whizz-Kidz

Volunteer ‘Buddy’ at Wheelchair Skills Training

Aimed at young wheelchair users, the Wheelchair Skills Training programme develops technique, confidence and road awareness thereby increasing independent mobility and safety. Volunteers are needed at each programme to “buddy up” with young wheelchair users to support and encourage them as they engage in exercises during the training.

The role of a buddy is to support their young partner(s) to get the most out of the programme by encouraging full involvement, ensuring that they understand and engage in all activities. Volunteers can attend for a day or the whole scheme, but the longer you attend, the more you will get out of it. It takes time to get to know the participants so the more time you commit, the better the relationship with the child/young person you’ll have, and the more you’ll both get out of it.

The Programme

Wheelchair Skills Training schemes take place over 3 to 6 sessions, usually on consecutive days in school holidays. They take place at different locations across the UK, there are 74 schemes taking place in 2013!

The programme itself is delivered by a Trainer who is always experienced and skilled in wheelchair use. There are generally 8 - 12 young people per scheme and ideally, 2 - 3 volunteers are required each day.

What do our volunteers say?

“I had a great time during last week’s Wheelchair Skills Training. I managed to make some new friends, learn new skills and even meet celebrities, all while having fun. I have gained so much from volunteering and I can honestly say it was one of the best volunteering experiences I ever had.”

Ardito
Tower Hamlets Wheelchair Skills Training
March 2013

“It just wanted to say what a joy it is to volunteer for Whizz-Kidz again. I was made to feel exceptionally welcomed and part of the team. The young people clearly had a great time, and the life-changing skills they learn whilst at the clubs, and the friendships you see form really make it worthwhile!”

Michaella
Brighton Ambassador Club
September 2012

It's hard to believe but many disabled children and young people are never shown how to use the mobility equipment they receive!
Section 3: Volunteering with Whizz-Kidz

Volunteer ‘Buddy’ at Ambassadors Clubs and Life Skills Training

The Ambassador Club Network aims to bring disabled children and young people together to make friends and try out new activities and in turn increase their confidence and independence. There will be 45 Clubs taking place every 6-8 weeks in 2013 and they are usually on a Saturday or during the school holidays. There are Ambassador Clubs happening all over England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and venues will range from sports centres to schools.

Volunteer Role

As a volunteer at an Ambassador Club you play a vital role in helping us provide this opportunity. You don’t need any prior knowledge of wheelchair use or disability, but you do need a positive attitude and lots of energy! The key role for volunteers at the clubs is to encourage and support young people to participate in the activities taking place. It is essential that volunteers get involved in the activities as well and are involved in all aspects of the day.

The Clubs

The clubs are facilitated by a Trainer who is always experienced and skilled in working with children and young people. There are typically 10 - 15 young people (Ambassadors) that attend each club, who are supported by you as a volunteer as well as healthcare assistants, known at the clubs as PAs.

Things To Remember When Working With A Disabled Young Person

You do not need any prior knowledge about disability or wheelchair use to support Whizz-Kidz, but there are a few things that are important to bear in mind. Appropriate language is important but it is also a difficult subject because there is not always consensus on what is appropriate and what isn’t. It is not necessary for you to worry too much about this but you should be aware of what language is generally accepted, used by Whizz-Kidz and considered progressive.
Section 4: Volunteer Policy

Introduction and Scope
Whizz-Kidz recognises the significant and valuable role that volunteers play in supporting us to achieve our aims. This policy reflects our commitment to ensuring the volunteer is integrated into the heart of Whizz-Kidz, that volunteering with us is a constructive and rewarding experience and that all volunteers are treated in an equal, fair and just manner.

This policy sets out to provide guidance to staff and volunteers and outline procedures and support mechanisms available to volunteers. It defines the term “volunteer” and provides a framework of best practice which we will endeavour to follow when appointing, managing and supporting our volunteers.

Definition of the Relationship
Volunteers are individuals or groups who offer their time, experience, knowledge and skills without financial gain beyond reimbursement of expenses; helping us to achieve our aims.

There is no contract of employment between Whizz-Kidz and its volunteers and volunteers are not considered employees of Whizz-Kidz.

Whizz-Kidz’ Commitment to the Volunteer
Whizz-Kidz views its volunteers as a valuable resource and is committed to providing support and recognition of their input. Volunteers are supported through the provision of resources necessary to complete their duties; induction and appropriate training and a supervision commitment. Volunteer contributions are recognised through written references (where appropriate), invitation to special events and opportunities to feedback to the development of volunteer management at Whizz-Kidz. Volunteers have the right to refuse any request made of them and are not bound by contract, but are obliged to volunteer in line with this Handbook, the Volunteer Policy and the Volunteer Agreement.

Commitment of the Volunteer
Whizz-Kidz expects volunteers to behave in a manner which reflects positively on the organisation and to promote the key organisational messages where possible. Whizz-Kidz expects volunteers to execute agreed duties, unless otherwise informed, and requests that volunteers carry out in the name of the charity only those tasks approved by supervising staff. Whizz-Kidz
Section 4: Volunteer Policy

expects volunteers to be supportive of staff, other volunteers and of the Whizz-Kidz ethos and aims.

We would ask that all volunteers volunteering on a regular basis (weekly) to please, where possible, give us four weeks’ notice if they are considering leaving their volunteering role. We also ask that volunteers attending irregular events such as Wheelchair Skills training or an Ambassador Club to please give us at least one week’s notice if you are not able to attend a scheduled event.

Principles

This Volunteer Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Whizz-Kidz will endeavour to ensure volunteers are properly integrated into its organisational structure, that they are kept abreast of organisational developments and that necessary mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to our work.
- Whizz-Kidz does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- Whizz-Kidz recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development opportunities and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs.
- Whizz-Kidz expects staff to work positively with volunteers.

Recruitment and Selection

Whizz-Kidz recruitment and selection of volunteers is designed to ensure that we recruit volunteers who are suitable for the role they would like to do:

a) Whizz-Kidz will provide volunteer role descriptions which outline duties and responsibilities.

b) Prior to appointment, volunteers are invited to engage in a two-way discussion of the proposed role including its requirements and expectations with a view to assessing mutual suitability.

c) Commencement of the volunteering opportunity is subject to either a relevant Criminal Record Disclosure and/or reference clearance.

d) Volunteers may be subject to a probationary period of 1 - 2 months depending on the role.

e) Support, guidance and supervision are provided as appropriate.

Disclosure of Criminal Record

Due to the nature of our work all volunteers, aged 16 years or older, are subject to a criminal record disclosure as part of the recruitment process. Whizz-Kidz complies fully with the code of practice provided by Disclosure Scotland, Access NI and the Disclosure and Barring Service and undertakes to treat all volunteer applicants fairly in line with our commitment to equal opportunities and to comply with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. A copy of our policy on the recruitment of offenders is available to all applicants during the recruitment process.
Equal Opportunities and Diversity
Whizz-Kidz is committed to promoting equal opportunities. Volunteering opportunities at Whizz-Kidz are open to all regardless of age, race, disability, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, nationality, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity. Whizz-Kidz recognises the positive benefits a diverse volunteer pool can bring to the organisation and is committed to ensuring our recruitment and selection procedure reflects this.

Disabled Volunteers
Whizz-Kidz promotes diversity in all areas of volunteering and as a disabled children’s charity, we encourage disabled people in particular to volunteer with us. All the venues that we use are fully accessible and we may be able to provide extra support when required for expenses (please liaise with the Volunteer Coordinator about this prior to volunteering). We would ask where possible, for volunteers to bring their own carers and support workers if required, as we have a limited budget for volunteer expenses. The carer or support worker would need to provide a criminal record disclosure certificate on the day of volunteering.

Disabled volunteers can act as role models and mentors to the young wheelchair users that we work with and may inspire them during their journey towards independence. Disability should not be a barrier to volunteering and volunteers can still claim benefits as long as you are aware of the restrictions explained in the ‘Volunteering while getting benefits’ leaflet produced by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Induction and Training
All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the organisation as well as task specific training to ensure they can carry out their work on behalf of Whizz-Kidz effectively and efficiently.

Confidentiality
Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information to which they are exposed. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer’s relationship with the organisation.

Support and Recognition
All volunteers will have a named supervisor responsible for the management of their work who are there to provide guidance and assistance. Those engaged in more sustained volunteering will have more formal supervision sessions at agreed intervals. These sessions shall be conducted via email, phone or face-to-face as appropriate and agreed.
Supervising staff will conduct review the volunteering placement as often as required, with the aim of ensuring that recognition keeps apace with role development. Whizz-Kidz is happy to provide a confirmation of contribution for volunteers who have given a minimum of a full week of their time or a reference for those contributing over longer, sustained periods. Volunteers may be invited to “thank you” events and consulted, where possible, on development of the volunteer strategy.

**Volunteer Expenses**

It is Whizz-Kidz’ policy that volunteers should not be out of pocket for their contributions, therefore we are happy to reimburse reasonable receipted travel and subsistence costs. Minimising costs maximises income to Whizz-Kidz therefore, Whizz-Kidz asks volunteers to keep expenses to a reasonable and necessary level. Below is some guidance of what constitutes reasonable expenses and the procedure for claiming them. If you so wish, expenses can be donated back to the charity, the tax on which can then be reclaimed through Gift Aid. If you wish to do this, please contact the Volunteer Manager.

If volunteers have any queries with regards to expenses, they should consult the Volunteer Manager prior to any commitment being made.

**Travel and Subsistence**

- Up to £5.00 lunch costs reimbursed on production of receipts; this only applies when volunteering for an unbroken 4 hour period.
- Volunteers will be reimbursed for all **necessary** travel expenses - assuming they have chosen the most cost effective option. (The use of a taxi is only approved when necessary and in advance by a department manager.)
- For volunteers helping with administrative tasks in Headquarters, a maximum of £10.00 a day can be claimed for travel and lunch on production of receipts.
- For volunteers helping at events such as Wheelchair Skills Training and Ambassador Clubs, reasonable travel expenses can be claimed up to a maximum of 30km from the venue. Any further expenses will have to be covered by the volunteer, and for this reason we try to recruit volunteers for events that live within 30km of the venue. Whizz-Kidz has a budget of £30 per day for volunteers attending our services and if your expenses may exceed this amount, please get approval from the Volunteer Manager in advance of the event.
- If it is essential that a volunteer stay overnight in the course of their volunteer duties, Whizz-Kidz will organise this for the volunteer, but it must be agreed in advance with the volunteer’s supervisor.)
Section 4: Volunteer Policy

- If relevant, dinner will be reimbursed up to a cost of £20.00 including non-alcoholic drinks and service if this is on the receipt, per night.

Procedure for Claiming Expenses
All claims must be made using the Volunteer Expenses Claim Form – only **fully completed forms with receipts attached will be accepted**. The Volunteer Expenses Claim Form must be signed by the volunteer and returned to the volunteer’s supervisor for authorisation and then sent to the Volunteer Manager at HQ for further authorisation. Payment of authorised expenses is made by BACS transfer directly into the volunteer’s bank account (N.B. full bank, or building society, account details must be completed on the Volunteer Expenses Claim Form for this to be processed). Expenses are paid to volunteers in the middle and at the end of each calendar month.

Partnership Working
Whizz-Kidz is keen to develop relationships with partner organisations. When volunteers attend Whizz-Kidz events from partner organisations, Whizz-Kidz requests that partners sign a Memorandum of Understanding which clarifies our behaviour and safe working protocols, and confirms the criminal record disclosure status of volunteers.

Health and Safety
All volunteers volunteering in Whizz-Kidz’ buildings, or on the premises where a Whizz-Kidz event is being held, are to be given a Health and Safety induction. All volunteers in the course of representing Whizz-Kidz are covered by the organisation’s Public Liability Insurance. We endeavour to ensure that any events which volunteers are asked to attend on behalf of Whizz-Kidz are safe and accessible. This is achieved through the prior completion of risk assessments at Whizz-Kidz’ organised events and in some cases written confirmation of appropriate insurance cover at third party organised events.

We ask that all volunteers organising an event for the general public address Health and Safety issues as a matter of course. If you have any questions about this matter, please speak to the Volunteer Manager in the first instance.

Concerns and Complaints
Whizz-Kidz is committed to the welfare of our volunteers and we believe that any concerns brought to light at an early stage can be dealt with in an informal manner between volunteer and Supervisor. In the unlikely event that a dispute cannot be resolved in this manner, the Volunteer Manager can be involved. All volunteers have the opportunity to feedback to the Volunteer Manager through evaluation forms or meetings, depending on the volunteer role.

Whizz-Kidz is the working name of The Movement for Non-Mobile Children.
Charity registered in England and Wales (No. 802872) and Scotland (No. SCO42607)