



VOLUNTEER TASK DESCRIPTION

Volunteer Role:	School Talks Volunteer - SMILE Project
Section:	Children's Section
Reports to:	Volunteer Co-ordinator & Film Project Coordinator
Time Commitment:	One day a week for 6 weeks.

Context

SMILE Project

The Supporting and Mentoring in Learning and Education (SMILE) Project is a project funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and is part of the Children's Section of the Refugee Council. It is based in Yorkshire & Humberside, the West Midlands and London.

The project consists of three volunteer co-ordinators, a project manager and a research and web officers.

The project will recruit volunteers to support refugee and asylum seeking children, both unaccompanied and in families, to support them in their school or college placement, and to enable them to learn life skills and enjoy their learning.

There are three volunteering roles within the project – these are mentoring, befriending and school talk volunteers.

School Talks role:

To plan and deliver school talks and interactive group work aimed at increasing awareness and knowledge around the issues affecting asylum seeking and refugee children in the United Kingdom

Volunteer role:

To plan school talks and interactive group work with the volunteer co-ordinator, other project volunteers and education practitioners

To deliver school talks and interactive group work within pre-identified Schools, colleges and other education service providers

To liaise with education practitioners around the aims and objectives of the SMILE Project

To undertake office based duties related to school talks, if and when necessary

To participate in forums and meetings related to the project's activities, aims and objectives

To have fortnightly contact with the volunteer co-ordinator to feed back on the activities undertaken

To cooperate with the research officer around the evaluation of the project and the design of educational toolkits linked to the project's aims and objectives

To maintain links with workers from different organisations involved in the support of asylum and refugee young people

To keep accurate records of action and progress made

To submit the volunteer activity record form to the volunteer co-ordinator on a regular basis

To disseminate to other volunteers and volunteer co-ordinator information about services accessible to young people

To attend training sessions to support the school talks role as and when required

To feed back experience of the school talks role to the SMILE project

To communicate as a matter of urgency any child protection and health & safety concerns to the volunteer co-ordinator

Person Specification

It is **essential** that volunteers within this role have:

- Some experience of working with or supporting young people
- Awareness around the needs of young people, especially separated children, and willingness to enhance it through training
- Awareness around child protection and willingness to enhance it through training
- Self-confidence and the ability to approach and talk to young people
- An ability to understand and abide by the Refugee Council lone working procedure
- A commitment to the work and values of the Refugee Council
- An understanding and commitment to equal opportunities in practice
- Effective communication skills, and a good level, and understanding of spoken and written English
- Ability to work as part of a team, as well as on their own with clients outside the office
- An understanding of the need to provide a quality service without becoming over-involved with individual clients
- Ability to access appropriate resources for young people.
- Basic IT skills – use of the internet and email.
- An understanding of confidentiality, impartiality and non-directive approach when working with clients.
- Must be able to use private or public transport in and around the project's area
- Must consent to and provide all relevant documentation for an enhanced disclosure by the CRB (Criminal Records Bureau)

Skills and experience likely to be gained from the role

- An understanding of the specific needs of asylum seeking and refugee children in the UK around educational attainment.
- Knowledge of the work of the Refugee Council Children's Section
- Knowledge of the British education system
- Knowledge of Child Protection and Health & Safety related to young people
- Experience of providing direct support to young people on a one to one basis

- Skills in developing personal boundaries and understanding the importance of maintaining these

Volunteers are reminded to:

1. Adhere to the principles of confidentiality, for example do not discuss your client's details out in the public domain including your own home environment.
2. Adhere to the principles of equal opportunities, for example by providing appropriate, sensitive and impartial services and being accessible to all asylum seekers and refugees, regardless of their personal circumstances
3. Adhere to clear boundaries, for example do not give out your telephone number; do not give any gifts however small or second hand they may be; and never lend, give or accept any money

Jan 2009