



We believe people with learning disabilities and autism deserve to live life to the full!

Volunteer Resources

Welcome to the volunteer resources document – hopefully you’ll find lots of useful information and links here. Please help keep it up to date by adding any helpful information or by sending any useful links to [Kate Sankey, Yellow Submarine Co-Director](#).

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General FAQs

Why should I volunteer with Yellow Submarine?

Volunteering with us is an experience that is rewarding in many ways. As well as being a fantastic opportunity to support people with learning disabilities, their families and carers, and making a positive change in your community; you will be learning new skills, gaining CV experience and meeting a lot of new people!

You can have a look at what our volunteers past and present have to say about their experience with us in our [what it's like to volunteer](#) section.

What makes a great Yellow Submarine volunteer?

In our sessions we're looking for people who are enthusiastic, friendly and non-judgemental. Someone who enjoys talking to new people and knows how to make others feel welcome. A person who genuinely enjoys all the activities we get up to at Yellow Submarine and understands it's all about our members.

A strong volunteer will be able to follow the flow of a session, figuring out who needs attention, who needs a helping hand and who is getting on just fine.

Finally, volunteers feel comfortable keeping an eye out for members' wellbeing, and sharing a responsibility for members' safety with their team-mates and session leader.

If you have any particular skills you can bring to sessions – from football to yoga! – we'd love to hear that too!

How do I get involved with Yellow Submarine?

[Check out our volunteering opportunities](#), we have a variety of activities to get involved with! If something appeals to you, complete our [expression of interest form](#).

If you have any questions about volunteering or how you can get involved take a look through our [FAQs](#) or [contact us](#).

How old do I need to be to volunteer with Yellow Submarine?

We have volunteering opportunities for people age 16 or over – so anyone from sixth form college age upwards is welcome! We have volunteers from all walks of life who each bring something different to our activities. The amount of responsibility that you will have for the day will depend on how much experience you have.

How much time will I have to give?

The great thing about volunteering is that it's very flexible! Time commitments vary according to the activity that you are involved in and the role that you have. For example, if you come to our evening clubs, you will only need to be there for three hours whereas our residential holidays usually last a few days at a time.

For our regular activities, it's useful if you can come weekly or fortnightly – but if you don't have that much time to give, chat to us about it. We're happy to be flexible!

You can find more information on all of our opportunities [here](#).

I am still a student; can I get involved with Yellow Submarine?

Yes! As long as you are 16 or over we would be very happy for you to volunteer with us. If you feel like you are too busy to volunteer during term, you can always sign up to volunteer at our activity days or residential trips which run during the school holidays.

Have a look at our [volunteering opportunities](#) to see what you can get involved in.

I have a part-time or full-time job; do you have opportunities that I could get involved with?

Absolutely! If you are too busy during the day to volunteer but are free in the evenings, you would be most welcome to attend one of our evening clubs. It's a great way to help your local community whilst also giving you the opportunity to meet new people.

If you happen to be free during the school holidays we also run activity days and residential trips that we need volunteers for too.

Some workplaces have an Employee Volunteering Scheme, where volunteers can book a day off to help out in the community. Find out how you can use your day to support Yellow Submarine [here](#).

Have a look at our [volunteering opportunities](#) to see what you can get involved in.

Do I need a DBS check?

You may need to complete a DBS check, but this will depend on what activities you get involved with and how often you volunteer. Anyone volunteering with us on a regular basis (once a week or more) or signing up to volunteer on one of our residential trips will be asked to complete a DBS check.

If you are already in possession of a DBS check please do let us know on your application form along with date it was issued.

Application FAQs

How do I get involved with Yellow Submarine?

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If you have any questions about volunteering or how you go about getting involved have a read through of our [FAQs](#) or [contact us](#).

I'd prefer to handwrite my application; do you have another version of the form?

Yes, of course! You can download the [pdf volunteer application](#) form print off and fill it in by hand. You can return the form by post to the Yellow Submarine office – 12 Park End Street, Oxford, OX1 1HH, or via [email](#).

What is a DBS check?

A DBS check enables employers to check the criminal records of employees and potential employees or volunteers, to see whether or not they are suitable to work with vulnerable adults and children.

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Why do I need to provide referees?

We ask for referees on our application form, so that we can make sure our volunteers are suitable for a role supporting our young people and vulnerable adults.

Who should I put as my referees?

Your referees should be someone that you have known for more than two years – preferably in a professional context. For example, a current or former employer or if you're still in education a teacher or lecturer.

After your application

What happens after I express an interest in volunteering with you?

We try to acknowledge everyone as quickly as possible – so hopefully you will hear from us pretty promptly. We will probably ask you to come in for a chat so that we can meet you and let you know about all of the different opportunities.

How will I find out about volunteering opportunities?

You can find out [here](#)! Also once we receive your references are cleared we'll sign you up to our volunteer newsletter which is sent out on a regular basis and has details of all of the upcoming volunteering opportunities.

What will happen at my first activity?

Our activities are quite varied but you're sure to have lots of fun and be welcomed by lots of smiling faces! After signing up for an activity you'll be sent all of the details you need by the activity leader a week beforehand.

Do have a read of some of volunteers, past and present, [first experiences](#) of Yellow Submarine, they're sure to put your mind at ease!

Do you run any training sessions?

We run regular training sessions for staff and volunteers throughout the year; for example, inductions for new starters. Training sessions are advertised in the volunteer newsletter.

At every activity you'll be given a briefing of what you'll be doing along with a reminder of our safeguarding policy.

Volunteer Resources - General

What is a learning disability?

A learning disability is a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities – for example household tasks, socialising or managing money – which affects someone for their whole life.

People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn and may need support to develop new skills, understand complex information and interact with other people.

Find out more – <https://www.mencap.org.uk/definition>

Communicating with people with a learning disability.

Working with someone with a learning disability may challenge your idea of what communication is, and how you make yourself understood.

Top 10 tips for communication

1. Find a good place to communicate in – somewhere without distraction. If you are talking to a large group be aware that some people may find this difficult.
2. Ask open questions; questions that don't have a simple yes or no answer
3. Check with the person that you understand what they are saying e.g. "the TV isn't working? Is that right?"
4. If the person wants to take you to show you something, go with them.
5. Watch the person; they may tell you things by their body language and facial expressions.
6. Learn from experience – you will need to be more observant and don't feel awkward about asking parents or carers for their help.
7. Try drawing – even if your drawing isn't great, it might still be helpful
8. Take your time, don't rush communication
9. Use gestures and facial expressions. If you're asking if someone is happy or unhappy, make your facial expression unhappy to reinforce what you're saying
10. Be aware that some people find it easier to use real objects to communicate, but photos and pictures can really help too

Read more – <https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/communicating-people-learning-disability>

For all our up to date Induction information, [click here](#).

All new starters should be given a copy of the current induction booklet ([download here](#)) and all new staff and volunteers should be given a copy of our basic policy document ([download here](#)) to

read and sign to ensure they are aware of key policies and their responsibilities. Please also read our [Volunteer Handbook](#) outlining your role at Yellow Submarine.

Induction training sessions take place every three months and all new starters are invited to attend ASAP. After attending please complete the induction [quiz](#) to confirm your understanding.

Volunteer Resources – Induction

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Volunteer Resources – Safeguarding

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is about protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse or neglect. We are all responsible for the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We must ensure that we are doing all we can to protect the most vulnerable members of our society.

Safeguarding guidelines

General safeguarding responsibilities, including the 'Golden Rules', can be viewed [here](#)

All staff & volunteers must agree to work within our guidelines and must sign a copy of our essential policies & guidelines document – [download here](#)

Safeguarding contacts

Yellow Submarine's safeguarding contacts can be viewed [here](#). Our safeguarding lead is [Kate Sankey](#).

For up to date information on safeguarding at Yellow Submarine
see: <https://www.yellowsubmarine.org.uk/safeguarding/>

Useful websites and resources

- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board: <http://www.oscb.org.uk/>
 - Reporting safeguarding concerns – useful contacts view [here](#)
 - View the OSCB information sharing protocol [here](#)
- Safe – Safer Activities For Everyone CIC. Visit their website – [here](#)
- CEOP – Keeping young people safe online and reporting concerns. Visit their website – [here](#)
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance Information Hub holds information and resources about reducing the bullying of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Visit their website – [here](#)
- Online abuse and bullying prevention guide produced by gov.uk downloadable [here](#)

Volunteer Resources – Health and Safety

Useful Websites & Resources

HSE (Health & Safety Executive): Advice, guidance, news, templates, tools, legislation, publications from Great Britain's independent regulator for work-related health, safety and illness. Visit their website [here](#)

Yellow Submarine has a duty of care to both our members and staff to report and share appropriately details of any accidents or incidents that occur. To ensure this is done we have a procedure in place which includes documenting what happened and sharing with the Yellow Submarine senior management team who will take the matter forward as necessary. Forms to document accidents and incidents can be found below.

[Accident Form](#)

[Incident Form](#)

[Handover Form](#)