

Volunteering for Young People – Advice and Information

Young volunteers can bring a skill set that can really benefit a voluntary organisation. There is no legal reason why a young person aged 16 or 17 cannot volunteer. However, children are classed as a vulnerable group, so any organisation that takes on young volunteers must be careful to protect you.

It is important that when you are looking for a volunteer opportunity you are aware of your own safety and rights within that opportunity, and that you feel comfortable with what you are being asked to do. Parental permission if you are 16 or under must be sought by the organisation you are seeking to volunteer with before you take-up that opportunity.

Community Connections Richmond, managed by Richmond CVS www.richmondcv.org.uk, delivers volunteering services in Richmond for people 18+. This briefing is intended to give you some ideas about where, if you are under 18, you might look to find volunteering opportunities, and some of the things you should be aware of when choosing an option that's right for you.

What do you want to do?

A good place to start is to think about what your interests are, what you like to do, what skills you are looking to develop, the time commitment you have available. Often things you are already involved in – your sports club, uniformed group, school activity – may have opportunities for you to help out. If you are looking to complete your D of E be clear what's required of you, how many hours you have to achieve, what skills you will need to be able to demonstrate through the assessment process. Does the volunteering opportunity support you to achieve this? Are you looking to develop skills and experience for your CV? Make a list of all your requirements and this will help you search more effectively for an opportunity that's right for you.

Opportunities

VInspired provides you with inspiring high quality social action opportunities to gain new experiences and skills for life. Specifically targeted at young people, the site offers you the chance to

- Log your hours and work towards awards
- Use your volunteering CV to apply for temporary paid jobs
- Run your own social action project – funding of up to £500 is available to apply for

The Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation has recently added their Youth Ambassador role to the V Inspired data base. The Youth Ambassador role gives you the opportunity to support young people to make safer choices around drugs and alcohol in school and at Foundation events and workshops with full training and ongoing support available. Suitable for those aged 16-24 the volunteer programme is being rolled out in Richmond in Autumn 2018. Find the opportunity by putting Youth ambassador into the key words search. www.vinspired.com

The Challenge in Richmond is the National Citizen Service government-backed programme which brings together young people from diverse backgrounds, providing them with strong skills for life, work and adulthood. Available to 15-17 year olds, the programme is delivered in 3 stages: Get Active (which includes a residential); Get Involved (learn a new skill); and Make Your Mark (deliver a social action project). For more information and to sign up go to <http://www.ncsthechallenge.org/>

Team London is The Mayor of London's volunteering database where you can find out about local and London based events such as helping out at sports and charity events. Sign up for their e-alert of monthly featured volunteering opportunities, for the free team London App, or search their database for opportunities including Speed volunteering. <http://volunteerteam.london.gov.uk/#s>

Me Too & Co provides activities and therapies for children with disabilities and additional needs. They welcome enthusiastic and motivated young people aged 14+ to volunteer as part of the DoE scheme bronze or silver award. Young volunteers help at sessions for children with additional needs and siblings on Tuesdays after school in Twickenham during term time only. As part of their placement they are involved in many activities ranging from playing with children, helping in drama, cookery, karate or art classes, setting up and putting away toys and equipment to helping at fundraising events such as fairs and fetes. They can also help at the Pedal Project course on Wednesday afternoons in Twickenham where children with disabilities can learn to ride a bicycle. See their website for further details <https://www.metooandco.org.uk/>

The Vineyard Community Centre benefits greatly from the volunteer services of students undertaking the requirements of the Volunteering aspect of the DoE. Our students are generally between the ages of 15-18 and undertake a variety of tasks at the Centre, such as working in the cafe during the afternoon when it is open to the public (we follow the guidelines that no student under 16 can interact with our guests and so students do not volunteer during our drop-in hours); working in the charity shop; organising donations so that we can distribute them efficiently during morning drop-ins; helping with the food bank; and general tidying and support of the premises. Our aim at the Vineyard is to provide our DoE student volunteers with an understanding and awareness of homelessness throughout the borough, the extent and complexity of the situation, and the efforts made to address and improve the lives of the most vulnerable people in the Richmond community. <http://www.vineyardcommunity.org/volunteering/>

London Borough of Richmond offers volunteering opportunities for young people

- **The Borough Arts Service at Orleans House Gallery** offers volunteering opportunities for those undertaking Duke of Edinburgh or Arts Awards. <https://www.orleanshousegallery.org/get-involved/volunteer/>
- **The Richmond Inclusive Sports and Exercise (RISE) Programme** offers sport opportunities for disabled young people and is keen to recruit volunteers across the week to support these activities. For more information visit http://www.richmond.gov.uk/rise_events
- **The Local Offer** is a directory and information resource for children and families with disabilities provided by Achieving for Children who deliver children's services on behalf of the councils of Richmond and Kingston. It contains a wealth of opportunities for leisure and short break activities and includes information and advice about volunteering, work experience and apprenticeships. <https://www.afclocaloffer.org.uk/>

Kingston Hospital offers a range of volunteer opportunities for those over 16. More information about the roles can be found at <https://kingstonhospital.nhs.uk/get-involved/volunteering.aspx>

The Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond offers volunteer usher opportunities to young people doing their Duke of Edinburgh award. To find out more contact Izzy Cotterill Education and Participation Manager takepart@orangetreetheatre.co.uk. Please note there is a high volume of interest in these positions <https://www.orangetreetheatre.co.uk/opportunities/volunteering>

Girlguiding groups offer volunteering roles for girls aged 14+. They can join as v*inspired and DoE for the time they need to. They can also join as Girlguiding young leaders. They will receive training, mentoring, support and will be able to access Girlguiding membership opportunities including social activities, festivals and concerts. Registration is via their central office at www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-volunteer/register-your-interest. There is also more information on youth volunteering on their main website at www.girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/the-senior-section-14-25.

Richmond Police Cadets: For 13-18 year olds Volunteer Police Cadets offer an inspiring and challenging environment in which you can make new friends, work as part of a team, get involved in exciting activities, gain valuable knowledge and skills. You do not need to have an aspiration to have a career in the police force in order to join. <https://vpc.police.uk/>

St John Ambulance Cadets: Young People aged 10-17 can join a local cadet unit to take part in volunteer work and learn valuable life skills. More information at <http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/young-people/cadets.aspx> . Or e-mail London-Volunteering@sja.org.uk

Volunteering at local charity shops: Many charity shops can offer time limited volunteering for those doing their Duke of Edinburgh awards. You will need to visit your local charity shop to discuss this with them. Those under 16 will need parental permission, and you will need to complete an application form and supply references. There are also a number of charity shop roles listed on VInspired.

For those seeking apprenticeships and employment Way to Work provide guidance, recruitment and apprenticeships to benefit young people aged 16+ and employers in Richmond borough and the local area. Way to Work operates as part of Achieving for Children who deliver children's services on behalf of Richmond and Kingston and is funded by the Skills Funding Agency. <http://www.waytowork.org.uk/>

For those 18+ Richmond CVS, in partnership with Richmond Adult College, provide the volunteering service in Richmond. You can register your details and search for opportunities online at www.richmondcv.org.uk

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