

VOLUNTEER TASK DESCRIPTION

Children's Activity Volunteer

Location:	The Refugee Council, Leeds. Hillside, Beeston Road, Leeds, LS11 8ND
Time commitment:	Between 1-4 half-days a week Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10:00 – 13:00
Responsible to:	STEP Forward support worker
Main role:	To assist Refugee Council's staff members (qualified in Level 3 Childcare) in our in-house creche by contributing to the running of creative, fun sessions for children of clients on our tailored basic English language course for refugee women.

The Organisation

Founded in 1951, the Refugee Council exists to support people who come to the UK in need of safety and our purpose is to advocate with them for compassion, fairness and kindness. We achieve this by providing expert advice and casework, building the capacity of refugee community organisations, and working with allies across society to change government policy.

The Refugee Council is one of the leading organisations in the UK working with refugees and people seeking asylum. We not only give help and support, but also work with clients to ensure their needs and concerns are voiced and addressed. Volunteers are a key part of many of the services that support our clients and work alongside paid staff across the organisation.

Our vision is that people seeking asylum and refugees are welcome to live safe and fulfilling lives contributing to the UK has never been more urgent and needed. Today 21.3 million refugees and 89.3 million displaced people around the world need of safety, dignity and welcome. We are determined to secure public and government support for safe routes for all people seeking protection through the creation of a fair, effective and compassionate refugee protection system.

Now is an excellent time to join the Refugee Council. Our [strategy](#) sets an ambitious new direction which will see us defend refugee protection in the UK against the Government's corrosive plans with refugees and like-minded allies, united in our desire to create a just, fair and humane refugee protection system. It will also see us delivering direct services that improve people's refugee protection journey through targeted advice and casework and strengthening and connecting Refugee Community Organisations with other service providers and advocates.

Our Values

Our values underpin everything we do:

- **Inclusive:** We are inclusive. We work with - not for - refugees and people seeking asylum, so they have an equal voice, co-producing projects and ensuring their expertise and experiences are at the heart of what we do.
- **Collaborative:** We are collaborative. Working with others is a priority in order to have the collective impact that is vital to achieve policy and practice reform.
- **Courageous:** We speak out when we see injustice, cruelty and unfairness. We always stand up for what we believe is the right thing to do to transform the experiences of those seeking protection in our country.
- **Respectful:** We are respectful of all those we interact with. We treat everyone – our staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, partners and people we disagree with – with the same respect, professionalism and understanding.

About STEP Forward

This Team provides intense and multi-faceted including provision of ESOL, education, financial and digital literacy, volunteering placements, wellbeing sessions and mentorship for female refugee clients from a range of backgrounds.

The volunteer role

One of the barriers for female refugee clients to access learning is finding suitable and reliable childcare, whilst they attend sessions. To help them overcome this barrier, we have set up an on site creche for clients attending the course, managed by a member of staff who is qualified in Level 3 Childcare. Volunteers in this role will have the opportunity to support our operations and services by carrying out the main task of their role as set out below.

Specifically, the volunteer role includes:

- Assisting and taking direction from Refugee Council members of staff in helping to take care of the children by carrying out activities with them.
- Assisting with the set up and organising creative and play activities with the children.
- Assisting with song and story time
- Assisting with the set up and pack up of the Creche equipment for each session.
- Providing emotional support, especially for children new to the Creche
- Ensure children are playing in a safe environment.
- Offering a nurturing and supportive environment for the children
- Fetching the child's parent from the course when they need changing, feeding or if they are unable to be soothed.

Please note that volunteers are not responsible for feeding or changing nappies as part of this volunteer role and remains the responsibility of the client during the course. Volunteers are never to be left alone with any child at any time. Otherwise, you will have to do enhanced DBS checks.

Useful skills and experience

- Reliability and commitment.
- Confidence and comfortable meeting new people.
- Ability to establish and maintain professional boundaries.
- Ability to build relationships and rapport with children and their parents.
- Ability to communicate with people of all abilities and culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Adaptability to new ideas and concepts
- An appreciation of the importance of confidentiality and data protection. Full training will be provided.
- An understanding of the need to keep children safe in line with our organisational safeguarding policy and procedures. Full training will be provided.
- Pashto or Dari language skills are desirable but not essential.

This role is subject to a satisfactory basic level Disclosure and Barring Service check. Repeat checks are initiated every two years.

Skills and experience to be gained from the role.

- Experience in working with children in a welcoming environment.
- Induction into the work of the Refugee Council, as well as the role, data protection and safeguarding.
- Experience of volunteering in an early year setting
- Opportunity to improve future employment prospects.
- Support and guidance from Refugee Council team members, including 121 and group supervisions.
- Regular training and development opportunities
- We would be more than happy to provide references to volunteers.
- We would be more than happy to provide CV support, personal professional development.

How we support our volunteers

Volunteers are valued members of our teams, and we provide them with support and development opportunities. Volunteers will receive regular planned support sessions with their supervisors.

Refugee Council allows volunteers to attend our professional training courses, when possible, free of charge. Training will be discussed with you during support sessions with your supervisor.

Through sponsorship from the Marsh Trust, Refugee Council also provides volunteers with the opportunity to design and set-up a new service for new clients. There will be an opportunity to discuss this with your supervisor.

Volunteer roles are unpaid, but we can reimburse volunteers for lunch and travel costs. (Unfortunately our limited budget only allows for local travelling costs.)

Unanswered questions?

For more information contact Shana de Silva on 07392 866351

Email: shana.desilva@refugeecouncil.org.uk

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Health & Safety

The volunteer is responsible for:

Cooperating with the Refugee Council in delivering all legal responsibilities in respect of your own and your colleagues, volunteers, clients and others health and safety whilst at work.

Becoming familiar with the Refugee Council's Health & Safety Policy and procedures including lone working, boundaries and evacuation procedures at your workplace.

With support from your supervisor, carrying out risk assessments of your own work and especially of your own workstation to ensure that you do not expose yourself or others to unnecessary risk.

Equal Opportunities Statement

As part of its recruitment policy, the Refugee Council intends to ensure that no prospective or actual employee or volunteer is discriminated against on the basis of sex, race, nationality, marital status, sexual orientation, employment status, class, disability, age, religious belief or political persuasion, or is disadvantaged by any condition or requirement which is not demonstrably justifiable.