**Volunteer Guidance for Under 18’s**

Special Olympics Great Britain (SOGB) welcomes and values volunteers of all backgrounds, experience and age, but cannot accept volunteers under the age of 15.

We have a duty to protect all our volunteers, however, there are extra responsibilities for volunteers who are under 18 years of age. SOGB has a duty to protect young volunteers and will do everything possible to make sure that the volunteering experience is positive, meaningful and safe. All volunteering experiences should be balanced with the needs of the club/programme or event and the individuals they work with.

This Volunteer Guidance for Under 18’s is designed to provide key information about the volunteer registration process, what is expected of young volunteers, how to get help, support and advice, and also outlines vital information about safeguarding, whistleblowing and codes of conduct.

**Completing the Volunteer Registration Process**

* Complete Volunteer Registration form:
  + Online (including Easy Read Version) – [**HERE**](https://www.cognitoforms.com/SpecialOlympicsGreatBritain/VolunteerRegistrationForm)
  + Word Document (emailed or posted) – downloadable [**HERE**](https://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/club-resources/volunteers)
* This form requests information about:
  + **You** (contact details, consents, personal details and your club)
  + The **role** you wish to apply/register for
  + **Safeguarding** information and declarations
  + Your **training/qualifications** (if relevant/required)
  + Your **working/education history** (if relevant/required)
  + 2 x **references** (including personal and professional where possible)
  + **Code of Conduct** Attestation – see more [**HERE**](https://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/club-resources/volunteers)
  + **Under 18s require the below parental consent form to be submitted**
* This form will be reviewed and processed by SOGB with the support of the local club/programme leads. Depending on the nature of the role and necessary processes, this may take from 2-6 weeks.
* For additional support, please contact [**volunteer@sogb.org.uk**](mailto:volunteer@sogb.org.uk).

**Expectations and Responsibilities of the Role**

Responsibilities as a volunteer will differ from role to role, however it is important to note that volunteers under the age of 18 are not permitted to have “duty of care” and/or “sole responsibility” for athletes, for example coach, assistant coach, 1;1 support, etc. . Volunteers under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times during any SOGB activity they are involved in by another volunteer who is over the age of 18 and is both registered as a SOGB volunteer and DBS/PVG checked as legally required.

**Safety, Welfare and Safeguarding**

SOGB takes the safety and wellbeing of its athletes, volunteers and staff seriously. To ensure that all SOGB activity is delivered in a safe and positive way, we have set safeguarding standards that are role specific which must be adhered to.

For volunteers under the age of 18, these standards are as follows:

* The club to carry out a risk assessment to identify any risks that might occur with the tasks that the young volunteer will undertake.
* The club to carry out normal safer recruitment checks such as references and have the correct criminal background checks in place *(age/role dependent)*
* Those aged 16 and over are eligible for a DBS/PVG check see [Roles that require a DBS/PVG Guidance](https://resources.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/sogb/document/2024/10/31/2ca8d572-530d-469a-ad9e-ad1b32c54677/LIST-OF-ALL-CURRENT-ROLES-REQUIRING-VALID-DBS-PVG-2024.pdf)
* The young volunteer to complete a Club induction/familiarisation session
* This would typically involve meeting the Club Safeguarding and Welfare Officer *(SWO)*, and being given information on how and when to contact them, what to contact them for, and familiarisation with club activity risk assessments and athlete risk assessments/one page profiles (where appropriate) and with local safeguarding and health & safety processes and information (eg. Local authorities and emergency services).
* The club to ensure the young volunteer is clear about the context of their role and that they know and understand their responsibilities and boundaries.
* The young volunteer to complete a basic safeguarding awareness course (SOGB or other)
* Basic/introductory [Safeguarding training](https://elearn.specialolympics.org/learn) is designed to give basic safeguarding and welfare knowledge. It will identify key safeguarding themes such as types of abuse, indicators of abuse and what to do if you have any safeguarding concerns.
* The club to ensure the young volunteer receives the appropriate support and that the young volunteer knows how to access this. Anyone acting in a supporting role should be skilled and competent at supporting young people and have had the appropriate safer recruitment vetting completed.

**Code of Conduct**

SOGB have a specific Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct, which outlines rules and guidance on several important areas. It covers professional boundaries, personal conduct, safety, safeguarding and more.

The SOGB Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct can be found [HERE](https://resources.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/sogb/document/2022/02/17/7a5cbe5c-350d-43af-8ec4-db4199e3981c/Staff-and-Volunteer-Code-of-Conduct-2021.pdf) and needs to be read, understood and agreed to before an individual starts volunteering. (**Please note this is currently under review**).

**Key Contact Information**

As a volunteer at SOGB there are some key contacts that individuals need to be aware of both locally within the club and nationally within the organisation. Take some time to familiarise yourself with the information below. Local arrangements and key contacts should be included in the club induction, but we will also highlight them here.

**Local Key Contacts**

Club Safeguarding and Welfare Officer (SWO)

Club Chair/Main Contact

Club Health and Safety Lead (where applicable)

Club Volunteer Coordinator (where applicable)

Regional Main Contact (where applicable)

**Organisational Key Contacts**

SOGB Safeguarding Lead: Adam Leathwood

**Tel** 07383 389663  
**Email** [safeguarding@sogb.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@sogb.org.uk)

SOGB Director of Operations: Vanessa Snell

**Tel**  07859 769184

SOGB Volunteer Development Officer:   
**Email** [volunteer@sogb.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@sogb.org.uk)

**Where to find information and guidance**

The [Special Olympics GB website volunteers resources page](https://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/club-resources/volunteers) has lots of information and guidance to support you in your volunteering journey with us. Here you will find Codes of Conduct, training information, registration information, templates, safeguarding guidance and more. Get in touch with [volunteer@sogb.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@sogb.org.uk) if you cannot find what you are looking for.

**Parental/Guardian Consent**

All volunteers under the age of 18 must gain Parent/Guardian consent to become registered as a SOGB volunteer. Below is the parental consent form that must be completed by yourself and member/s of the club who will be responsible for supervision and support whilst volunteering as indicated within each section.

There is also a link to the form to download [HERE](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fresources.specialolympicsgb.org.uk%2Fsogb%2Fdocument%2F2025%2F03%2F14%2F1e3c509b-5eb6-49a7-b3b2-c06e72a18bda%2FSpecial-Olympics-GB-Under-18-Volunteer-Consent-Form.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

**Parental Consent Form**

This parental consent form is designed for Coaches/Club members to outline the responsibilities, duties and engagement that the young volunteer will be undertaking at the club, so that parents of the young volunteer are fully informed when giving consent. It should also outline what protections are in place for the young volunteer whilst volunteering at SOGB.

\* ***Volunteers under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times by a registered and DBS/PVG checked Volunteer.***

Please read through carefully, to ensure you fully understand and are happy with what is expected.

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| What role will the young volunteer be undertaking? (Please describe the duties of the role which should be age and needs appropriate ) |
| ***e.g. General Coaching Support – Athletics***  ***[More information needed]*** |

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| What is the time commitment of the volunteering role? (Please include days/times of volunteering activity – although there is no specific legislation, these should not be excessive) |
| [Information needed] |
| What supervision is in place for the young volunteer? (Please outline what supervision of the young volunteer involves and who will be responsible for it) |
| [Information needed] |

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| Please fill in key contact details for your club |
| Safeguarding and Welfare Officer (SWO): [Information needed]  Head Coach: [Information needed]  Assistant Coach (if applicable): [Information needed] |

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| I (insert name of parent) consent for my child to volunteer at (insert club name) |
| Name: [Information needed]  Date: [Information needed]  Signature: [Information needed] |

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| Key information about young volunteer |
| Please fill in any key information about your child that may be important for the club volunteers and those with responsibility to know, e.g., any medical conditions/needs, communication needs, etc. |

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| I (insert name of young Volunteer) agree to conditions set out above whilst volunteering at (insert club name) |
| Name: [Information needed]  Date: [Information needed]  Signature: [Information needed] |

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| I (insert name of responsible person/s below) agree to supervise and support (insert name of volunteer) whilst they are volunteering at (insert club name) |
| **Person 1**  Name: [Information needed]  Date: [Information needed]  Signature: [Information needed]  **Person 2**  Name: [Information needed]  Date: [Information needed]  Signature: [Information needed] |

**Parent/Guardian/Carer** **Contact Details**

Please provide your contact details in the event the club should need to contact you.

Name: [Information needed]

Phone Number: [Information needed]

Email: [Information needed]

Once this form is complete, please save a copy on file and email a copy to volunteer@sogb.org.uk