

Role: School Referral Pathways Volunteer

Where: *North Cotswold Foodbank*

Time commitment: 2 to 4 hours weekly

When: Hours are flexible over the week.

Main contact: *North Cotswold Foodbank Manager*

Why we want you

Our vision is for a UK without the need for food banks. We know that strong relationships with our referral agencies will help us improve the support we're able to give to those using the food bank.

This role will support our staff at the food bank to establish, maintain and improve vital partnerships with our existing and new school referral partners. Our local schools play a key role in ensuring people in our community are referred to our food bank when they need to be, and so it's hugely important that we maintain strong relationships and good communication with our local school contacts.

Why volunteer with us

Volunteering is a fantastic way for you to be involved in your local community and our volunteers are at the heart of all that we do as a food bank. The role of volunteers dedicating their time and skills is critical as we work to fulfil our vision of seeing the UK without the need for food banks.

What you will be doing:

- support our Referral Agency Liaison to maintain positive relationships with our local referral agencies, specifically our schools
- engage and communicate regularly with our key contacts at local schools, to ensure that our aims and vision as a food bank are understood
- identify where partnerships with school referral agencies are working well and where there are opportunities to strengthen these relationships
- gain a greater understanding of the services and support provided by school agencies
- advocate on behalf of our food bank by sharing what we do with our school referral agencies and support the Referral Agency Liaison with making initial contact with new school based referral agencies, where relevant
- support the food bank manager with keeping our volunteers and staff up to date with the latest information on our school referral partners, including running food bank information sessions.

Skills you need:

- knowledge of local school referral agencies
- empathy and compassion
- good interpersonal skills, particularly in active listening and establishing stakeholder relationships
- understanding the need for confidentiality, safeguarding, data protection, and the ability to adhere to our volunteer policies and guidelines
- strong IT skills - Microsoft Teams, Outlook, PowerPoint, Word, and Excel
- ability to prioritise and manage a range of tasks, demonstrating flexibility
- ability to get on with others and be part of a team, as well as being motivated to complete tasks independently.

What is in it for you:

- having an enjoyable experience whilst volunteering with us
- providing a vital support function as part of our food bank services
- helping us strengthen our school referral partner relationships
- supporting our work to ensure that people who are accessing our food bank are receiving appropriate support
- learning new skills and using your existing skills to make a difference
- meeting new people and being part of a motivated team who share your passion to better support people in hardship in your community.

Support and personal development

This role requires a minimum commitment of 12 months, including attending relevant training depending on your experience. We will provide you with ongoing support and development opportunities. You will have a main contact at the food bank. We are happy to arrange a taster session for you to meet other volunteers and to find out more about the role and the food bank. We will also buddy you up with another volunteer in your first few weeks.

This role will involve some volunteering from home however, you will be required to spend time at our foodbank centres and potentially meeting at the relevant schools.

How to apply

Whatever your background, we want to make sure you are supported, empowered, and enjoy your time volunteering with us. We know that having volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds, and with varying experiences, can help to make what we do as effective as possible. As such, we welcome all applicants regardless of age, religion or beliefs, disability, ethnic background, gender reassignment, sex, or sexual orientation. We also encourage those with lived experience of poverty to apply.

For more information and to have an informal discussion please contact *Kevin Carden* via email at info@northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk