

# **GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

## **Ukrainian Evacuees and Hosts**

### **Objectives**

To support Ukrainian Evacuee families in Cheshire East and host families or groups providing independent housing to families.

All Refugees Welcome Volunteers will work collaboratively with other volunteers, and with the Family themselves to:

- Respond to each individual /family's strengths and needs as they settle in an unfamiliar environment.
- Respond to the needs of Host families in relation to the Evacuees where needed.
- Treat evacuees with dignity and respect, encouraging independence and integration and always maintaining confidentiality
- Follow the Equality Act, celebrating diversity and avoiding any kind of discrimination.
- Ensure adults and children are safeguarded
- Provide opportunities to make links with the wider community.
- Report back to Refugees Welcome Supervisor and Supervising Trustees on families' needs to enable this to be recorded and integrated into continuing services
- Empathize with the experiences of Evacuees and have an understanding of cultural differences

### **Best practice principles**

Support will embody the following best practice principles:

- Enable the individual/family to settle within Cheshire East, to access the community and local services, and to develop their English speaking, if necessary, through practicing informally.
- Support host families over the term of the hosting arrangement
- Seek to foster independence in every contact
- Recognize and accept when individuals/families can do things independently of any voluntary support and step back and/or cease voluntary support as needed
- Be aware of possible tensions and signpost for help at the earliest opportunity to try to prevent the breakdown of arrangements

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## Values and Principles

Refugees Welcome supports vulnerable adults and children and delivery of the service is informed by the following values and principles:

**Privacy:** The right of individuals to be left alone or undisturbed and free from intrusion or public attention to their affairs

**Dignity:** Recognition of the intrinsic value of people, regardless of their circumstances, by respecting their uniqueness and their personal needs and treating them with respect

**Independence:** The adult, child or young person will be encouraged to maintain independence, even in circumstances when he/she needs personal assistance. This should be provided in an enabling and supportive way.

**Choice:** The adult, child or young person's opportunity to select independently from a range of options and to influence the nature of their support or services provided, and the style in which these are provided.

**Rights:** The adult, child or young person will have all the entitlements associated with citizenship and will be aware of their right to comment upon the quality and the support of services they receive.

**Fulfillment:** The adult, child or young person will be supported in his/her right to have control over the quality of his/her life in their own home.

**Equality and Diversity:** The adult, child or young person will receive the same quality of service as delivered to other residents within the borough, with recognition of their unique additional needs due to their experiences.

**Opportunity:** Irrespective of gender, culture, race, disability or special personal requirement, opportunities for the adult, child or young person will be considered individually to support maximizing their potential to learn, be active and work.

**Confidentiality:** Provide confidential and safe services which respect the individual and preserve people's dignity

## Policies and procedures

Volunteers must always adhere to the Refugees Welcome policies and procedures available to all volunteers on the Volunteers page of the RW website, in order to safeguard evacuees, hosts and volunteers and to ensure equity of experience for volunteers across Refugees Welcome.

## Personal Safety

- Please always work to maintain safe practice. This requires you to work within the boundaries of the Safeguarding Policy and Health and Safety Policy for Refugees Welcome
- Do not undertake any task for which you feel that you have insufficient knowledge or training
- Report any incidents or “near misses” to the Volunteer Supervisor/ Supervising Trustee/ Trustee Board
- Ensure someone knows where you are going and the time you are expected back
- Take your mobile phone with you to use in case of emergency
- You are under no obligation to remain in a situation in which you feel unsafe, e.g. if you think the person you are visiting may be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Report your concerns to the CVSCE Volunteer Supervisor or Supervising Trustee

## Managing Boundaries

Volunteering is a service in which the relationship between volunteer and individuals/families/hosts is open to scrutiny by others. This relationship is distinct from friendship, which is a private, mutual relationship although it can over time become a friendship by mutual consent. The volunteering relationship with evacuees carries a high level of responsibility. When working with those new to the country and culture, the volunteer can often be seen as a role model. In order to protect both families, hosts and volunteers it is essential that appropriate boundaries are always maintained.

If you are concerned about where the boundaries should lie, you should talk to the Volunteer Supervisor if available, and ask yourself the following questions: -

- Does the evacuee /host understand my role as volunteer?
- Is this relationship meeting my needs more than those of the evacuee?
- Am I being completely open about things, and if not, why not?
- Will any action I undertake leave me or Refugees Welcome open to reasonable criticism?
- Does this action undermine the work of others in Refugees Welcome or staff at Cheshire East?

## Specific Boundaries

The list below, whilst not exclusive, sets out examples of boundaries that volunteers are expected to maintain:

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- Ensure the evacuee individual or family and host understands the nature of your relationship with them that you are there to help them to settle and be clear about what you can and can't do.
- Ensure that the evacuee individual/family and host know how to contact you and when you will be able to respond
- Once a relationship of trust has been established volunteers should communicate with evacuees and hosts in the way most convenient for everyone.
- Do not embark on a relationship which could lead to accusations against you e.g. sexual or emotional relationships or financial involvement
- Be careful of adding evacuees/hosts to any social media accounts (e.g. Facebook) as friends where they have access to personal information about you, that they do not need to know, unless you are comfortable to do so at your own risk
- Do not use abbreviations or emoji's which could be misconstrued.
- Do not lend money to evacuees, make payments on their behalf, accept free gifts or services, or give financial advice
- Do not take responsibility for caring for children in the absence of their parents unless you are willing to do so and have an enhanced DBS check
- Be aware of cultural norms
- Do not use your position to establish an unfair or improper relationship
- Avoid physical contact, beyond what is culturally acceptable as greeting or expression of sympathy, as this may be misconstrued by the evacuee/host or an observer
- Arrange to meet individuals/ families/ hosts in places where you and they feel safe and comfortable that do not put either party at risk
- Do not disclose or discuss any of your own personal issues or problems
- Do not use illegal substances with the evacuees, or undertake volunteering whilst under any such influence
- Most meetings will take place in the evacuee's place of residence or in public places or if you feel comfortable to do so in time, in your own home.
- Do not impose your own personal beliefs, views, values or attitudes on to evacuees
- Avoid comments and discussions which could be misinterpreted or cause distress or embarrassment e.g. politics, religion or sexual comments
- Be careful about developing any relationship with evacuees and hosts through social media to maintain their privacy.
- If you have any concerns that any of your actions or words may have breached any of these boundaries or may have been misinterpreted, or if you feel an exception should be made in any of these areas, discuss these with the Volunteer Supervisor/ Supervising Trustee

## **Amended November 21 – Use of 'What's App' as a communication aid.**

- We are aware that most families like to use this method of communication. If it is used it should only be for the purpose of the volunteering roles.
- All communication with Minors should be via a parent. All communication with children needs to be transparent and supervised whether it is either physical or digital

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- If using 'What's App' for the purpose of communication between a group of volunteers for ease of passing on information, this should be solely for the purpose of the volunteering role.
- **By agreeing to RW Policies and Procedures as a volunteer you are agreeing that if there is a request for information in any 'What's App' chat needed for an investigation of a complaint or issue, you as volunteers will 'export' the chat to another format where it can be viewed by RW Trustees, the CVS Supervisor or any other statutory organisation requesting the information.**

## Confidentiality

There is sensitivity surrounding the resettlement of evacuees and their integration into the community, and therefore particular attention should be always paid to confidentiality. All volunteers must sign the Confidentiality Agreement before starting their involvement and must always comply with Refugees Welcome Confidentiality Policy and Procedures.

## Reliability

Volunteers are expected to offer the level of commitment they have agreed to and are able and comfortable to offer. If you will be unavailable for a period e.g. because of holiday or personal circumstances or are unable to carry out a pre-arranged task, you are expected to give reasonable notice to the Volunteer Supervisor so that alternative arrangements can be made.

## Travel and insurance

If using your car for Refugees Welcome activity, it is your responsibility to ensure that your car is fully taxed, insured, maintained and serviced as Refugees Welcome can accept no liability for this. You will need to contact your insurance company to check whether volunteering is covered by your insurance and obtain written confirmation of this. You will not normally be expected to carry individuals/ families in your car, but in an exceptional situation where you may be asked to do this, you must only do so if you have seat restraints which meet statutory requirements for children of particular age/size, and where you have written evidence that your insurance covers transport of passengers in your volunteering activity. **Children must always be accompanied by a parent**

## Personal Interests

We ask that you do not act in such a way that your personal or professional interests come into conflict with the best interests of Refugees Welcome. If you have a conflict of interest by volunteering with Refugees Welcome, this should be noted up front at the time of appointment so that it can be managed by the Volunteer Supervisor.

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## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually for currency and accuracy by the Chair of Trustees or individuals delegated by him/her. This does not prevent any changes taking place to this policy at any other time due to changes in practice or legislation.

**V1 March 22**

**Reviewed: April 23**

**SIGNED BY: N.A. Campbell**  
**[Trustee/Chair of Trustees]**

**DATE: 20.4.23**

**POSITION in REFUGEES WELCOME: Chair of Trustees.**

**Next Review Date: April 2024**