



Volunteering with Mermaids

Mermaids UK is the only UK-wide charity working to support transgender or gender non-conforming children, young people, and their families. Our goal is to create a world where gender-diverse children and young people can be themselves and thrive. Mermaids promotes education and awareness, and offers information, support, friendship, and shared experiences to those in need.

Volunteers are vitally important to Mermaids and the work we are doing, we value their dedication and commitment to helping children, young people, and their families. Our Volunteers are making a difference and changing lives every day and developing valuable skills and experience along the way. You do not need to be an expert in gender to volunteer with us, just compassionate, empathetic and supportive.

Volunteer Role:	Helpline Services - The helpline and web chat service offers emotional support, a gateway to the parents and teens forums, information about current legislation and protections under the law, signposting to the training department, as well as resources. Choose to volunteer on the phone, webchat, or both! Volunteers need to be at least 18 years old and not have been a member of the Mermaids youth forum for at least 12 months.
Supported by:	Helpline Service Manager and Volunteer Manager
Location:	Home based - a quiet, private space You need access to a laptop or pc and the internet. To volunteer on the phone you will need a landline (not mobile) which we are happy to discuss with you.
Time Commitment:	The helpline is open from 09:00 – 21:00 Monday to Friday and we ask that each volunteer commit to at least one three-hour session a week. These sessions are 09-12, 12-15, 15-18 or 18-21. You will be asked in advance what sessions you can do for the following month and be included on the rota based around that. Initial training is approx two days.

Main tasks:

- Volunteer alongside staff on the helpline during the hours of 09:00 – 21:00
- Answer calls and web chat and provide emotional support, active listening, as well as signposting as needed
- Record all contact made by service users on our database, for statistical and quality monitoring purposes
- Understand and follow Mermaids policies and procedures including safeguarding, confidentiality, data protection and health and safety

- Participate in regular supervision
- Have the opportunity to attend events, support the delivery of workshops, and engage in promotion and networking for Mermaids

What experience and skills do you need?

- A desire to support gender-diverse children, young people and their families
- Be reliable and punctual
- Ability to listen supportively without giving advice
- Empathy for others, a non judgmental approach to working, and understanding of the uniqueness of everyone's situation.
- The ability to communicate with people who are in distress or times of crisis and have a calm attitude/approach
- Resilience and understanding of looking after your wellbeing and willing to be honest about your feelings and engage in supportive supervision
- Ability to follow and implement professional boundaries and commit to our policies and procedures
- A commitment to support the work of Mermaids presenting us in a positive way

Why volunteer with us?

- Make a difference to children and young people living with gender dysphoria
- Do something meaningful by helping others
- Build your confidence and self-esteem
- Experience for your CV and personal development
- A chance to develop your emotional support skills
- Develop listening and communication skills you can use in all aspects of your life

Mermaids will provide:

- An induction when you start
- Training for your role
- An Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (criminal records) check
- Ongoing regular guidance/supervision
- A supportive volunteering team and community
- A landline phone set if you do not have one (incoming calls costs are covered by us)

This is a voluntary position that supports the work of our services and is not replacing the work of a paid member of staff. The role description does not form part of any contract of employment.

How to apply

We actively support and encourage people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences to join us and shape what we do. If you would like to apply, please complete an [application form](#).

Registered Office: Regus, Princes Exchange, 2 Princes Square, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS1 4HY

Mermaids | [Mermaidsuk.org.uk](https://mermaidsuk.org.uk)

Volunteering enquiries: volunteer@mermaidsuk.org.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1160575

Document reviewed: 03/10/2023 by Sarah Cooper, Volunteer Manager