

INtegr8 Befriending Service

Befriending Application Information Pack
Information for new and potential volunteer befrienders

WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer befriender with INtegr8 Befriending Service.

This pack explains what the service does, who we support, what the befriender role involves, and what you can expect from the application and recruitment process.

It is designed to help you make an informed decision about whether befriending is right for you at this time.

1. ABOUT INTEGR8

INtegr8 provides one-to-one befriending support to isolated young people aged 10–21 living in West Lothian.

Our aim is to promote:

- positive mental health
- confidence and self-esteem
- social connection
- independence
- wellbeing

Befriending offers young people a safe, consistent relationship with a trusted adult who listens, encourages, and supports them to take positive steps forward.

2. WHO WE SUPPORT

We prioritise young people who:

- are socially isolated
- have limited or no other supports
- struggle with confidence, anxiety, or low mood
- face challenges at home, school, or in the community
- would benefit from a consistent, supportive relationship

Young people with multiple supports already in place are usually not appropriate for this service.

3. THE BEFRIENDER ROLE

Directly responsible to the Befriending Co-ordinator.

The role of a befriender is a consciously undertaken commitment by an individual who has completed a process of recruitment, training, vetting and selection. Befriending relationships are monitored, supported, and supervised within the policy framework and guidelines of the organisation.

Befrienders play a key role in supporting children and young people who use the service and are in a position of trust due to the nature of the one-to-one relationships built with befriendees.

Positive befriending relationships enable a sense of worth and confidence to be nurtured in befriendedees and can be helpful in supporting service users to achieve goals and move forward positively.

Task

Befriending tasks will vary depending on the needs of the individuals supported. Within the policies and procedures operated by the organisation, befrienders are expected to:

- Develop and promote a positive relationship with their befriendedee.
- Establish and maintain appropriate boundaries with their befriendedee.
- Agree activities to participate in with their befriendedee, subject to organisation safety requirements and insurance cover.
- Provide non-judgemental support, acknowledging the befriendedee's right to making their own decisions.
- Be consistent and dependable.
- Be realistic about what can be achieved while recognising that supporting children and young people can be challenging due to their individual needs and circumstances.
- Abide by the organisation's confidentiality policy as well as other policies and procedures.
- Participate in support and supervision sessions (6-12 weekly for 1-2 hours per session), report any concerns and complete session recording sheets.
- Work within a non-discriminatory framework while providing an accepting and understanding presence.

Experience, skills, and attitude:

The organisation aims to promote an inclusive service which recognises the diverse range of skills and experiences which volunteers can bring to the role. The person specification outlines those that are felt relevant.

Essential requirements:

Prior to being accepted, potential volunteers need to successfully complete befriender induction training. Additionally, as the role involves working with children and vulnerable young adults, they are required to complete an application to become a member of the PVG scheme (protection of vulnerable groups) via Disclosure Scotland. Additionally, we ask for two references.

Person specification

Volunteers come from all walks of life with a variety of experiences and skills to offer. There are no specific educational qualifications required for the role and we aim to recruit people with potential as well as those with relevant experience or qualifications.

Qualities:

- Able to form positive, supportive relationships with others.
- Able to communicate well, particularly with children, young people, and young adults.
- Able to reflect on your relationship with the befriendedee and how situations affect you and your match, as well as question your own assumptions.
- Able to work alone using initiative and common sense while knowing when to seek support.
- Able to offer a reliable, consistent, and dependable presence with the ability to handle a level of stress.
- Able to focus on the needs of the befriendedee during sessions.

- Able to understand the issues and challenges faced by children, young people, and young adults.
- Able to accept that being challenged or let down could occur during a relationship with a befriender.

Values:

- Able to accept people for who they are.
- Able to respect others as being of equal worth.
- Able to not impose own values and beliefs on others.
- Able to appreciate and value the diversity of people.
- Able to understand that people have the right to make their own decisions.
- Able to work with a positive attitude while being realistic without cynicism.
- Able to recognise we can have a positive impact on those we support.

Organisational:

- Able to understand and work within the organisation’s boundaries, policies, and procedures.
- Able to adhere to the organisation’s confidentiality policy.
- Able to participate in support and supervision sessions.
- Able to arrange sessions with the befriender (or their parent/carer) and monitor how these go.
- Able to complete and submit session recording sheets and relevant expenses claims.
- Able to commit to weekly or fortnightly befriending sessions, for a few hours at a time, for a minimum period of 6 months once matched.

Review

4 to 6 weeks after being matched, a review will be incorporated into the first support and supervision session.

Support

Support is available in various formats; support and supervision sessions, telephone, email, text, WhatsApp, and additional meetings if/when required. A contingency is in place for when the befriending co-ordinator is not available.

Match conclusion

Ideally, a minimum of 2 months’ notice should be given to end a befriending match.

4. TIME COMMITMENT

To ensure stability for young people and the service, we ask volunteers to commit to:

- 2–3 hours weekly or fortnightly once matched
- a minimum of 6 months after matching
- participating in induction training
- attending support & supervision every 4–12 weeks
- completing brief session notes after each outing
- Submitting expenses claims monthly

Matches typically last around one year, depending on the young person's needs.

5. TYPES OF BEFRIENDING

Face-to-Face Befriending

- community-based activities
- longer waiting times (often 12+ months)
- matching based on compatibility, geography, and availability

Remote Befriending

- telephone, text, or video
- usually offered more quickly
- some volunteers take a second remote match

Blended Befriending

- a mix of remote and face-to-face
- waiting time similar to face-to-face

Remote support cannot be used as a temporary option while waiting for face-to-face.

6. SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS

You will be supported throughout your time as a befriender.

Support includes:

- supervision every 4–12 weeks
- additional support whenever needed
- reflective conversations
- guidance on boundaries, safeguarding, and communication
- a contingency plan when the Coordinator is unavailable

You will never be left to manage difficult situations alone.

7. EXPENSES

Volunteers can claim out-of-pocket expenses in line with our Expenses Policy, including:

- mileage
- public transport
- activity costs
- refreshments

Full details are provided during training.

8. TRAINING & INDUCTION

The INtegr8 Befriender Induction Programme is delivered in parts. Some parts are self-directed, and others are delivered by staff either in person or online.

All volunteers must complete Parts 1–4 before being matched with a young person.

PART 1

Core Induction (Self-Directed Learning)
Completed independently.

This section provides the foundations of befriending and introduces volunteers to:

- What befriending is (and is not)
- INtegr8 values and expectations
- Communication skills
- The matching process
- Building relationships
- Roles and responsibilities
- Support and supervision
- Managing endings
- Community connectors
- Service-specific information

Volunteers complete activities, reflections, and required reading, and watch short videos throughout.

PART 2

Safeguarding, Confidentiality & Boundaries Workshop
Delivered by the Project Director - either in person or online.

This compulsory workshop covers:

- Safeguarding responsibilities
- Child protection
- Confidentiality in practice
- Professional boundaries
- Escalation routes
- Recognising and responding to concerns
- Real-life scenarios
- What to do / what not to do
- How INtegr8 keeps volunteers and young people safe

This session includes discussion, Q&A, and practical examples.

PART 3

Induction Review & Support Meeting
With the Befriending Coordinator.

This is a one-to-one meeting to:

- Review the completed training/learning

- Clarify any questions or uncertainties
- Check understanding of key concepts
- Discuss preferences for matching
- Explore any concerns
- Confirm readiness to move forward

This meeting must be completed before matching.

PART 4

Compulsory Mini-Modules

Self-directed as part of the core induction training

These modules provide essential knowledge for supporting young people safely and confidently.

All volunteers must complete:

- Mental Health Awareness
- Challenging Behaviour

These modules may include videos, short readings, scenarios, and reflection tasks.

PART 5

Optional Mini-Modules (Ongoing Development)

Completed at any time during the volunteering journey.

Volunteers can choose from a range of additional modules, such as:

- Autism & Neurodiversity
- LGBTQ+ Inclusion
- Self-Care for Volunteers
- Trauma Informed Practice
- Online Safety
- Additional modules as needed

These modules help volunteers deepen their understanding and confidence in their match.

PART 6

Ongoing Support & Development

Provided throughout the volunteering relationship.

This includes:

- Regular 1:1 supervision
- Additional training opportunities
- Reflective practice
- Group sessions (where available or applicable)
- Access to policies, guidance, and support
- Opportunities to discuss challenges and celebrate progress
- Access to the Befriending Coordinator and Project Director as needed
- Befriending Team meetings/catch ups

9. APPLICATION, ASSESSMENT & SELECTION

The recruitment process is fair, transparent, and designed to ensure safe, suitable volunteers.

9.1 What the Application Pack Includes

- This INtegr8 Befriending Application Information Pack
- Application Form
- Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

9.2 Application Stage

Once we receive your application, suitable applicants will be invited to an initial meeting to:

- discuss the role
- explore motivations and expectations
- ask questions

9.3 Assessment

Assessment continues throughout:

- the application
- the initial meeting
- the training programme

We look for:

- values and attitudes aligned with the role
- understanding of boundaries and safeguarding
- reliability and commitment
- ability to reflect and engage with support

Applicants are encouraged to use this process to decide whether befriending is right for them.

9.4 Training as Part of Assessment

Participation, engagement, and reflection during training contribute to the assessment process.

9.5 Selection

Applicants who successfully complete the process may be invited to join the befriending team, subject to:

- two satisfactory references
- PVG Scheme membership

Decisions are communicated sensitively, and feedback may be offered.

All information is handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

9.6 How We Use Your Information (Privacy Summary)

We collect only the information needed to process your application and deliver the service safely. This may include:

- your contact details
- emergency contact information
- information you share during the application and training process
- relevant health or wellbeing information
- information required for PVG membership and recruitment checks

We use your information to:

- assess your suitability for the role
- communicate with you during recruitment and training
- meet safeguarding and legal responsibilities

Your information is stored securely and accessed only by staff who need it.

We only share information when required for safety, by law, or for essential service delivery.

We never sell your information or use it for marketing.

For full details, please see the WLYAP Privacy Policy (available on request).

10. THANK YOU

Volunteers are at the heart of INtegr8. Your time, energy, and compassion make a real difference to young people who need connection, encouragement, and a safe, trusted adult.

If you have any questions at any stage, please get in touch.

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