

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the minimum and maximum age requirement to be a mentor?

We require all our mentors to be above 18 years old. However, there is no upper age limit, and you are welcome to volunteer as long as you are able to keep pace with a child.

2. Can I mentor if I have a criminal record?

Having a criminal record does not necessarily mean you will be unable to volunteer, but this is determined on a case-by-case basis. If you have a criminal record, you will need to let us know on your application or in interview. We will also ask you to fill in a self-disclosure form. Our designated safeguarding officer (DSO) will need to see your police check certificate and will contact you for a private and confidential discussion.

3. Can I mentor when COVID-19 restrictions are in place?

As we are slowly transitioning out of COVID-19 Lockdown measures, our mentoring service will reflect that. This means that for the first part of your mentoring journey, you may be doing a mixture of phone call + messaging-based mentoring/ face-to-face mentoring. However, as government guidance is changing, we hope to be able to transition all mentors to full face-to-face mentoring within the next few months.

4. Will I receive training?

Yes! It is mandatory for mentors to complete 2 training days. These are designed to aid you in your journey as a mentor, and cover key topics such as:

- Qualities of a mentor
- Safeguarding
- Setting boundaries
- Dealing with difficult situations
- Planning sessions

5. How will I be matched with a mentee?

Once you have gone through the recruitment process, we begin the process of matching you with a child. This will be based not only on proximity but also on similar interests and personalities which we feel will make a good fit!

6. When do I need to be available to mentor, and for how long?

One session is usually between 1-3 hours long, and sessions take place once a week. This will be outside of school hours, so you will need to be available to mentor either on a weekday evening or weekend.

7. Where will the mentoring take place?

The sessions begin with the mentor collecting their mentee from their house, and this will be in one of the boroughs we work in, as below:

- Hackney
- Camden
- Lambeth
- Southwark
- Greenwich
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Brent

Sessions initially take place in the local area, and over time you will be able to explore London with your mentee!

8. How much contact would I have with the mentee's family?

You will be in touch with the family of your mentee to book-in and confirm sessions each week. On the day of the session, you will collect your mentee from their parent/carer and drop them back home after the session. This may be the only contact you have with their family, and any boundaries to keep in mind will be discussed further in training.

9. Are any expenses covered?

Yes, reasonable expenses are covered, and this will be discussed further in training.

10. Can I take a holiday during the mentoring?

Yes, you may take a holiday as long as you let your mentee's family and your volunteer coordinator know. We do ask if you could avoid taking holidays longer than 1 week in the first 6 weeks of mentoring, as these must be consecutive sessions to help build a relationship with your mentee. After that, we ask if you could keep any holidays under 3 weeks long.

For further information, please contact z.ahmad@thekidsnetwork.org.uk