

Volunteer Education Advocate Role Description

Reports to: **Education Inclusion Coordinator**

Purpose

At Back Up we understand that spinal cord injury can be devastating but we believe it needn't prevent anyone from getting the most out of life. The aim of this role is to support the full inclusion of children and young people with spinal cord injury in mainstream education. To promote solutions to inclusive education and raise awareness of spinal cord injury in the education community.

Our values

Volunteering with Back Up, as with everything we do, takes place in the context of our values:

- We embrace challenge
- We have fun
- We build inclusive communities
- We are ambitious for each other

Key tasks

- **To visit children and young people with spinal cord injury at their education setting:**
 - Attend 1-1 meetings at education setting, to support with things such as preparing for a child or young person's return, accessibility around setting, or Education, Health and Care plan applications
 - Deliver presentations / assemblies at schools to raise awareness and understanding of spinal cord injury
 - Promote the voice of the child or young person
 - Work alongside the young person, family and a range of professionals
 - Signpost to other organisations that can support child/family
 - Share experiences of living with a spinal cord injury when appropriate and relevant
 - To be sensitive and to offer encouragement
 - To feedback to Education Inclusion Coordinator
- **To be a role model and Ambassador for Back Up:**
 - To inspire and empower children and young people, and their families
 - To talk about all Back Up services (Mentoring, Outreach, Courses, Children & Young People services)
 - To act professionally and to be aware of confidentiality and safeguarding procedures

The Person

- Able to empathise with others – patient, sensitive and considerate
- Able to build positive and quick rapport with children and young people and those adults supporting them
- Excellent interpersonal skills including communication and listening
- Friendly, approachable and enthusiastic
- Able to speak confidently in front of a group
- Able to use personal experience in a helpful way for others
- Respectful and able to keep information confidential
- Able to support appropriately with sensitive issues
- Understanding of equal opportunities, confidentiality and data protection

Experience and Knowledge

- Personal experience of living with a spinal cord injury
- Sound knowledge of Back Up services, vision, mission and values

Time Commitment

- Attend an initial 2 day training course (virtual or in person)
- Visiting children/young people at education setting between 2-8 times a year

Support and opportunities provided

- Training will be given by attending a 2 day training workshop to support you as an Education Advocate Volunteer and to develop your skills to fulfil the role. Further development and training opportunities are offered annually
- Agreed expenses paid by Back Up
- Support and guidance from Back Up Children & Young People Team and other Back Up staff as applicable
- The chance to work as part of a dynamic team and to have a real impact on children and young people affected by spinal cord injury at an early stage, and to link them in with a lifelong network of support.
- Joining our closed Education Advocate Facebook group to keep in touch about potential visits and other relevant information

Other information

Back Up has safer recruitment procedures in place to manage risk when staff and volunteers are working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This role is subject to an enhanced DBS check and reference checks.