



Blue Room:

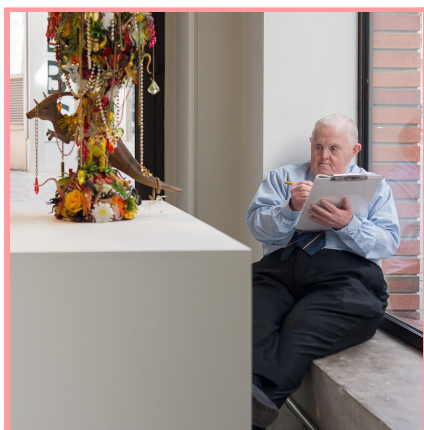
Information for Volunteers

Blue Room is Bluecoat's inclusive arts project for learning disabled and neurodivergent adults. Since the project began in 2008, Bluecoat has supported Blue Room members to explore contemporary arts and heritage, and to create and share their own work. The project began as a collaboration with Liverpool City Council as they explored ways of transforming day service provision but is now run independently by Bluecoat. We have three groups based at Bluecoat in Liverpool city centre and one group at Norton Priory Museum and Gardens in Runcorn.



We support a growing membership of over 40 artists to access full day inclusive arts sessions each week. Members develop creative and social skills, building confidence and greater independence. Membership of Blue Room has led to supported volunteering opportunities with Out of the Blue, our programme of after school art clubs in local primary schools. We have also supported Blue Room members to develop their own practice as visual and dance artists through mentoring and skills development.

Bluecoat has been awarded a grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. This will allow



Blue Room to grow from its current foundation of group visual arts sessions to include a programme of new dance and a studio programme supporting individual artist development. We will also implement a leadership skills development strand and develop an advocacy network across the UK to support arts organisations to enable learning disabled and neurodivergent artists to share their work with audiences.

Covid-19 and digital programme

Bluecoat continued to support Blue Room members during the pandemic through 'Blue Room at Home', a programme of postal resources and online art sessions. We delivered a thriving programme of four online group sessions each week, exploring a wide range of ideas, techniques and themes suggested by our members.

We have recently reopened onsite Blue Room sessions as part of a phased return to the building over 2021.

Volunteering with Blue Room

Blue Room volunteers are a vital part of the team supporting the delivery of creative sessions with the Facilitator team, Assistants, Support Workers and fellow volunteers.

Blue Room sessions are attended by up to 12 members per day.

They take place on Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursdays at Bluecoat and Fridays at Norton Priory. Members attend for full day sessions.



On occasion Blue Room also engage with groups of children and families involved in other programmes at Bluecoat so volunteers may also support activities with children aged 4 – 11 as part of the role.



Volunteering with Blue Room is a perfect opportunity for those wishing to give their time to a life-enhancing project. The role is a chance to learn from experienced inclusive arts practitioners in the context of a high quality programme which is becoming nationally renowned. It is not a training role, although

some specific training and guidance will be provided. You will almost certainly develop new skills and approaches whilst becoming part of a nurturing creative community.

Requirements for the role

Blue Room volunteers must:

- Have an active interest in contemporary visual arts and heritage
- Be interested in learning about inclusive arts practice
- Have a commitment to equal opportunities and a positive attitude to inclusion and access
- Be reliable and willing to show a level of commitment to the project
- Have good communication skills and a positive attitude to teamwork
- Be flexible and responsive to tasks that may arise during sessions

The role will involve:

Blue Room volunteers will often be assigned to support an individual or a small group of Blue Room members for each session. Their role in supporting these members might include:

- Encouragement to take part in activities
- Encouraging active listening and making sure distractions are limited
- Support in forming and realising ideas (but not taking over)
- Help in accessing materials or equipment
- Support in using certain equipment and materials.
- You may want to share your own art making skills.
- Helping members with reading resources and writing down their ideas and thoughts
- Documenting the activity and artwork using the project cameras and iPads
- Encouraging a friendly, sociable atmosphere in the workshop space by facilitating conversations between members

Other general tasks will include:

- Preparing materials for the session
- Helping staff meet and greet members on arrival, showing members to the studio space.
- Washing up palettes, brushes etc
- Cleaning up and assisting with maintaining a hygienic, COVID secure environment including wiping surfaces and sweeping the floor

- Making tea and coffee

Safeguarding and Health and Safety

You will require an Enhanced DBS check (formerly known as CRB) for this role as you will be working with adults at risk and children. The cost of this will be covered by Bluecoat/Norton Priory.

Volunteers have a responsibility to alert Blue Room staff to potential Health and Safety and Safeguarding issues. You will receive information on how to recognise, respond to and report Safeguarding concerns when you begin your volunteer role.

Blue Room members will often form a close bond with regular volunteers. It is your responsibility to ensure that this relationship does not extend beyond formal Blue Room activities. This can be difficult but is important to our Safeguarding policy. Remember - it is for your protection as well as that of our Blue Room members.

You will **not** be required to get involved in personal care (i.e. helping people go to the toilet). A trained support worker from Community Integrated Care is employed to do this.

Blue Room members may also “disclose” issues to people with whom they have formed a bond. If a Blue Room member tells you about anything that concerns you with regard to their welfare then you have a duty to report it. You will be given details of how to do this as there is a process that must be followed to maintain confidentiality.

Keeping Covid-Secure

Many Blue Room members and their families or support are especially vulnerable to becoming seriously unwell if they become infected with Covid-19. Bluecoat is taking the responsibility to ensure a Covid-secure environment for Blue Room members, staff and volunteers very seriously. Detailed risk assessments, enhanced hand washing and surface cleaning regimes, the use of face coverings and alterations to group size and spaces will be in place.

Where possible, members, staff and volunteers are encouraged to take up the offer of the vaccine when invited to do so by the NHS. A completed course of the vaccination (two doses) should significantly reduce the risk of an individual becoming seriously ill if they become infected.

It is possible for Covid-19 to be transmitted by individuals who are asymptomatic - NOT displaying recognisable symptoms. Staff and volunteers will be asked to take part in the regular testing in order to safeguard against outbreaks within Blue Room. Bluecoat is part of the **NHS COVID 19 testing for Adult Day Care Centres** programme. The scheme offers weekly LFD (Lateral Flow Device) and PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) testing for all staff and volunteers in contact with Blue Room members.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding vaccination, testing or COVID secure measures, the Blue Room Creative Manager will be available to discuss them.

Expenses & Refreshments

Bluecoat will reimburse out-of-pocket expenses for travel.

Tea, coffee, and juice are free of charge for volunteers in the workshop space.

For Volunteers supporting on Wednesdays and Thursdays:

Other coffees – latte, cappuccino etc - are £1 from Bluecoat cafe. There is a 10% discount on all food for volunteers.

Bluecoat will also provide lunch from the cafe for volunteers supporting a full day Blue Room session. Please exchange a ticket (claimed from the Tickets & Information desk) for a meal up to the value of £5.

For Volunteers supporting on Tuesdays and Fridays:

Please note that Bluecoat's cafe is currently closed on Tuesdays. The cafe at Norton Priory is run by a separate company. Volunteers supporting these days can have the cost of their lunch reimbursed up to £5 by providing a receipt.

How to apply to become a Blue Room volunteer

1. Please complete our online Blue Room Volunteer application form. Click [here](#)
2. Contact our Blue Room Administration Manager if you have any questions or require the application form in a different format: angel.l@thebluecoat.org.uk
3. If you meet our criteria then you will be asked to attend an informal interview with some of our staff team. If we do not think you are quite right for Blue Room we may point you in the direction of other opportunities.

4. If successful at this stage you will be asked to volunteer for a trial session
5. After the trial session a decision will be made as to whether to offer you the opportunity to volunteer with Blue Room.
6. You decide whether to accept the opportunity and we discuss how long you would like to volunteer for.

If you are offered a voluntary position you will then be required to bring in suitable documentation to support an online DBS check. You must have official documents that are less than three months old showing your name and current address (i.e. bank statement, utility bill, tax document, NHS document) and ideally either a passport or driving license. More advice will be given to you at the time to ensure that you have the right combination of documents available.

You will be asked to attend a Volunteer Induction session, either in person or online. The session will cover topics such as Safeguarding, Infection Prevention and best practice when supporting Blue Room sessions.

Further information

For more information about Blue Room and Bluecoat, visit our website

<https://www.thebluecoat.org.uk/projects/blue-room>

Click [here](#) to watch a short film about Blue Room.

Have a look at our social platforms:

Facebook: facebook.com/theBluecoat

Twitter: [@thebluecoat](https://twitter.com/thebluecoat)

[@BlueRoomLIV](https://twitter.com/BlueRoomLIV)

Instagram: [@the_bluecoat](https://www.instagram.com/the_bluecoat)

[@blue room inclusive arts](https://www.instagram.com/blue_room_inclusive_arts)