



AN INTRODUCTION TO SERVING AT THE GATEHOUSE



Online
Application Form

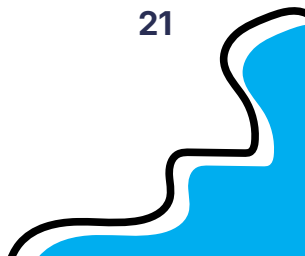
Gatehouse Church, Waterloo Road, Corner of Central Drive,
Blackpool FY4 3AD
01253 347521

Website: www.elimblackpool.org.uk
Email: contact@elimblackpool.org.uk

Updated: V2.0 24/09/2026

Table of Contents

Part 1: Welcome to the Team	4
Our Vision: A Family on Mission	5
Why We Serve: The Heart of Volunteering	5
Part 2: Our Shared Commitments	6
Our Commitment to You	6
Our Expectations	7
Communication, Feedback, and Problem-Solving	8
Part 3: Keeping Everyone Safe	9
Our Unwavering Commitment to Safeguarding	9
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks:	9
Health, Safety, and Emergency Procedures	13
Confidentiality and Data Protection	14
Part 4: Your Time	14
Part 5: Your Journey as a Volunteer	15
Getting Started: The Application Process	15
Induction and Training	16
Saying Thank You	17
Part 6: Key Contacts	17
Part 7: Serving Teams Chart	18
Part 8 : Application Form	19
Part 9: Volunteer Agreement Form	21



Part 1: Welcome to the Team

A Welcome from the Pastor & Leaders

On behalf of the entire leadership team at Gatehouse Church, welcome! We are so grateful that you are considering dedicating your time and talents to serve alongside us. Our volunteers are the lifeblood of our church; you are co-labourers in the ministry God has given us here in Blackpool, and we truly could not do it without you.

We often describe ourselves as a "Family on Mission". This means we are a group of ordinary people committed to creating a place where we can make friends, experience God together, and see lives radically transformed. Whether you are helping to create a welcoming atmosphere on a Sunday, leading our children in their faith, operating a camera for our livestream, or serving our community during the week, your contribution is a vital part of that mission. Service is not just about getting tasks done; it is a powerful act of worship and a primary way to build relationships, grow in your faith, and find your place in the Gatehouse family.

This manual is designed to be a helpful guide for your volunteering journey with us. It outlines the vision that drives us, the opportunities available for you to get involved, and the important policies that ensure we serve in a way that is safe, effective, and honours God. We pray that as you step into serving, you will not only be a blessing to others but will also find deep fulfilment and joy.

Thank you for being willing to serve. We are excited to see all that God will do in and through you.

In Christ,

Pastor Neville Walker and the Gatehouse Leadership Team

Our Vision: A Family on Mission

At the heart of everything we do is our core identity: we are a Family on Mission. This simple phrase captures the two fundamental aspects of our vision for Gatehouse Church.

First and foremost, we are a Family. We are a community of ordinary people who believe that church should be a place of genuine friendship, support, and belonging. This "family" aspect is about our internal life together. It is seen in the warmth of our welcome, the care we show one another in small groups, the laughter over coffee after a service, and the commitment to walk alongside each other through all of life's ups and downs and to grow together as disciples of Jesus. Building a strong, healthy, and loving church family is the essential foundation from which all our other activities flow. It is in the context of this family that we are encouraged, equipped, and empowered for the work God has called us to.

Secondly, we are on Mission. Our focus is not just inward on ourselves, but outward towards our community in Blackpool and beyond. As a family, we have been given a shared purpose: to reach out with the love of Jesus and see lives transformed by His power. This "mission" aspect is seen in our diverse outreach activities, from the practical help offered through our midweek groups to the global reach of our online services. It is a mission to share the good news of Jesus not just with words, but with tangible acts of service, kindness, and compassion.

This dual identity of "Family on Mission" is the framework for all our volunteering. Every team and every role is designed to contribute to one or both of these essential callings. When you volunteer at Gatehouse, you are not just filling a rota slot; you are actively participating in building our family and advancing our mission.

Why We Serve: The Heart of Volunteering

The Bible presents service not as a duty to be endured, but as a joyful response to the grace God has shown us. Jesus himself said that he "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matthew 20:28), setting the ultimate example for us to follow. Therefore, at the Gatehouse, we view volunteering as a vital part of our discipleship and an active expression of our worship. It is faith in action.

Serving is one of the best ways to get connected into the life of the church. While Sunday services are a great starting point, it is often through working alongside others on a team that deep and lasting friendships are formed. It provides a shared purpose and a natural context for community. As you use the gifts God has given you, you not only bless the church but also experience personal growth and a deeper sense of belonging.

We believe that God has a plan for every person and that this plan is often discovered as we faithfully serve within the body of Christ. Whether your skills are practical, technical, creative, or relational, there is a place for you to make a meaningful difference at the Gatehouse. By joining a team, you become an essential part of making our Sunday services and midweek activities happen, helping us to be a church that effectively ministers to our family and reaches out to our community.

Part 2: Our Shared Commitments: The Volunteer Charter

To ensure that volunteering at Gatehouse is a positive and rewarding experience for everyone, we believe it is important to establish a clear set of mutual commitments. This charter outlines what you can expect from the church leadership and what the church expects from its volunteers. It forms the basis of our relationship, built on respect, trust, and a shared passion for our mission.

Our Commitment to You

As a valued member of our volunteer team, you have the right to expect the following from the church leadership:

A clear role: We will provide you with a clear understanding of your role and responsibilities, ensuring you know what is expected of you.

Support and supervision: We will provide a designated team leader or contact person who can offer guidance, answer your questions, and provide ongoing support.

Training and equipping: We will provide the necessary induction and role-specific training to help you feel confident and competent in your role. Where specialised skills are needed, we will provide training as much as we are able and as time permits.

A safe environment: We are committed to providing a safe physical and emotional environment for all our volunteers, with clear health, safety, and safeguarding procedures in place.

Appreciation and recognition: We will regularly and genuinely express our gratitude for your contribution. We recognise that your time and energy are precious gifts, and we are committed to honouring your service.

Open communication: We will keep you informed about the life of the church and solicit your feedback and suggestions. We value your perspective and encourage an environment of open dialogue.

Reimbursement of expenses: We will reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred while volunteering, according to our expenses policy. This ensures that no one is prevented from volunteering due to cost.

Our Expectations

As a volunteer and an ambassador for Gatehouse Church, you are entrusted with representing our values and mission. We ask that you commit to the following :

Be reliable: Please be punctual and dependable in fulfilling your duties. If you are unable to make a commitment, please notify your team leader with as much notice as possible and, where appropriate, try to arrange a substitute.

Have a teachable spirit: Be willing to learn new skills, receive direction, and accept supervision graciously. We are all learning and growing together.

Work as a team: Work co-operatively and respectfully with other volunteers and staff members. Support one another, accept differences in style, and maintain a positive, encouraging attitude.

Uphold our values: Conduct yourself in a manner that is consistent with the Christian faith and the values of Gatehouse Church. Treat everyone you interact with—congregation members, visitors, and fellow volunteers—with courtesy, dignity, and respect.

Maintain confidentiality: Hold in confidence any sensitive personal information you may become aware of through your role. Avoid gossip and act with integrity in all your relationships.

Adhere to policies: Familiarise yourself with and adhere to all church policies, especially those concerning Safeguarding, Health and Safety, and Data Protection.

Communication, Feedback, and Problem-solving

Effective and transparent communication is the cornerstone of a healthy team. We are committed to fostering an environment where you feel comfortable asking questions, sharing ideas, and raising concerns.

If you have a suggestion or face a challenge in your role, your first point of contact should always be your designated team leader. We encourage you to address issues directly, graciously, and promptly. Most difficulties can be resolved through simple, open conversation.

If an issue cannot be resolved at the team leader level, or if it concerns the team leader, please speak with the church's central volunteer coordinator or a member of the pastoral staff. We are committed to listening and working towards a fair and positive resolution. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us to improve our ministries and our support for volunteers.

Part 3: Keeping Everyone Safe

Gatehouse Church is fully committed to providing a safe and secure environment for every person who walks through our doors. This commitment is a non-negotiable aspect of our Christian faith and our legal responsibility. The following policies are essential for protecting our church family, especially children and adults at risk.

All volunteers are required to read, understand, and adhere to these procedures.

Our Unwavering Commitment to Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the action that our church takes to promote a safer culture. It means we are proactive in protecting children, young people, and adults at risk from abuse and harm. This is a responsibility that belongs to every single one of us at Gatehouse Church.

Our "family" culture values trust and strong relationships, and it is precisely because we are a family that we take our duty of care with the utmost seriousness. Implementing formal safeguarding procedures is not a sign of mistrust; it is a practical expression of our love and our collective commitment to protect the most vulnerable among us. As part of the Elim Pentecostal Church, we adhere to national safeguarding policies and best practices, ensuring our procedures are robust and up-to-date. All volunteers in eligible roles will be required to attend regular safeguarding training.

Disclosure & Barring Service

DBS checks : Step-by-step guide

A key part of our safeguarding practice is ensuring that all eligible volunteers undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The DBS is a government agency that helps organisations make safer recruitment decisions by processing and issuing criminal record checks.

What is a DBS Check? A DBS check provides information about a person's criminal record history. For roles involving significant contact with children or vulnerable adults, this is a legal requirement.

Why is it necessary? It is a vital tool to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with vulnerable groups. It is illegal for the church to allow someone to engage in certain activities (known as "regulated activity") without the appropriate check, and it is also illegal for us to request a check or a role that is not eligible.

Therefore, we carefully assess each volunteer role against government criteria.

Levels of DBS check

There are different levels of DBS checks. The two relevant for our church volunteers are:

- **Enhanced DBS check:** This check is for roles with significant contact with children or adults at risk, but which do not meet the full definition of "regulated activity." It shows spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, and warnings, and may also include information held by local police that is considered relevant.
- **Enhanced DBS Check with Barred List Check:** This is the highest level of check. In addition to the information provided by an Enhanced Check, it also checks whether the individual is on one or both of the lists of people barred from working with children or adults. This check is required for anyone engaged in "regulated activity."

"Regulated activity" with children includes unsupervised roles involving teaching, training, caring for, or supervising children. It becomes regulated if it happens frequently (more than three times in a 30-day period) or overnight. Regulated activity with adults includes tasks like providing personal care, managing their money, or transporting them to receive healthcare.

The Process at Gatehouse

Eligibility: The team leader will determine if your role requires a DBS check based on the table below.

Application: If a check is required, you will be guided through the application process by our designated DBS verifier. The process is typically completed online.

Cost: There is no cost for volunteers to obtain a DBS check.

DBS Update Service: We strongly encourage all volunteers who receive a DBS certificate to register for the free DBS Update Service. This online service allows the church to re-check your certificate status annually without needing a full new application every three years, saving time for both you and the church. You must register within 30 days of your certificate's issue date.

DBS Check Requirements by Volunteer Role

To provide absolute clarity and ensure consistent application of our safeguarding policy, the following table outlines the DBS requirements for volunteer roles at Gatehouse Church.

Volunteer Role	Required DBS Check Level	Notes / Rationale
Limitless Kids/Youth/Crèche Leader or Helper	Enhanced with Child Barred List Check	Involves frequent, unsupervised contact with children, which is a regulated activity.
Connect Group Leader	Enhanced without Barred List Check	May involve providing pastoral care and support to adults who could be at risk.
Open Doors / Pastoral Visitor	Enhanced with Adult Barred List Check	Likely to involve providing personal advice and support to adults at risk, potentially meeting the definition of regulated activity.

Volunteer Role	Required DBS Check Level	Notes / Rationale
Worship Team Leader (if team includes under 18s)	Enhanced with Child Barred List Check	The leader is in a position of responsibility and supervision over children in the team.
Alpha Course Team Leader / Small Group Host	Enhanced without Barred List Check	Involves pastoral discussions and support which may be with adults at risk.
Technical Production Team Member	DBS Check Not Required	Role is public-facing and does not typically involve unsupervised, one-to-one contact with vulnerable groups.
Refreshments / Hospitality Team	DBS Check Not Required	As above.
Welcome Host / Steward / Car Park Team	DBS Check Not Required	Role is public-facing and does not typically involve unsupervised, one-to-one contact with vulnerable groups.
Facilities Team (Cleaning / Maintenance)	DBS Check Not Required	As above, unless the role involves being a keyholder with unsupervised access when children's groups are present.
Administration / Finance Team Member	DBS Check Not Required	Role does not typically involve contact with vulnerable groups. Financial roles are based on trust and reference checks.
Toddlers & Co. Team Leader	Enhanced with Child Barred List Check	Involves pastoral discussions and support which may be with adults at risk.

Health, Safety and Emergency Procedures

Your safety and the safety of those around you are paramount. All volunteers should be familiar with the following procedures:

Fire Safety:

- If you discover a fire: Immediately raise the alarm by shouting "Fire!" and activating the nearest red fire alarm call point.
- When the alarm sounds: Stop what you are doing. Do not run. Evacuate the building immediately via the nearest safe fire exit, following the green running man signs.
- Assembly Point: Proceed directly to the designated fire assembly point (location will be shown during induction).
- Do not re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so by a fire warden or the emergency services.

First Aid:

- First aid boxes are located in the kitchen and the church office.
- In the event of a serious injury or medical emergency, call 999 immediately.
- Only trained first aiders should administer first aid. A list of current first aiders is available in the church office.

Accident Reporting:

- All accidents, injuries, and near-misses, however minor, must be reported to your team leader and recorded in the accident book located in the church office. This helps us to identify potential hazards and prevent future incidents.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

In your volunteer role, you may become aware of personal or sensitive information about individuals. It is vital that you treat this information with the utmost respect and confidentiality.

- **Personal Information:** Do not discuss personal matters you have been told in confidence with others. Upholding confidentiality is essential for building trust. The only exception is if you have a safeguarding concern, which must be reported immediately to the church's designated Safeguarding Officer according to our policy.
- **Avoiding Gossip:** We are committed to being a community that builds people up. Please refrain from engaging in or listening to gossip.
- **Data Protection (GDPR):** The church is legally required to handle personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other data protection laws. As stated on our connection forms, we store information securely on our database. As a volunteer, you must not share personal contact details (e.g., phone numbers, addresses) of church members without their explicit consent.

Part 4: Your Time

Please refer to the attached Volunteer Role Description which details the purpose, responsibilities and skills of the role that you have signed up for.

Time Availability Matched to Ministries at the Gatehouse

Sometimes our 'busyness' of life can put constraints around how we can serve. Check out some ways below in which you can still serve that fits your weekly routine.

When / Where	Gatehouse Ministries
Available to serve on some weekdays in the day	Admin & Office Support, Kids (advance preparation), Cleaning, Open Doors, Events, Graphic Design, Missions, Connect groups, Podcast Uploading, Video Editing
Available on some weekdays in the evening	Alpha, Events, Youth, Church in the Cafe, Podcast Uploading, Prayer Ministry, Media, Security
Available on some Sundays during our services	Kids, Youth, Café, Car Parking, Welcome hosts, Refreshments, Info desk, Livestream Moderation, Media, Photography, Prayer Ministry, Production, Lighting And Cameras, Security, Sound & Audio, Worship
Available to help from home, flexible hours	Graphic Design, Livestream Moderation, Podcast Uploading, Prayer Ministry, Video Editing

Part 5: Your Journey as a Volunteer

We want your journey into volunteering at Gatehouse to be as simple and supportive as possible. This section outlines the steps to get involved and what you can expect along the way.

Getting Started: The Application Process

Joining a team is a straightforward process designed to ensure you find the right role for you and that all necessary safeguards are in place.

- **Express Interest:** The first step is to let us know you are interested. You can do this by filling out the "Get Involved" form on our website ³, or by speaking directly to a team leader or a member of the pastoral staff after a service.
- **Informal Chat:** Once you have expressed interest, the relevant team leader will arrange a friendly, informal chat with you. This is a two-way conversation to explore the role in more detail, answer your questions, and help us get to know you and your interests a little better.
- **Application Form:** For most roles, we will ask you to complete a simple Volunteer Application Form. This helps us to gather the necessary information in a consistent way.
- **References:** For certain roles, particularly those involving leadership or working with vulnerable groups, we will ask for two references. This is a standard part of good practice in recruiting volunteers.
- **DBS Check:** If your role is eligible for a DBS check (as outlined in Part 3), we will guide you through the application process at this stage. You will not be able to start in the role until the check is complete and has been reviewed by the church.

Induction and Training

Once you have been accepted onto a team, we are committed to providing you with the support you need to thrive in your role.

Your induction will include:

- An introduction to your team and your team leader.
- A tour of the building, highlighting key areas relevant to your role (e.g., fire exits, first aid kits).
- An overview of the church's vision and the essential policies contained in this handbook.

- Role-specific training to ensure you are confident with any tasks or equipment you will be using.
- We also provide ongoing training opportunities, including mandatory safeguarding refresher courses every two to three years for those in eligible roles.

Saying Thank You: Appreciation and Recognition

We are incredibly grateful for every person who gives their time to serve at Gatehouse. We believe it is vital to recognise and appreciate this commitment.

While you will hopefully experience regular, informal thanks from leaders and the congregation, we also look for specific ways to show our gratitude. This may include special mentions in services, volunteer-focused social events, or a dedicated "Volunteer Appreciation" gathering during the year. Your service does not go unnoticed, and it is deeply valued by the entire church family.

Part 6: Key Contacts

For any questions about volunteering or specific teams, please use the following points of contact:

General volunteering enquiries:

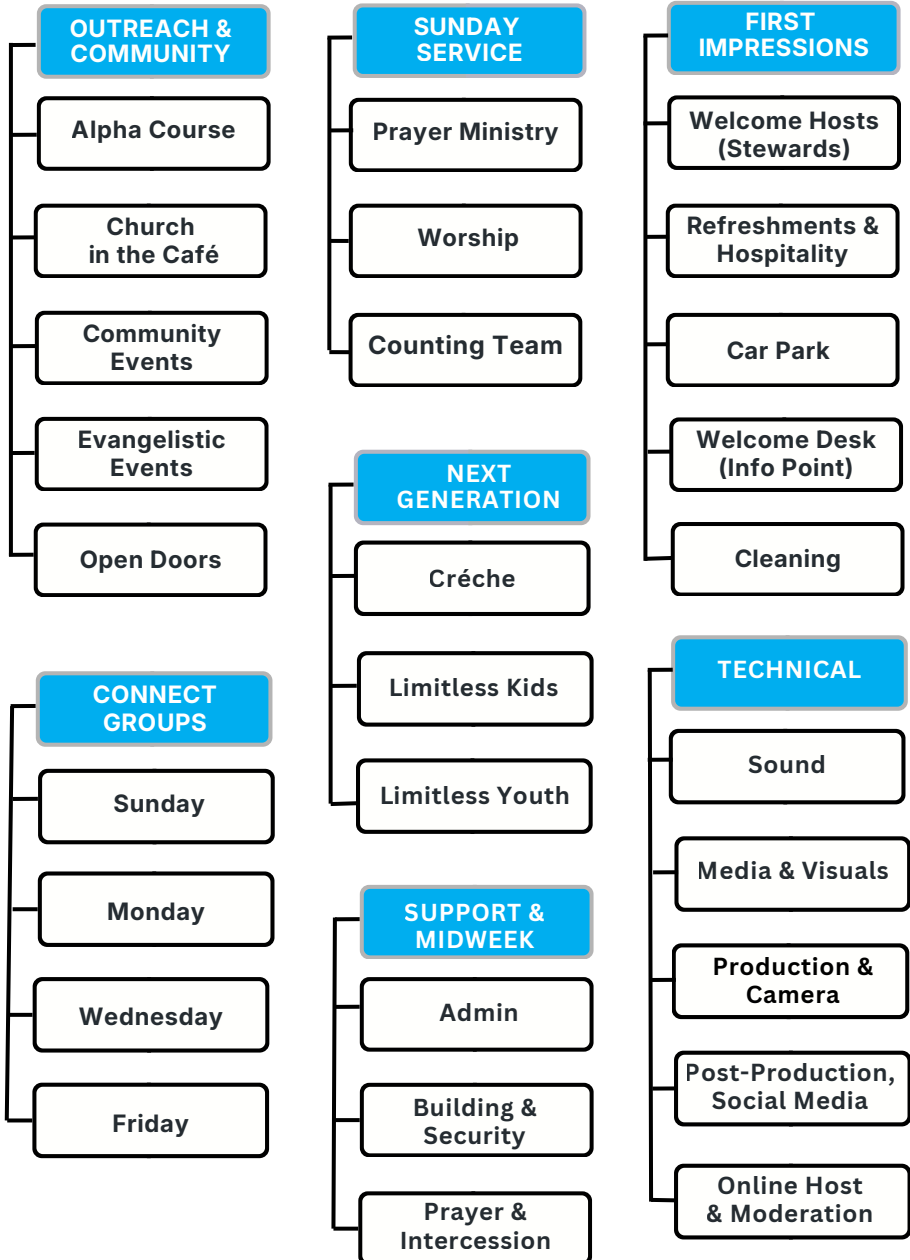
Church office

- Email: contact@elimblackpool.org.uk
- Phone: 01253 347521

Safeguarding concerns: Please contact our Designated Safeguarding Officer. Their name and contact details are displayed on the safeguarding noticeboard in the church foyer and on our website.

Team leaders: Contact details for specific team leaders will be provided to you upon joining a team. Your team leader is your primary point of contact for day-to-day questions, scheduling, and support.

Serving Teams



Application

If you would like to be part of a serving team please complete the form below.

Your Full Name

Email

Mobile

Tell us a little about yourself (e.g. what skills you have and why you want to serve):

Area you are interested in serving in /...



Serving Areas

Area you are interested in serving in:

- ☐ Alpha Course
- ☐ Facilities, Maintenance & Cleaning
- ☐ Car Park Monitor
- ☐ Crèche (Sunday morning)
- ☐ Church in the Café Outreach
- ☐ Connect Group Leader
- ☐ Community & Evangelistic Events
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Graphic Design
- ☐ Kids (Sunday morning)
- ☐ Media + Visuals
- ☐ Open Doors
- ☐ Photography
- ☐ Production, Camera + Livestreaming
- ☐ Prayer + Intercession
- ☐ Refreshments
- ☐ Security
- ☐ Sound + Audio
- ☐ Video Editing
- ☐ Welcome Hosts
- ☐ Worship
- ☐ Youth

Volunteer Agreement Form

By signing below, I confirm that:

1. I have received, read, and understood the Gatehouse Church Volunteer Manual.
2. I agree to carry out my volunteer duties to the best of my ability and to uphold the principles and values outlined in the Volunteer Charter.
3. I agree to abide by all church policies, with particular commitment to the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, the Health and Safety Policy, and the Confidentiality Policy.
4. I understand the importance of my role within the 'Family on Mission' and commit to serving as a positive representative of Gatehouse Church.

Volunteer name (Print): _____

Volunteer signature: _____

Date: _____

Volunteer role/team: _____

Church representative signature: _____

Please return a signed copy of this form to
your Team leader or the church office.





Gatehouse Church, Waterloo Road, Corner of Central Drive,
Blackpool FY4 3AD
01253 347521

Website: www.elimblackpool.org.uk
Email: contact@elimblackpool.org.uk



V2.0 29/09/2026

Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance. Registered charity 251549 (England & Wales)
and SC037754 (Scotland).