

TRUSTEE VACANCY INFORMATION PACK



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BEING A BALLOONS TRUSTEE

Thank you so much for your interest in volunteering as a Trustee for Balloons. At Balloons we depend on volunteers to function and flourish. They are the beating heart of the charity and support our work in so many ways.

We are currently looking for someone with marketing and/or commercial experience to join our dynamic board. We are seeking people who bring this expertise to be able to provide strategic oversight and who also share our values and passion to support even more bereaved children and young people.

This pack provides information about the volunteer role as well as about Balloons. Please do contact me on 01392 982570 or nicolaclarke@balloonscharity.co.uk if you are interested in applying or would like to know more. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Nicky

Nicola Clarke - Balloons CEO



ALL ABOUT BALLOONS

Balloons is a small, local charity working across Exeter, Mid and East Devon, providing support for children and young people aged 5 to 25 and their families before an expected death, or following the death, of someone significant in their lives.

Our vision

That bereaved children and young people have somewhere to turn when someone significant in their lives dies.

Our mission

To support bereaved children and young people in our area when someone significant in their life dies. To work alongside their families and the professionals who provide care to them to further enhance the support they receive.

Our values



TRUSTEE ROLE

The Board of Trustees have overall responsibility for the governance of the charity. At the time of writing, the charity employs 6 staff – all of whom are part time staff, and has a volunteer team of 45.

The Board currently has 11 members and meets 5 times a year on a Thursday evening in Exeter. These are usually 2-hour meetings, with an extended strategy session in Autumn. All Trustees also sit on one of the four sub-committees (Finance, Fundraising, Personnel, Clinical Governance & Safeguarding). Committee meetings last 1 – 2 hours and meet 3-4 times a year, usually online. Trustees tenure is 3 years, maximum tenure of 9 years.

The Trustees work closely with the Balloons CEO to ensure the Board of Trustees fulfils its collective responsibilities, which in broad terms include:

- Setting an overall direction (strategy) for the charity with clear policy objectives
- Ensuring the business of Trustee meetings is dealt with, and decisions, when required, are arrived at, and recorded, and their implementation monitored
- Ensuring the charity's financial dealings are prudently and systematically accounted for, audited, or independently examined, and publicly available
- Ensuring the charity has a satisfactory system for holding in trust for its beneficiaries any funds, and for investing to the greatest benefit of the charity, within the constraints of the law and ethical investment practices
- Ensuring that the charity always acts in accordance with its policies and that the safeguarding of children and young people is paramount
- Monitoring progress in implementing the business plan
- Ensuring appropriate goals are set for the resources available to the charity
- Acting as an ambassador for the charity and in so doing help promote the charity to a wider audience of potential funders and beneficiaries

More specifically, for this role, we are looking for someone with marketing and/or commercial management experience to join the Board and one of the Subcommittees. Our staff team manage the day to day operations and what we are looking for in this role is marketing/business expertise to aid strategic oversight and decision making.

FURTHER DETAILS

The next two pages, and our website, contain more information on Balloons. Specifically the 'Charity' page of our website has information on the other trustees as well as a summary of our strategic plan, safeguarding policy and accounts. [Charity – Balloons \(balloonscharity.co.uk\)](https://www.balloonscharity.co.uk)

If you would like to have an informal conversation about becoming a Trustee, please contact Nicola Clarke CEO on nicolaclarke@balloonscharity.co.uk. If you would like further information on the roles of Trustees you can find further information here: [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do \(CC3\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

If you are interested in applying, please do complete the attached application form. You will then be invited to discuss your application with the Chair of the board and trustees from the finance committee.

Closing date for application is 20th February 2026 - we look forward to hearing from you!

ALL ABOUT BALLOONS

Research indicates that the death of a significant loved one is a critical, traumatic moment for children and young people. Unsupported children and young people have poorer health and educational outcomes, are more likely to enter the criminal justice system and can be more prone to a range of psychological disturbances. Balloons support mitigates against these negative health, educational and social outcomes, providing support to vulnerable bereaved children and young people.

We work directly with over 150 children and young people a year through pre- and post-bereavement support, and reach many more through our telephone advice to parents and carers, sending care packages and delivering training.

Children and young people are more vulnerable to adapting to bereavement, particularly if other stressors are present in their lives. We support them in the following ways:

IMPROVING
COPING
SKILLS AND
RESILIENCE

INCREASING
UNDERSTANDING
OF DEATH AND
GRIEF

TALKING ABOUT
THEIR LOVED
ONE AND
TELLING THEIR
GRIEF STORY

EXPRESSING GRIEF-
RELATED FEELINGS
VIA VERBAL AND
SYMBOLIC
COMMUNICATIONS

We mitigate against the worst risks faced by unsupported bereaved C&YP. These include poorer health and educational outcomes, increased use of mental health services, increased risk taking behaviours and increased isolation from peer friendship groups.

Here are some national statistics that show why we do what we do:



Every 22 minutes, every day, a child is bereaved of a parent



1 in 29 5-16 year olds has been bereaved of a parent or sibling - that's a child in every average class



41% of youth offenders experienced childhood bereavement (the national average is 4%)



Parentally bereaved young people's GCSE scores were an average of half a grade lower than their non-bereaved peers



Compared to their non-bereaved peers, bereaved children are around 1.5 times as likely to have mental health difficulties

ALL ABOUT BALLOONS - OUR SERVICES

1:1 support

Our core work is delivering face to face, one to one, bespoke support sessions through a trained team of volunteer 'Grief Support Workers'. These sessions enable grieving children and young people to tell us how they feel – we are neutral, not a caregiver, not a teacher or other professional; we are only there to deliver non – judgmental grief support. We help them with issues such as managing anxiety and anger, building self-esteem, managing sleep disturbance, telling the story and building memories. We do this through a combination of arts and crafts, games and talking interventions, tailored to the child.

Activity Days & Family Events

After 1:1 support children and young people have the opportunity to attend our Activity Days, participating in a range of activities to enhance their personal sense of wellbeing in a safe environment with others who have had similar bereavement experiences; reducing feelings of isolation.

Group work

We have started delivering a small group work project. Through this we are able to offer grief support to groups of children and young people. This can be whole class support, sibling groups or small group work in a school.

Telephone helpline

Providing vital comfort, advice, information, and coping ideas for families facing bereavement or already trying to manage the impact of bereavement. We also provide telephone advice to professionals working with bereaved children.

OUR SERVICES

Training for partners and local agencies

We provide childhood grief training for schools, GP surgeries, police, youth offending teams, hospices etc., equipping those agencies with the skills and knowledge to better support grieving children, young people and their families.

Care packages

We often send comfort packages to families who have experienced a bereavement. Packages includes items such as – snuggle objects, anxiety reduction toys, journals, story books and mindfulness wellbeing activities, as well as 'kits' for families to create precious memories together – memory boxes, planting a memory garden etc. Left alone, grieving families find it very difficult to get these resources together. As one caregiver said – "When my husband died, I couldn't think straight and was really struggling to support the children. Receiving a care package from Balloons made all the difference to us and brought us together as a family as we built precious memories. Thank you so much".