



VOLUNTEERS' HANDBOOK

Best Practices for Voluntary Service

INTRODUCTION

Akwaaba (Welcome!)

You are warmly welcome to The Potter's Village orphanage, a safe haven for over 100 children rescued from abuse and abandonment. We sincerely appreciate your time and effort to complement our efforts in protecting the interests of these incredible children.

This handbook has been prepared to help you understand the best practices for voluntary service at The Potters Village. It also provides relevant details concerning daily routines and work schedules for all volunteers in the home.

About The Potter's Village

The Potters Village is a charitable organization established in the year 2000 to provide care and protection to victims of abuse, neglect and domestic violence. ., Our vision is to build a safe haven for the vulnerable in Ghana. We do this by empowering women and children to greatness through quality institutional care, education and other positive interventions. Our long-term goal is to expand our vision to reach out to people in other communities (within and outside Ghana) who need various forms of assistance.

What We Do

1. **Shelter and Protection**: We provide shelter, food, clothing and other material needs to all the children in our home.
2. **Education**: Every child attends formal schooling when they come to The Potter's Village. We provide home schooling for all children (from pre-school to Junior High School level), while the older children are sent to Senior High boarding schools outside Dodowa.
3. **Health & Wellness**
4. **Counseling Support**: Our Counseling Unit assists victims of abuse to overcome their emotional, psychological and social challenges. They are taken through educative sessions that will rebuild their sense of self-worth, self-esteem and ultimately empower them to greatness.
5. **Public Education Programme**: Along with directly supporting the children at The Potter's Village, we provide education and counseling services to members of various communities on domestic violence and other social issues that affect the wellbeing of women and children.

Please, visit our website, www.thepottersvillage.org, to learn more about us.

The Founder

Dr. Mrs. Jane Irina Adu (affectionately called Mama Jane) is the Founder and President of The Potter's Village. She was born on July 27, 1954. She is an educationist, book author, marriage counselor, a Certified Life Success Consultant and a Minister of the Gospel. She was trained as a professional teacher at Mount Mary College and the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. She holds a Diploma in French Education from the University Of St. Etienne France and has over 25 years' work experience. In March 2002, she led an official delegation from Ghana to the UN Conference on the Commission on the Status of Women in New York, USA. Later, in December 2004, she was the Keynote Speaker at a Conference organized by LaGuardia Community College, New York, USA on "Cultural Issues Surrounding Women's Health in Ghana". Additionally, she was main speaker on "Domestic Violence against Women – A Worldwide Phenomenon" at African American Museum of Nassau County, hosted by Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc. Rho Omega Zeta Chapter, New York (2004)etc.

As a loving mother, Mama Jane treats every volunteer as one of her own; she loves all volunteers and treats each one of them with respect. It is therefore expected that every volunteer relates with her and all staff the same way.

The Children

The Potter's Village currently has 123 children under its roof. Their ages range from 1to 22 years. Although every child here is different and special in their own way, we treat each one of them with the same love, care and attention.

Management

Our committed staff is always on hand to provide the best services for the benefit of the children and the orphanage as a whole. Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or concerns.

| NAME | ROLE | PHONE NUMBER |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Jane Irina Adu (Mama Jane) | Founder / President | 0243572386 |
| Alex Owusu Asamoah | Vice President | 024 330 3756 |
| Sophia Okyne | Home Director | 024 508 7247 |
| Charles Adu | Overseas Director | 024 499 0007 |
| Nana Ama Owusu | National Director | 0244 485393 |
| Kwabena A. Adu | Communications Director | 0542 876993 |
| Mr. Josiah Quay Larbi | Administration Assistant | 026 1192328 |

BEST PRACTICES

- The daily volunteer routine is outlined on page 4. We expect you to follow the routine you have been given. It is our expectation that you volunteer a minimum of 5 hours each day from Monday to Friday. If you are unable to attend a shift due to illness or personal conflict, please inform Charles Adu. If at any point in time you want to switch to a different routine, kindly speak to Sophia about it. Where possible, your routine will be changed for you.
- If you came along with donation money, kindly inform Mama Jane about it at your earliest convenience. The sooner we find out about your donation, the faster we can take action and use it to benefit the children. Mama Jane will work with you to ensure that the funds you have brought are used towards a pressing need that you are passionate about supporting. (further information on donations can be found as you read along)
- Kindly direct any questions or concerns to Mama Jane. Her doors are always open to you
- The Potter's Village is open to new suggestions and recommendations. Please inform our team about your ideas and plans
- If you want to plan an activity, think of something that will involve everyone. Leaving out some of the children can seriously damage their self-esteem and confidence.
- Do not give money to the children, even if they ask
- Do not engage in any romantic relationship with the children. This behavior will not be tolerated.
- Do not let the children play with your phone, camera, or other electronic gadgets.
- If you have come with donations but do not have enough for everyone, please hold off on giving these out until you inform Mama Jane. Together we can decide the best way to go about distributing your gifts.
- Besides the few girls who assist Aunty Bea, the children are not to be brought back to the Volunteers House
- If you plan on taking a child outside the home, please first inform someone from our team..
- Do not give your phone numbers to children
- Do not create Facebook accounts for the children
- Do not make promises to the children.
- If you desire to speak to a child, call the office (+233 054 2000 143) and the child will be called for you. We prefer that you call on Sundays after church (i.e. after 12:30 GMT)
- If a child comes to you to request items, kindly direct them to Sophia, Auntie Bea or Mama Jane.

DAILY ROUTINE

Week-Days

05:20 AM Wake up

05:30 AM Arrive at the orphanage.

Assist mothers and caregivers – Maa Becky, Maa Ama and Maa Mma with the bathing, drying, putting on cream, school uniforms etc. for the little children. When helping out in the mornings, politely ask the mothers to show you how you can help.

You may also assist with serving of breakfast. Ensure there is a bowl with water and soap for the children to wash their hands before they eat.

The bedrooms should be checked to ensure that they are tidy before the children leave for school. Check under the beds and inside desk drawers for leftovers and dirty bowls.

Those designated to dispense medicine to the children should do so immediately after the children have taken their bath.

07:30 AM Please ensure that the children are gathered at the assembly grounds.

07:50 AM All children should be seated in their classrooms by this time. Lessons start at 8 am.

09:00 AM Breakfast

09:30 AM You have time to rest but it is also time for you to help organize and clean the rooms. Some children may have been absent from school due to illness. It would therefore be appreciated if you check on those children to monitor their progress. You can offer to help the mothers with the preparation of lunch for the children.

01:00 PM Lunch

03:00 PM School closes by this time.

Children MUST remove their uniforms immediately after school.

03:10 PM After school, inspect children for wounds and cuts sustained during the day.

Kindly ensure that there is enough drinking water available at every meal.

Assist the children to do their homework, revise their notes and prepare adequately

for the next day.

Art projects/Activities - The children do love to play and so it is a good idea to plan structured activities/games. This is necessary because the children do not often get creative stimulation in the classroom and absolutely adore showing off their creative flair. Please plan the activity before you head over and only take materials you need for the activity.

You are encouraged to play with the children after school. If you are planning on taking the children to play games outside the orphanage, they **MUST** wear clothes and **SHOES**.

06:00 PM Dinner is served at this time.

The Senior House Master locks the gate to the home by 06:30 PM. If you go out with the children, you should return before this time.

07:00 PM Time to rest

Weekends and Holidays

Weekends and holidays are meant for volunteers to travel, explore and enjoy Ghana. This is very much encouraged and entirely at the volunteers discretion. However, some volunteers may decide to stay back at the orphanage with the children. In this case, the following are worth-noting:

1. Weekend/ holiday activities are similar to what happens during weekdays, except that the children are not supposed to go to school.
2. During the day, the children may go out to play games with other children in Dodowa. You are encouraged to go and cheer them up.
3. Your breakfast, lunch and dinner times will not change. If you are travelling please let Aunty Bea know which meals you will not attend.
4. If you would like to watch a movie with the children, discuss with George or Mama Jane.
5. On Sundays the children will attend church service at the home. The service starts at 09:00 am.

Health & Wellness

If you suspect that a child is ill, kindly inform **Mr. Awiya (the Health Coordinator)**. Cooperate with him to ensure that the appropriate measures are taken quickly to prevent complications.

Although emergency conditions are uncommon, they must be attended promptly when they happen. Seek prompt medical help when:

- a child is unconscious
- a child is not responding to first aid or treatment
- a child is rapidly weakening

Some Common Symptoms in Children

1. **Fever**– It is a rise in the body temperature. A lot of illnesses can give fever. If a child has fever, it is very important to wash down the child's body with a soft cloth soaked in lukewarm water. Remove excessive clothing. Keep the child in a cool room. Give paracetamol or ibuprofen. Do not give aspirin to children.
2. **Headaches**– This is also a common symptom. Most headaches are easily treatable. When a child has headaches, give paracetamol. The child should see a doctor if the headache persists for more than 3 days.
3. **Diarrhea** – Diarrhea in children is mostly viral and hence will stop on its own. Notwithstanding, you should manage with **Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS)**. If the diarrhea is as a result of something the child ate, give the child metronidazole in addition to the **ORS**. If diarrhea persists for more than a day after commencement of treatment, take the child to see a doctor.
4. **Vomiting**– A child exhibiting this symptom needs professional attention because the child cannot keep anything down. The child is likely to vomit all medicines out if they are given so the child must be sent to the hospital.

If a child needs to be taken to the hospital, ensure you have the child's medical insurance card and hospital card from the office. Then, take a car to the Dodowa hospital. This should not cost more than GHS2.00 when you go with a small commuter bus (*trotro*); a taxi may cost you GHS5.00 or more. The health insurance cards are always in their files. The following are some important information about the insurance card that you should know.

- It needs to be renewed every year; dates will be on the individual cards. Check the cards regularly to ensure that they are not out of date.
- Renewals of the card are done at the Health Insurance Office at the Dodowa hospital. This will cost some money and will take some days to complete.

- If you take a child without the health insurance card, you will have to pay the hospital bills at a higher price

Donations

- Donations are always greatly appreciated and needed at Potter's Village.
- If you brought donations of any kind from home submit them to Mama Jane.
- If you want to do something special for the kids, discuss with Sophia, Aunty Bea or Mama Jane.
- You may offer sponsorship to a child in Lower Primary/Upper Primary School, Junior High School and Senior High School. Talk to Kwabena, Sophia or Mama Jane about this if you are interested.

NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- If you buy Coke, Fanta, or Sprite in a glass bottle, remember to return the bottle to the shop.
- You may purchase toilet tissue from any grocery shop near the orphanage or volunteers' home.
- Toilet tissue should be placed in the waste bin after usage.
- If you smoke, do not smoke around the children
- If you intend to put food/drink in the fridge, remember to label it nicely.
- When the water tank gets low, inform IVHQ coordinator so he can arrange for it to be refilled.
- Please change bed sheets weekly. Place in a pile to be washed.
- An authorized staff from The Potter's Village will conduct weekly checks in the volunteers' house. This will be done on Mondays.

PLEASE NOTE: The Potter's Village reserves the right to suspend or terminate your program if you do not cooperate with us.

THANK YOU.