



Karen

**MATES MENTOR
STAWELL**

Karen has been volunteering for our MATES Mentoring Program for four years.



Why do you choose to volunteer in your local community?

I think it is so important that children have someone that they know is there for them and will listen to them. All children should have an adult in their life that they can talk to and trust.

I would really encourage other people in the community to become volunteers. We need to support all young people and let them know there are people who care.

What does your volunteer role entail?

When I go and visit my MATES student at her school, we talk, discuss how she has been going, play math games with a dice, play uno, read books, draw, cook or make cards. We do lots of nice things together.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering?

I love it. My MATE is so happy to see me, and we have lots of fun together. Just knowing I am making a difference in her life is the best part. The strong bond that forms really surprised me. All the children I have worked with will always have a special place in my heart. It's very rewarding to see them grow in confidence as they grow bigger.

What would you say to anyone thinking about volunteering in the community?

You live in the community, be a part of it! Give it a go - you will get back so much more than you can give. It really is a joy.