

# VOLUNTEERING POLICY

## Introduction

The Foundation exists to involve more people more effectively in volunteering to help solve real problems and enrich communities.

It does this by:

- Working with volunteer involving Foundations to improve the diversity and quality of volunteer placements.
- Providing potential volunteers with the means to access volunteering opportunities.
- Helping people who might otherwise have found themselves excluded to take part in their communities.

The Foundation is committed to involving volunteers directly within the Foundation to:

- Contribute to the delivery of our services.
- Make sure we are responsive to the needs of our users.
- Provide different skills and perspectives.
- Offer opportunities for participation by people who might otherwise be excluded.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers. The volunteer handbook gives further details about the support and procedures in place for volunteers.

## Principles

- The Foundation Recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and to paid staff.
- Will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the Foundational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the Foundation's work.
- Will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- The Foundation expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- Will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers.
- Recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- Will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.

### **Recruitment**

Recruitment of volunteers will generally be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with the Foundation's Equal Opportunities Policy using our safer recruitment policy.

People interested in becoming volunteers with the Foundation will be invited for an informal meeting with the appropriate contact person. They will be given an information pack including general information about the centre and specific information on the volunteer post in which they are interested. In general we follow the principles of our safer recruitment.

All volunteers will be asked to complete a simple registration form appropriate to the role that they are applying for and to supply two references. Where applicants are not placed in the role applied for, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles both with the Foundation.

Volunteers with The Foundation are likely to come into contact with vulnerable people and/or be in a position of trust. They will therefore be asked to provide information about any criminal convictions via a self disclosure form that is completed prior to starting your volunteering. Every volunteer role will undergo a risk assessment by the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

This information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and will not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work.

### **Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines**

Volunteers will receive a role description and volunteer agreement containing full information about their chosen area of work and a clear idea of their responsibilities as a volunteer.

### **Induction and Training**

Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

### **Support**

Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person who will provide regular support. Support sessions will provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue about the development of the volunteering role and any advice and guidance as needed.

### **The Volunteer's Voice**

Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them. The Foundation is committed to developing consultation and representational procedures for volunteers.

### **Records**

Minimum details will be kept on volunteers. This will include the registration form, references, placement details, crisis contact, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with The Foundation confidentiality policy.

### **Insurance**

Volunteers will be covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

### **Health and Safety**

The Foundation will reasonably practicable steps to ensure the volunteers' health, safety and welfare while at work in accordance with the Foundation's Health and Safety policy.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Volunteers and staff will work in accordance with the Foundation's equal opportunities policy and will prevent discrimination on any grounds.

**Problems**

The Foundation has a policy to help deal with grievances that volunteers may have. In line with this policy volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with their named contact at any time.

If the contact person is unable to resolve the problem they will refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer and ultimately the Foundation Trustees, with the permission of the volunteer.

**Endings**

When volunteers move on from their role at the Foundation they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire with a member of the leadership team.

On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

The Foundation has a policy on how it will deal with any disciplinary issue regarding a volunteer.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Foundation will systematically monitor and evaluate its use of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy.