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Volunteer Policy

This policy is the foundation in which Foresight endeavours to involve its volunteers within the organisation and demonstrates our commitment to our volunteer programme. It will ensure consistency to all the elements that affect the volunteer and will play a key part to not only involve a diverse range of volunteers but will also help to define the role of the volunteer and how they can expect to be treated.

By referring to this written policy, ensures that decisions are not made on an ad hoc basis, and that all involved are treated equally and fairly. It will also ensure that paid staff and senior management fully understand why volunteers are involved with our services and what role they will have within the organisation.

Introduction to Foresight

Foresight is a registered charity and operates throughout North East Lincolnshire. It provides a wide range of activities for the disabled and sensory impaired their families and careers. Foresight also provides various services to include transcripts in audio or Braille format, a befriending service for the visually impaired, which provides companionship in the home.

Foresight aims to improve the quality of life for its service users by combating social exclusion and braking down the barriers, myths and stigma surrounding disability. Foresight engages and enables individuals to lead a full and independent life and works with a variety of partners to ensure that all are included in the project.

Foresight relies heavily on funding and volunteer support. Some of the funding enables Foresight to not just develop the needs of the service user as previously mentioned but to develop the needs and role of the volunteer by providing opportunities in training, mentoring, to learn new skills, to become an integral part of the community and raise awareness of volunteering with the organisation. Foresight offers a host of courses for the volunteer to include, visual awareness training, basic first aid, health and safety, communication and confidence building and an adult engagement programme which enables the volunteer to actively seek employment and gain a recognised qualification.

Foresight Good Practice

Recruitment

- Foresight aims to recruit volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds that reflects community cohesion (see Equality and Diversity policy)
- Each potential volunteer will need to complete the application process (please see flow chart) if assistance is required a member of staff will provide support.

- Each potential volunteer will be required to provide two references prior to commencing project.
- Potential volunteers will be invited to attend an interview with volunteer coordinator.
- Once four week probationary period is finished, volunteers will be subject to a CRB check due to the nature of our service users. Having a criminal record will not necessarily stop you from volunteering with us however if the offence relates to vulnerable adults or children, Foresight has the right to withdraw any application and report to the relevant organisation.
- Each person volunteering with Foresight will discuss and sign a volunteer agreement and be given a copy of the agreement and Role description, which explains the expectations and support offered by the volunteer coordinator and Foresight. This will be agreed prior to commencement of volunteer placement by both parties and can be revised at any given supervision if requested by either party.
- Foresight aims use every possible method to advertise volunteer opportunities locally.

Induction and Training

- Volunteers will be inducted prior to commencement of volunteer placement and it will include introductions to staff and other volunteers, a guided tour of the building, fire procedure, , volunteer agreement, policies and procedures, time sheets, identification badges, an overview of the organisation and how you fit in as a volunteer.
- Mandatory training on safeguarding children, health and safety in the workplace, visual impairment awareness, first aid, moving and handling, disability awareness will be organised and proposed dates given.
- Other training opportunities will be discussed at regular supervisions and forums.
- Volunteers will undergo a 4 week probationary period where attendance, skills and approach will be monitored and to also ensure that volunteer is happy with in their role. Volunteers will be given the opportunity to attend taster sessions to ensure best experience is gained.
- Volunteers will be signposted to the appropriate accredited training wherever possible.

Disclosure Barring Service (DBS)

As an organisation delivering services to vulnerable Adults and Children it is our duty to ensure that all volunteers who may come into contact whether through face to face, or other are DBS checked. Therefore all volunteers will be subject to an enhanced DBS check or must hold a valid and current enhanced DBS check to or be in process of obtaining an enhanced DBS check as part of the recruitment process. The DBS checking process includes searches against records held by the Police, and registers of people barred from work with adults and children.

Support and Supervision

- Volunteers will be responsible primarily to the volunteer coordinator unless otherwise stated in role description. The volunteer coordinator should be approachable at all times and willing to discuss any issues the volunteer may have.
- Volunteers will receive regular supervisions every 3 months after initial first four week supervision.
- If volunteers are on placement the supervisions will remain to be once every four weeks.
- Short term volunteers will receive supervision sessions as agreed by both parties prior to commencement of volunteering opportunity.
- Volunteers will be invited to attend regular team or volunteer meetings and become involved in the promotional activities for volunteering projects.
- Volunteers will be entitled to a reference based on the given knowledge and performance of the individual involved.

Expenses

- Foresight endeavours to reimburse all out of pocket travel expenses to exclude taxis. This will be paid at 40 pence per mile or the full cost of a bus fare.
- On submission of expenses you can expect to receive them within seven days.
- All expenses must be claimed over a thirty day period, Foresight has the right to with draw claims over the thirty day period.
- Reimbursement for subsistence can be met occasionally if the volunteer is required to work away from home for the day.
- If the volunteers are in receipt of state benefits, they are advised to inform the benefits agency of their volunteering hours and the volunteer coordinator will write to confirm on company headed paper.

Insurance

- All volunteers are covered by Foresights insurance whilst undertaking in any volunteering role authorised and agreed by volunteer coordinator.
- It is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform their motor insurance company that they are using their vehicle to escort service users to activities.
- Volunteers will have to provide Foresight evidence to support the necessary changes from domestic to business.

Health & Safety

- Foresight has a duty of care to avoid at all cost exposing the volunteer to any such risk to their health and safety.
- All volunteers are given a copy of Foresights Health & Safety Policy as part of their induction
- It is also the volunteers responsibility in inform staff of any Health & Safety issues in and out of the centre as they arise.
- Volunteers will also have to attend mandatory Health & Safety in the Workplace training.

Equality and Diversity

- Foresight is fully committed to offering equal opportunities to all who access the service regardless of race, gender, age, sexuality, religion or disability.
- Volunteers will be given a copy of the policy at induction and will be expected to adhere and promote the policy where needed.

Safeguarding Children

- Foresight has a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of any one under the age of 18 accessing its services to include both service users and volunteers.
- Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of our safeguarding children policy and be committed to adhering to the policy at all times.
- Volunteers will be inducted on what action is appropriate in any safeguarding matter and who their point of contact is within the organisation.
- It is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure that children are safeguarded on each participating activity and to report any issues to the volunteer coordinator or activities manager.

Confidentiality

- Volunteers will be given a copy of Foresights confidentiality policy and agreement at induction and will be expected to read and sign both before commencing their volunteering post.
- They are expected to inform the volunteer coordinator of any confidential issues that may arise and treat any issues in the strictest of confidence.

Problem Solving

As soon as any issues or areas of concern arise for the volunteer they will need to discuss it at the earliest possible instance. Foresight has a grievance policy and the correct procedure must be followed to ensure that the issue or problem is solved in the quickest and easiest way possible without causing upset to the volunteer.

This information is also available in other formats, languages and picture format upon request.