



**Charity number: 1175671**

## **Volunteer Policy**

### **1.Introduction**

The Place exists to support families with young children in the Faringdon area. We welcome the contribution volunteers can make to supporting our work and strengthening our links with the local community. In doing so, we recognise that the roles of volunteers will complement and not replace the roles of paid employees. The time, energy and skills offered by our volunteers benefit our work and help us to achieve our aims. Research has shown that volunteering also brings benefits to volunteers themselves and those with whom they work.

### **2. Definitions**

Volunteers offer their time, experience and skills to the charity and our service users. This is undertaken by choice and is unpaid. Volunteers are involved in a range of roles, including supporting our staff delivering groups, fundraising and as trustees providing support and decision making input into the governance of the charity. The Place believes that our relationship with our volunteers is mutual and reciprocal, so that both parties have responsibilities and show commitment. We hope that volunteers will enjoy their involvement and gain from it in terms of their own personal objectives.

### **3. The Purpose of this policy**

Lived experience is at the heart of our volunteer policy. We believe that the unique perspectives and backgrounds our volunteers bring can enrich the services we offer. We will actively encourage individuals who have personal experiences related to our provision to support us through volunteering

The purpose of The Place in adopting this policy is to:

- highlight and acknowledge the value and contribution made by volunteers
- recognise the respective roles, expectations and responsibilities of volunteers and The Place
- To confirm our commitment to involving volunteers in our work and to establish clear principles for this
- To help to ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers
- To demonstrate commitment to appropriately identifying and meeting the resourcing costs of volunteering through appropriate funding.
- To provide a framework for recruiting and supporting a diverse range of volunteers including people with similar lived experience to the families we support

#### **4. Responsibilities**

The Trustees are accountable for producing the Volunteer Policy, the Volunteer Agreement and procedural guidance to enable the manager to effectively manage and support volunteers and for ensuring that the manager has the necessary systems, processes and resources in place to effectively implement the policy. The manager and staff are responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring that volunteer's can contribute effectively and safely to the project.

#### **5. Commitment to good practice in Volunteering**

The following steps should be taken to ensure volunteers can be managed effectively and fairly

- the tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all concerned with their activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities
- The Place will keep records of the work done by volunteers as a basis for monitoring, and volunteers will have access to any records kept on them
- Volunteering opportunities will complement rather than replace the work of paid employees or casual workers
- Opportunities will be given for volunteers to represent their views to the management of The Place
- All existing and future policies will be checked as to how they affect volunteers; and a mechanism will be established by which the policy and procedures on volunteers can be monitored and reviewed
- The Place's Equality & Diversity Policy will be adhered to when recruiting and selecting volunteers.
- Volunteers will be required to complete an application form and be recruited and selected in accordance with The Place's Safer Recruitment Policy. The organisation's Safeguarding requirements apply in full to volunteers working with children and families, as defined by the Criminal Justice Court Services Act
- Written task/role descriptions will delineate time, commitment, necessary competencies and actual duties
- People who offer to volunteer will have their offer of support and application dealt with as quickly as possible
- Placement of volunteers will ensure that their skills, talents and interests with voluntary work are matched appropriately within the organisation and the needs of service users. The needs of children and young people are paramount, and the placement of volunteers will be made against this principle.
- Once placed, we will expect volunteers to comply with designated policies and procedures that apply to their role.

#### **6. Support for Volunteers**

- The Place will invest appropriate resources (people, financial, technical) for the management of volunteers.
- We will provide an induction period and a review session for volunteers to assess the progress of their placements and to resolve any problems at an early stage.

- Volunteers will be given clear information about whether any expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim if applicable.
- Volunteers will be given information on other legislation or policies which may affect them, such as Health & Safety, Confidentiality, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.
- All volunteers will be offered appropriate access to support on a regular basis, with a named support worker/co-ordinator, and will be informed of who to contact in an emergency.
- All volunteers will be offered access to appropriate training and learning and development opportunities to enable them to fulfil their role safely (for themselves and those they may be serving)
- Volunteers will be updated on any matters that might affect how they should undertake their role
- Volunteers will be encouraged to provide each other with mutual support, including opportunities to meet with others who volunteer for the charity
- Volunteers will be made aware of the relevant procedures to follow should they have any issues, concerns or problems; and in the event that there needs to be a discussion with them about their volunteer role or conduct •
- A designated person will be assigned responsibility for dealing with complaints about volunteers' conduct, in accordance with The Place Complaints and Whistleblowing Policies and Procedures.

## **6.2 Support for Volunteers as Trustees**

To support its Trustees, The Place will provide:

- an induction on the work of the organisation
- induction documents including signposting to the Charity Commission's guidance for trustees <https://beingacharitytrustee.campaign.gov.uk/>, the most recent annual report and the most recent accounts
- opportunities to meet with staff and to gain knowledge and insight into the organisation's work
- written information and reports in good time on matters related to the governance and management of The Place
- opportunities for learning and development relevant to their role as Trustees

## **7. Volunteer Agreement**

This describes what Spurgeons and volunteers can expect from each other.

The Place will:

- Treat our volunteers with consideration and respect
- Provide induction and/or learning and development opportunities needed to meet the responsibilities of the role
- Explain clearly the standards that we expect for our services and to encourage and support volunteers to achieve and maintain them

- Provide a named person to regularly meet for support and discussion, reflect on achievements and to help resolve difficulties and problems if they arise
- Try to resolve fairly any problems, grievances and difficulties and in the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to discuss the issue with the manager or a named trustee
- Have safe working conditions, systems and guidance
- Provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst undertaking volunteering approved and authorised by us (excludes personal car insurance)
- Repay expenses that have been agreed with the manager in line with our financial processes and procedures
- Consult about decisions that will affect volunteers

The Place expects that volunteers will:

- perform their volunteering role to the best of their ability
- Support The Place in delivering services and support for children and families
- Ensure those we work with and encounter are safeguarded
- Carry out tasks in a way that demonstrates acceptable standards of responsible conduct and behaviour, treating others with respect at all times
- Follow the organisation's policies, procedures and standards applicable to Volunteers, including Safeguarding, Confidentiality, Health & Safety, Code of Conduct
- Meet time commitments and standards agreed to, except in exceptional circumstances, and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made
- Attend support meetings, training/learning & development sessions as agreed
- Understand that not keeping to the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 1) may mean the volunteering will end

## **8. Relationships between volunteers and employees**

Steps will be taken to ensure that staff are clear about the role of our volunteers and that good working relationships are fostered between them

- The roles of volunteers and employees and casual workers will be complementary and mutually supportive
- Appropriate learning and development, support and resources will be provided to ensure effective management of volunteers
- Volunteers will also be given clear information about the roles undertaken by staff colleagues and their value and contribution to The Place

