



Volunteer Induction Booklet

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Welcome to Footprints Women's Centre

Footprints Women's Centre recognises and acknowledges the contribution made by all volunteers and appreciates you giving your time on a voluntary basis.

We want to make your volunteering experience enjoyable and beneficial.

You should expect the following when you become a volunteer;

- An induction morning to fully acquaint you with the Centre and how it functions
- Orientation to the Centre and introduction to the staff in all areas
- A volunteer induction Pack containing policies and procedures for the centre
- An induction programme tailored to support you to have a quality volunteer experience at Footprints Women's Centre and to ensure that Footprints Women's Centre gets the best possible support from their volunteers
- An opportunity to review and discuss your volunteering with your allocated contact

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Footprints Women's Centre has provided services for women and children within the Colin Neighbourhood since 1991. The Centre has evolved from a strong self-help ethos and operates within a Community Development context.

The Centre has been acknowledged as a valuable asset within the community and has developed a diverse range of services within the Colin Neighbourhood. The Centre operates as a Social Enterprise generating income to support services directly of benefit to women and children. Footprints Trading Ltd has created employment in an area of multiple deprivation.

Footprints Women's Centre operates out of a purpose built facility and also provides outreach programmes across the Colin Community. The Centre works with up to 400 women per week and up to 100 children. Footprints employs 42 staff and is managed by a voluntary Board of Directors comprising of 7 local women and 4 professional women with expertise in particular areas of interest.

Footprints Women's Centre offers a fully inclusive childcare service. The centre works closely with the South Eastern Trust in providing support to families. We have a highly qualified staff team and encourage continuous professional development to ensure we offer the highest standard of services to women and children. The centre has quality assurance kite-marks including the Investors in People Award and 5 scores on the door.

For further information please check our website www.footprintswomenscentre.org.

VALUES

- Demonstrate **Respect** through listening actively to others and being non-judgemental
- To create a **Welcoming Friendly Atmosphere**
- To recognise diversity through **Treating People as individuals**
- Demonstrate **Equality** through showing no difference among those we work for and with
- Maintain **Confidentiality** through being clear about boundaries and meeting the requirements of the confidentiality code
- Provide **Support** through matching need
- Demonstrate **Commitment** through generating positive energy individually and collectively
- Underpin work with a **Feminist** ethos that raises awareness of the inequalities experienced by women in society and provides interventions to redress the balance.

Volunteer Code of Practice

As a volunteer for Footprints you are required to:

- Have a basic understanding of the aims and ethos of the centre
- Undertake an induction process as part of the practice of the centre
- Have a welcoming and friendly attitude to all visitors to the centre
- Act in a non-judgemental manner when dealing with other women

Work within the guidelines of all policies in Footprints Women's centre;

- Equal opportunities
- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety
- Child protection
- Vulnerable adults

Volunteer Expenses Policy

Footprints will refund receipted out of pocket expenses incurred during the completion of volunteering duties including:

- Mileage/Travel Expenses
- Subsistence

Childcare support will be provided 'on-site' within our day-care provision. This can be booked in advance for volunteers involved in supporting core volunteering activities and is subject to availability ie Administration support, childcare, counter service, Senior Citizen's lunch club.

Mileage/Travel Expenses

Volunteers using their own car should record travel mileage on a mileage sheet. All travel should be authorised by the Women's Empowerment Worker, or the department manager responsible for the volunteer.

Volunteers who do not use a private car for travel should obtain receipts for all journeys and submit them to the Finance Officer.

In the case of black taxis, expenses will be paid at the going rate upon completion of the Black Taxi Travel Expenses form. These should be submitted to the Finance Officer.

Wherever possible, Volunteers should endeavour to travel by the most economical means possible.

Receipts must be supplied for refreshments up to a limit of £3.50 per volunteering session. The maximum expenses claim can only be authorised when a volunteer works over the lunch period.

Break (up to £1)
Lunch (up to £2.50)

In exceptional circumstances, expenses can be paid for childcare outside the Centre on completion of Care of Dependants form (child). Expenses will be reimbursed at the rate of £2.50 per hour. This must be authorised in advance by the Centre Director.

Volunteers and Childcare

Footprints Women's Centre will make every effort to provide childcare facilities for Volunteers undertaking volunteering duties for Footprints.

All childcare must be booked through the Childcare request form for Volunteers.

The Childcare Co-ordinator must approve all requests for Childcare.

Childcare is available for the 0-4 year age group from 9am-1 pm and 2pm-6pm. Childcare is not available over the lunch period except by arrangement with the Childcare Co-ordinator.

For those Volunteers who have to arrange care for dependants outside the Women's Centre the Care of Dependants form must be completed in order for expenses to be claimed in accordance with the expenses policy.

CODE OF CONFIDENTIALITY / ACCESS TO INFORMATION

In any organisation or relationship, confidentiality is very important and works hand in hand with trust.

From this point of view Footprints Women's Centre will respect the confidentiality of others. This code of confidentiality relates equally to every member or potential member of Footprints Women's Centre.

Any person breaking this code without due course **will** be disciplined or evicted.

In keeping with this code everyone must be aware of the expectations and consequences of a breach. Confidentiality relates not only to the spoken word but also to written records and computer data. Written records must **always** be factual and must **always** be held in a secure manner as provided by Footprints Women's Centre. Personal data held on the computer must **always** be accurate and access **must** be restricted.

Any person wishing to see written information or computer information held on them should apply to the Project Administrator.

Footprints Women's Centre operates an Open Access Policy.

N.B. Confidentiality must be broken where there is a risk to self or others.

Good communication between and within agencies is not in itself a breach of the code.

Footprints Women's Centre

Equal Opportunities Policy

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Centre Director, Board of Directors and senior management team to the promotion of equality of opportunity in Footprints Women's Centre.

It is our policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish Traveller)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice; it also makes sound business sense. Our equal opportunities policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

2 To whom does the policy apply?

Equal Opportunities policy applies to all those who work for (or apply to work for) the organisation, Trainee workers and students on work experience or placements and Volunteer workers

3 Equality commitments

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons.
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies

- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with Footprints Women's Centre Board of Directors.

4 Implementation

The Centre Director has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Each director, manager and supervisor also has responsibilities and we expect all our employees to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment which is its objective.

In order to implement this policy, we shall:

- Communicate the policy to employees, job applicants and relevant others (such as contract or agency workers)
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff
- Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate, including training on induction and management courses.
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques.
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications practices (eg, staff newsletters, intranet).
- Obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organisation and our workforce.
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

5 Monitoring and Review

We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy. The effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy will be reviewed regularly [at least annually] [in consultation with the recognised trade union(s) if appropriate] and action taken as necessary. For example, where monitoring identifies an under-representation of a particular group or groups, we shall develop an action plan to address the imbalance.

6 Complaints

Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures¹. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

In addition to our internal procedures, employees have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination to an industrial tribunal or the Fair Employment Tribunal under the following anti-discrimination legislation:

- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976, as amended
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended 1 Insert here, for example, Grievance Procedures
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, as amended
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003
- Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, as amended
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006
- Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, as amended.

However, employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under our internal grievance procedures first. Every effort will be made to ensure that employees who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

Footprints Women's Centre

Health & Safety Policy

Part 1

General Statement

Part 2

Organisation & Responsibilities

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Arrangements

- Health & Safety Information
- First Aid
- Accident Reporting Fire Safety
- Evacuation Procedures
- Electrical Safety
- Manual Handling
- Safe Stacking Step Ladders
- Good House Keeping
- Reporting Hazards
- Display Screen Equipment
- COSHH
- No Smoking Policy
- Risk Assessments
- Violence
- Gas Safety
- Play Equipment
- General Maintenance

Part 4

Sub Appendices of Health & Safety Policy:

- Appendix 1: Procedure for dealing with known or suspected allergic reaction
- Appendix 2: Domestic Violence and The Workplace Policy
- Appendix 3: Safety in Office Premises
- Appendix 4: Manual Handling
- Appendix 5: Portable Ladders / Step Ladders
- Appendix 6: Play Areas and Play Equipment
- Appendix 7: The Control of Hazardous Substances
- Appendix 8: Safety in Catering Premises

Part 1

General Statement

The Board of Directors of Footprints Women's Centre aims to act as a good employer and to conduct its activities a way which will achieve the highest possible standard of health and safety, for its' employees, visitors and members of the public when they come into contact with the centre and its services.

The centre regards the successful management of health and safety as equal to all its' other activities. The Board of Directors regards the promotion of health and safety measures as a mutual objective for both management and employees.

The co-operation of all employees is vital for the promotion of health and safety within the company. This will involve safety inspections, equipment checklists, risk assessments, etc.

The centre intends to comply will all legal statutory requirements and Codes of Practice. In particular, it will:

- Carry out an assessment of risks to all employees whilst at work.
- Provide and maintain safe working conditions and equipment.
- Provide instruction, information, training and supervision.
- Provide suitable protective equipment where necessary.
- Provide adequate resources.
- Maintain a constant and continuing interest in health and safety matters in application to the centre's activities by consulting and involving employees or their representatives wherever possible.

Each employee has a duty to co-operate by:

- Using protective equipment provided.
- Adhering to company rules for securing a safe workplace.
- Reporting incidents or hazards to the Health and Safety Team which could lead to injury or damage.
- Assisting in the investigation of accidents and introducing measures to prevent a re-occurrence.
- Records accidents in the accident book and report to Health and Safety Officer.

Organisation & Responsibilities

Part 2

Overall responsibility for Health & Safety

Board of Directors

Implementation of Health & Safety Policy

Centre Director

Keyworkers

Implementation of:

- Supervision
- Training
- Accident Reports
- First Aid Boxes
- Complaints
- Health & Safety Audits
- Safety Inspections

Caretaker

Implementation of:

- Fire Drills

Employees

Implementation of:

- Report Defects
- Use protective equipment
- Adhere to company rules

Arrangements

Part 3

Health & Safety Information

Employees will receive information to enable them to understand and adhere to company health & safety policy and procedures. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure they are updated in new policies and procedures.

First Aid

Footprints Women's Centre has named First Aiders. Lists are posted throughout the building. First Aid boxes in Footprints Women's Centre are located in the childcare unit Rooms A, B, C and D, Kitchen, Main Office and Training and Education Office. Travel First Aid Boxes for childcare trips off site are available from childcare office. A medical cabinet is located in the childcare office to store medication brought in by parents or

staff. In the event of an accident, call a first aider and your Department Manager. It is the responsibility of the Health & Safety team to keep First Aid boxes well stocked.

Accident Reporting

An Accident Book is provided and kept in the Main Office and must be fully completed when an accident occurs to staff, visitors or members of the public. Whoever, is reporting the accident must ensure that the Health & Safety Officer is made aware of the accident. Accidents likely to result in absence from work of more than three days must be reported to the Local Authority Environmental Health Department for the area by the Health & Safety Officer using an N120508 form.

Fire Safety

The caretaker will ensure that fire evacuation drills take place throughout the year. In additions the Department Manager will ensure that:

- Fire extinguishers, fire alarms and emergency lighting are checked regularly by the Fire security supplier.
- All fire notices are displayed

Employees must ensure that:

- Fire exits are kept clear and fire doors are kept closed at all times to prevent a fire spreading.
- Fire extinguishers are kept in their designated positions
- Ensure that they are aware of the nearest fire exit and nearest assembly point depending on what part of the building they are in.

Fire extinguishers are located in main entrance, main office, room E - childcare, room D - childcare, downstairs left and right hallways, also in the drop-in and the kitchen, which also has a fire resistant blanket.

In the event of a fire, please do not attempt to use the fire extinguishers unless you have been trained to do so by the Fire Authorities.

Evacuation Procedures

When the fire alarm sounds all staff & users must leave the building via the nearest fire exit and should make their way to the nearest assembly point.

- Don't Panic!
- Leave everything!
- Everyone should leave the building in a calm and orderly manner to minimise injury.
- No one should push his or her way out an exit.
- **Do not use the lift!**
- No one should take any action, which would put him or her into danger.
- Remember! Once you are outside, **STAY OUTSIDE!**
- Keyworkers are responsible of ensuring all staff; visitors and members of the public relating to their area have left the building.
- Nobody can re-enter the building until the Fire Officer has given the all clear.

Electrical Safety

All electrical equipment will be regularly maintained and will be checked by an electrical engineer on a yearly basis.

Employees should report any defective equipment and remove it from use. Never use adaptors.

Look out for:

- Loose Wires
- Blackening around the plugs and sockets outlets.
- Trailing flexes.
- Signs of Overheating.

Manual Handling

The Safe Lifting Technique (see appendix 4)

1. STOP & THINK

Do I need help?

Where is the load going?

Are there any aids to help me?

2. THE LIFT

Feet apart

Leading leg forward

Bend the knees

Lift in stages

Keep back straight

Keep load close to body

Lean forward a little for good grip

Keep shoulders level

Get a firm grip

Put down first, and then adjust

3. DON'T

Jerk Overstretch

Twist

Lift loads, which are too heavy

A risk assessment has been undertaken for manual handling procedures.

All employees must ensure that they use the flatbed trolley or the two-wheeled trolley for transporting equipment around building. Employees should use the lift when transporting equipment downstairs.

Employee must make organisation aware of any condition that would limit their ability to carry or move equipment.

Safe Stacking

- Inspect containers, cabinets and racks regularly for damage
- Do not climb racking or shelves - there is stools available
- Do not exceed the safe loading of the racking

- Store heavy items at low levels
- Only approved ladders may be used to access items at high levels, and must only be used by employees who are trained in using ladders.

All staff must not use ladders unless they have been trained in the correct use of ladders. Make sure that the ladder is fully extended and locked in position. Use ladder, which enables you to gain access to the stock safely. The caretaker will check all ladders every six months.

DO NOT:

- Use faulty ladders
- Over reach whilst using a ladder
- Stand a step ladder on a box or other unsteady base

Good Housekeeping

Good housekeeping is essential to an effective safety programme and everyone has a responsibility to keep workplaces and toilets clean and tidy. Gangways should be kept clear at all times.

Reporting Hazards

Every member of staff has the responsibility of reporting hazards, which may come to their notice in any area of the building

The Health & Safety Representative for that area should be informed, in the first instance and your Line Manager in the second instance. The Health and Safety Representative for the area will ensure the matter is brought to the attention of the Health and Safety Officer.

The Health & Safety File

All departments will hold the health & safety file which all staff will have access to. The file will contain the following information:

- Health & Safety Policy & Procedures
- Risk Assessments
- Electrical Equipment Checklists
- COSHH Safety Data Sheets
- Correspondence

Display Screen Equipment

Employees using computers must remember the following:

Screen

- Position at a comfortable angle & distance

- Adjust bright/contrast/distance/angle, if causing eye fatigue
- Position at right angles to windows & to avoid glare from fluorescent lights.
- Close blinds
- Keep clean
- Protective screens are available to cover monitors

Mouse

Position so it can be used with the wrist straight and so the desk can support the forearm

Desk

- Large enough to allow you to change position
- Sufficient leg room
- Uncluttered

Keyboard

- Separate from screen
- Adjustable tilt
- Keep wrists straight, elbows at 90° and arms parallel to the floor

Document Holder

- At same height, angle and distance from screen

Hair

- Adjustable height and back rest
- Good lumbar support
- Adjust to allow feet on floor (or footrest); back straight, and arms to rest a' right angle to the desk

Footrest

Must be used if feet cannot reach floor

Staff operating a DSE must take a five-minute screen break every hour. Leaving the computer screen completely and undertaking another activity for this period.

The organisation will pay for all administration staff to have an eye test to be carried out annually.

COSHH: Control of Substances Hazardous To Health

Footprints Women's Centre will strive to ensure employees do not come into contact with substances which are hazardous to health in compliance with the Control Regulations (NI) 1990. The following steps will be taken to protect staff:

1. Where appropriate, a harmful substance will be substituted with one, which is safer.
2. Dangerous chemicals will be isolated from operators and stored safely.

3. Footprints Women's Centre will be well ventilated to ensure circulation of fresh air throughout the organisation. When photocopying, the operator will keep door open to ensure circulation of fresh air while photocopying.
4. The number of people with access to chemicals will be minimised i.e. cleaning, catering and childcare staff.
5. Protective clothing will be worn where appropriate.

All staff must ensure that:

1. Dangerous chemicals are stored in a locked cupboard at all times
2. Protective clothing is worn and rubber gloves are used
3. Are aware that hazard sheets are available to read and kept with the Health & Safety Officer

No Smoking Policy

Footprints Women's Centre operates a no smoking policy in all areas of the building. Staff smoking outside the building must use the ashtray for cigarette ends only. It is a fire hazard to use for rubbish.

Purpose

This policy has been developed to protect all employees, volunteers, service users, customers and visitors from exposure to second-hand smoke and to assist compliance with The Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 which is effective from 30 April 2007.

Exposure to second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers and non-smokers within the same airspace does not prevent exposure to tobacco smoke.

Policy

Smoking is prohibited throughout the entire workplace with no exceptions. This includes company vehicles. This policy applies to all employees, consultants, contractors, customers or members and visitors.

Implementation

Overall responsibility for policy implementation and review rests with the Department Managers.

All staff are required to adhere to, and facilitate the implementation of this policy. The person named above shall inform all existing employees, consultants and contractors of the policy and their role in the implementation and monitoring of the policy. All new personnel will be given a copy of the policy at their induction. Appropriate no smoking signs will be clearly displayed at the entrances to and within the premises.

Non-Compliance

While we are confident that the majority of people will respect this new law and policy, in the event that someone does not do so, the following procedures will apply. In the first instance we will

- Draw their attention to No Smoking signs and remind them that they are committing an offence. Politely ask them to stop smoking.
- Advise them that it is also an offence for you (as an organisation) to let someone smoke on the premises
- Explain to them that the business has a smoke free policy to ensure a safe working environment for all staff and customers

If the person is an employee:

- If the warning is ignored they will immediately be asked to leave the premises (if relevant advise them where they may smoke)
- If they refuse disciplinary procedures will be implemented for antisocial/illegal behaviour in the workplace
- Records of the incident and outcome will be made

If the person is a customer or visitor:

- We will explain that staff are obliged to refuse service if they continue to smoke
- If the customer carries on smoking they will be asked to leave the premises (they may be advised of where they may smoke if relevant)
- If he/she refuses procedures for dealing with illegal/antisocial behaviour will be implemented
- Records of the incident and outcome will be made

In any case where physical violence or intimidation is threatened or encountered police assistance will be immediately sought.

Under smoke free legislation, offences relating to the display of signage and smoking in a smoke free place may attract a fixed penalty notice or lead to prosecution – the co-operation of all staff in this matter is expected (e.g. reporting of missing notices etc). Failure to prevent smoking in a smoke-free place may lead to the prosecution of the organisation.

Help to stop smoking

Support for smokers who want to stop will be provided. Information on various aids and support groups is available from local pharmacists or GPs.

The Ulster Cancer Foundation (028 9066 3281) will also provide advice from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

Further information may be obtained from the Public Health Agency.

Risk Assessments

All organisational health and safety risk assessments are available for all staff to read and are kept centrally with the Department Manager.

Violence

Footprints Women's Centre will strive to ensure that employees are kept safe from physical danger. Where possible, there will be more than one employee in reception area at all times.

If a member of the public enters the centre and behaves in an aggressive manner, the police must be contacted immediately and assistance sought from colleagues while waiting for the police to arrive. The same procedure applies for staff behaving in an aggressive manner. Any violent incidents will be recorded in the accident book situated in the front office.

Gas Safety

Tri Power monitors the gas on a yearly basis. Tri Power is registered with Gas Safe.

All employees must make themselves aware of the `gas shut off valve. It is situated in the boiler room beside the metre box at the top right corner of the room. It is a yellow lever and it is situated at 12 o'clock when it's on and at 3 o'clock when it is off.

Play Equipment

Play Equipment for children must be suitable for the age group and any damaged equipment must be disposed off.

General Maintenance

Any maintenance is the responsibility of the Keyworker of that area. A maintenance request form must be completed. Any work needed to be carried out by external contractors is also the responsibility of the Keyworker in relation to Health & Safety. A security and maintenance file is held in the centre manager's office. Agreed contractors and contact details are contained in this file.

Future Plans

First Aid

Footprints Women's Centre has appointed First Aiders who will be responsible for accidents in the building and reporting accidents. They will also check the First Aid boxes on a quarterly basis and there will always be an appointed First Aider on the premises.

Fire Safety

The caretaker will ensure that fire drills are carried out once a quarter. Footprints Women's Centre has trained staff on the use of fire extinguishers by the Fire Authorities.

Electrical Safety

All staff will have the responsibility of completing electrical equipment checklists in their area.

Step Ladders

The Caretaker to check the stepladders every six months.

Gas Safety

A sign and instructions is displayed near the gas shut off value in the case of emergencies.

Health & Safety Policy

The Health & Safety Policy will be reviewed and updated due to changes in procedures.

Sub Appendix 1 (Health and Safety Policy)

Procedure for dealing with known or suspected allergic reactions

- Staff are to inform their Department Manager if they have a known or suspected allergic reaction to any substance e.g. particular foods or insect stings.
- Parents must inform the Children's Services Manager of a known or suspected allergic reaction before their child commences a placement at Footprints Women's Centre or when an allergy is first detected.
- The Department Manager will inform named first aiders of an individual's allergies and appropriate emergency treatments.
- Named first aiders must be trained to recognise allergic reaction symptoms and use of equipment.
- Medication required for treatment of an allergic reaction is to be stored in a first aid cabinet located in childcare office.
- If relevant a Medic Alert and GB number will be kept in an envelope with person's name on front in this first aid cabinet, for information for operator.
- In the event of a suspected allergic reaction an ambulance must be called at all times. The telephone operator must be informed of the possibility of anaphylactic shock.

Footprints Women's Centre

VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

1. Definition

A Vulnerable adult is someone who is over 18 who has, or may need, help with their everyday living tasks.

This includes disabled people who have physical or sensory impairments, learning difficulties, who experience mental illness or emotional distress, are frail older people, or who for any other reason are unable to care for or protect themselves.

2. What is meant by abuse

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It maybe something that is done to the person or something not done when it should have been. It does not necessarily have to be intentional, if the vulnerable person experiences it as abusive it is considered abuse.

It may be:

- Physical abuse, which includes hitting, pushing, inappropriate use of medication, sanctions or restraint.
- Sexual abuse, which includes rape and any sexual act which was not freely consenting.
- Psychological / emotional abuse, which includes threats, intimidation, coercion, harassment.
- Financial abuse, which includes theft, and pressure in connection with wills or property, possessions or benefits.
- Neglect which includes ignoring medical or physical needs, not providing access to appropriate health or social care, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- Discriminatory abuse, which includes all forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment based on a person's disability, ethnic origin, gender or sexuality, often called hate crime.
- Institutional abuse, which can include repeated instances of poor care, ill treatment of vulnerable adults, and unsatisfactory professional practice. This is often an indicator of more serious problems within a paid and/ or regulated care environment.

3. Awareness

As a member, director, paid staff or a volunteer etc., you are not responsible for diagnosing abuse. However you have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs that all is not well with a vulnerable adult. Not all concerns about vulnerable adults relate to abuse, there may well be other explanations.

It is important to keep an open mind and consider what you know about the person and their circumstances.

The abuse can take place in the home, at school or anywhere where vulnerable persons spend their time, including with voluntary organisations. Some forms of abuse are obvious, for example, when an adult strikes out at a vulnerable person in anger, but others can be much more subtle and therefore difficult for outsiders to detect. While some forms of abuse are a result of someone carrying out an action that harms the vulnerable person, other forms of abuse are a result of neglect, of failing to take steps that keep vulnerable persons safe and well.

4. What do you do if you have concerns about any vulnerable adult at Footprints Women's Centre?

This applies to any member of staff, trustee, volunteer or parent at Footprints Women's Centre.

Follow these points, step by step.

You will:

Sharing Information about Concerns with Agencies who need to know, and involving Parents and Children/Young People appropriately

As an organisation that offers community support Footprints Women's Centre through has an obligation and responsibility to know and disseminate information about child protection, to have a child protection policy and good practice guidelines, including procedures to follow when concerns arise.

We recognise that the identification of abuse should be left to the appropriate professionals. However, if staff do have concerns, they should be dealt with through the organisations procedures as follows:

Designated Child Protection Officer

Footprints Women's Centre has 4 Designated Officers who are responsible for dealing with concerns. This relevant Designated Officer will be readily available to handle any enquiries of any nature concerning the personnel or the activities of the organisation.

The Designated Officers are;

Joy Poots – Board of Directors

Gillian Gibson – Centre Director

Kyra Pauley – Children's Services Manager

Brenda O'Neill – Childcare Co-ordinator

Reporting Procedures

All staff are familiar with **Footprints Women's Centre** reporting procedures and the need for clear, factual and accurate reporting, which distinguishes between fact, opinion and hearsay

1. Staff/volunteer/trainees reports accurate factual information to designated officer using the appropriate paperwork ([see appendix](#))
2. Designated Officer reports accurate factual information to the appropriate body – using the unocini form
 - Social services
 - NSPCC
 - Police

In the case of a child/young person disclosing it is important to:

- Listen to the child rather than directly question him or her. Offer reassurance without making promises
- Stay calm and reassuring
- Explain to the child that if the complaint is of a serious nature that it may be necessary to inform others

- Listen to everything the child has to say –never stop the child from recalling significant events; don't over react; explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Under no circumstances interrogate the child
- Be clear in your mind what the child has related to you
- Ask if he/she has told anyone else and if not, who would be a good person to contact
- Thank the child for informing you and reassure him/her that they were right to do so.

ACTION

- Record the discussions accurately and as soon as possible after the event. Remember to be factual and accurate and clearly distinguish between fact, opinion and hearsay.
- Contact the designated person immediately and seek guidance in relation to the complaint. After the discussion the Designated Officer may contact the Social Services and if appropriate make a direct referral. If you cannot contact the designated person, then contact should be made immediately to one of the other Designated Officers in her or if none are contactable then contact Social Services.
- It is important to keep a record of ALL actions taken i.e. letters and telephone calls.
- All complaints/allegations shall be dealt with in accordance with the organisations policy and procedures however the designated person may consider that complaints of a lesser nature i.e. bullying, cheating etc may be handled internally without outside involvement. It must be emphasised that each case will be thoroughly investigated and remedied to the satisfaction of the involved parties.
- We acknowledge that reporting abuse can be a distressing experience for staff and volunteers consequently support will be offered throughout the process.
- Everyone in the organisation will have in their possession a current copy of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

5. What will happen to you when you raise a concern?

Reporting to management

All allegations/suspicious of serious abuse must be reported without delay to the manager of the service or available higher level of management. The service development manager must be notified as soon as possible.

Only the manager of the service or above have delegated authority to decide whether the allegations amount to serious abuse. The out-of-hours duty officer may also be considered a person with delegated authority.

You must consult with your manager or other available manager to decide if the allegations/suspicious should be treated as serious. Where possible the consent of the alleged victim should be sought before reports to others are made. When this is not possible, discuss with your manager or higher management to decide whether to report to others without this consent.

Reporting to Social services and the police

In all cases of serious abuse then the matter must be reported to social services without delay by the manager of the service or other available manager. In situations that suggest that a criminal offence may have occurred, then the matter must be reported to the police as well, even if the alleged victim does not consent to this. In all situations the reasons for reporting the allegation to social services and the police must be explained to the alleged victim.

Reporting to social services will be in accordance with the local multi-agency procedures which exist for the protection of vulnerable adults and child protection.

Reporting to parents or person with parental responsibility

In the case of a child (under the age of 18), the parents or the person with parental responsibility should be informed of allegations of abuse without delay once the situation has been reported to management. A decision on further action can then be made in consultation with the parents or the person with parental responsibility.

In the case of adults (over 18 years), it is usually good practice to inform the parents or next of kin. This should normally be done with the consent of the alleged victim. If this is not possible, reporting to parents without consent may be necessary, but every case must be considered individually. The decision must be made in consultation with your manager. In either case, parents or the person with parental responsibility should only be informed of a referral/investigation when it is clear that such discussion will not place the person at increased risk of significant harm. The decision must be made in consultation with your manager.

Reporting to other professionals

The involvement of others, such as the care manager, placing authority or psychologist, should be made with the consent of the alleged victim or that of the parents or the person with parental responsibility when the person is unable to consent. It is usually good practice to inform other relevant professionals. Reporting to other professionals without consent may be necessary, but every case must be considered individually. The decision must be made in consultation with your manager.

Care standards Act 2000

Part VII of the Care Homes Regulations 2001 requires the registered manager (or the line manager if it concerns the registered manager) to notify the National Care Standards Commission without delay of: any event in the care home that adversely affects the well-being or safety of any service user any allegation of misconduct by the registered person or any person who works at the home.

In respect of children's homes, Regulation 16.(2)(f) of the Children's Home Regulations 2001 states that it is necessary to notify with immediate effect any concerns about the welfare or safety of a child to one or more of the following:

- the police
- National Care Standards Commission social services child protection team placing authority.

The National Care Standards Commission will often be informed of incidents or allegations that are not reported to the police, because they affect the well-being of a service user. It is the responsibility of the manager of the service to make this report.

Other staff

Reporting to others must be limited to those with a legitimate "need to know".

Written Records

A written record of the allegation(s) or suspicion(s) as recorded by yourself/the original member of staff and the action you have taken must be made to your manager or other available manager to whom you have reported verbally.

You must: make a written report without delay if you suspect that someone has been abused, record precise details of the grounds of your Personal support and care (16 suspicions. If it concerns an allegation, then record exactly what was said by the person to you, using their own words to describe what has happened or their suspicions

of what has happened personally type or write your own report. Do not ask another person to type or write it for you record the names of any witnesses and who they are.

- All reports and notes must include: - times, dates, location or address of where the allegation or suspicion of abuse took place names of witnesses and who they are where witnesses can be contacted (address or telephone number).

In addition:

- All reports must be signed and dated as a true record of events.
- Clear objective reports and notes must be made of all decisions taken, the reasons behind decisions and subsequent action.
- The record must clearly distinguish between fact and opinion. Where there is unsubstantiated information the record must identify this. Submit the report and notes to the manager of the service or next higher level of management without delay. Social services or the police may require these, if an investigation takes place.
- Attach all report and notes to Form OP 2: Report of Complaint, Harassment or Abuse Allegations.
- Tell the person making the allegations that you will have to report what they say to your manager.
- Tell the person making the allegations that you may have to take action.

6. What will happen if any allegation is made against you?

As either a Footprints Women's Centre member of staff, volunteer or carer you will come under the terms of the Settlement's Disciplinary Procedures, Volunteers Policy or Users Code of Conduct.

7. Other information

- This policy will be reviewed and, where necessary, revised annually.
- If you have to report suspected abuse it is useful to have the following information:
- the vulnerable adult's name and age, where they live and who they live with, which organisations are providing help or services, why you are concerned, details of the person (s) who may be abusing the vulnerable person.

Volunteer Signature: _____

Manager Signature: _____

Date: _____