

Friends and Places Together



Staff Handbook

Reviewed: 25 January 2016

Friends and Places Together / Break With Mates

20 Crowstone Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 8BA

Website: www.friendsandplaces.org.uk www.breakwithmates.org.uk

Facebook Page: Break with Mates

Registered charity number 1159584 Company number 08554307

1. Introduction

Welcome to Friends and Places Together Staff Handbook

Our aim in producing this document was to create a one-stop information point where you would be able to access all the information you are likely to need in relation to your employment with us. The Handbook and corresponding policy documents form part of your contract of employment with Friends and Places Together.

The document gives an overview of the terms and conditions of your employment, and outlines what you can expect from us as your employer. In return we ask you for a high degree of commitment, dedication and loyalty to help us achieve the aims and objectives of the Company.

I hope you find this a useful guide during your employment with us. However if you are unable to find the answer to your question here, please feel free to contact your line manager who will certainly be able to find an answer for you.

Signed: _____

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2. Contents:

1. Introduction

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3. Friends and Places

a. About the Company

Friends and Places was established in 2011. The company was set up to meet the needs of young adults meeting up with their friends out of school.

The company was set up by Denise Nygate the Chief Officer who established and worked hands on for 3 years so she understands the needs of the organisations, families, young people and their friends. We have grown steadily since then, and in 2014 we were set up as a Registered Charity with Charity status. Our current services we offer are:-

- Friends and Places offering friendships outside of School and College for those people who are under 18 years old. We work with 13 to 18 years old
- Break with mates offering group activities with friendships and a range of inclusive activities in our local area. Services have been provided for 16 to 25 years old
- We offer a range of short breaks, holidays trips and day trips during the school/college holidays
- We offer volunteers opportunities to develop skills and experiences
- We support families through change around transition and have offered carers support groups
- We have also offered Saturday work club to help young people seek work and work experience

We have a workforce of around 5 staff on fixed contracts and we have a number of staff – 6 – who offer small amount of hours during the week to help young people go out with their friends.

We have been based at 20 Crowstone Road and recently we have moved to the rear of Crowstone Road where an office is now established for staff.

You can get more information on our website at www.friendsandplacestogether.org.uk and you can look on break with mates Facebook page to see what we have been up to in the community.

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[Friends and Places Together Mission Statement](#)

b. Recruitment

Recruitment Policy

1 Policy Statement

Friends and Places Together recognises its staff as being fundamental to its success. A strategic and professional approach to recruitment processes will help Friends and Places Together to attract and appoint staff with the necessary skills and attributes to fulfil its strategic aims and support Friends and Places Together values.

Friends and Places Together is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient and effective and promotes equality of opportunity.

This policy has been designed to provide a framework, which promotes good practice, adopts a proactive approach to equality and diversity issues and fully support Friends and Places Together core business.

The procedure has been designed to comply with relevant legislation. Any significant variations in practice must be discussed with the Board of Trustees to minimise risk to Friends and Places Together.

2 Aims

- ◆ To appoint the best person for each position
- ◆ To ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants and potential applicants
- ◆ To ensure compliance with Friends and Places Together Equality and Diversity Policy and relevant employment legislation
- ◆ To promote Friends and Places Together values
- ◆ To meet Friends and Places Together operational requirements and strategic aims
- ◆ To ensure that the recruitment processes are fit for purpose

3 General principles

All employees and Board of Trustees involved in the recruitment process should be aware of their responsibilities under the relevant legislation and be prepared to attend professional development training.

If a member of staff or Board of Trustees has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application. It would normally be necessary for the member of staff or Board of Trustees to avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection process.

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Documentation will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA). Applicants will have the right to feedback and to access any documentation held on them in accordance with the DPA.

4 Procedures

This document details the procedures required to undertake the recruitment and selection process through to appointment of staff. It splits the process into a number of stages. It is necessary to ensure that the procedures are followed as described since they are derived from legislation, policy and good practice.

The stages detailed in the document are:

Pre-advertisement	Preparation prior to a position being advertised
Pre-interview	From promotion of vacancies through to short-listing of applications
Interviewing	Procedures relating to setting up interviews and selecting the most appropriate candidate
Post-selection	The administration required once a selection has been made
Record Keeping	A detailed summary is provided in the following pages

4.1 Justification for Recruitment

All new posts will be approved by the Chief Executive. Before recruitment begins for any new or vacant post, the following must be considered:

- Is it necessary to fill the vacancy?
- Does the role require changes in duties and responsibilities?
- Is it appropriate to evaluate the grade of the post?
- Could the work be accommodated in other ways?
- If this is a new post has it been defined, and where will it be accommodated? Is there sufficient resources to cover the costs of the post?
- What terms and conditions are being offered for the post? Are they appropriate and consistent with the rest of Friends and Places Together?
- Are there any staff at risk of redundancy? Staff 'at risk' within Friends and Places Together who must be given first consideration for any vacancy prior to an external / or internal advertisement being placed.

4.2 Filling the Vacancy

To start the recruitment process, the recruiting manager must gain authorisation for recruitment from the Chief Executive. The following documentation must be completed for recruitment to all posts:

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- * Job Description
- * Person Specification

Job description and Person Specification

All new or vacant posts will have a written job description detailing the responsibilities and duties of the post holder and a person specification detailing the necessary experience and skills on which the applicant will be assessed. It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager for the post to draft or update these documents.

When a new job is created or where there are substantial changes to an existing job description the proposed job description and person specification must be approved by the Chief Executive.

Each job description and person specification should include the standard common items and be written according to the template guidelines.

Friends and Places Together should ensure that consideration is given to ensuring that people with disabilities are encouraged to apply for jobs, and to ensure that the workplace allows for their employment, e.g. layout of office, equipment available.

4.3 Internal applications and Advertising

It is normal practice that all vacancies are advertised both internally within Friends and Places Together as well as externally. However, where it is considered that existing staff have the pre-requisite skills consideration may be given to advertising posts internally only.

If managers agree that there are current post holders who meet the person specification for the new post, then the post will initially be opened up to internal applicants before being advertised externally to the organisation. If a post is advertised externally first, existing staff may still apply. The person specification stands for any internal applicants and internal applicants need to be made aware that they will not be treated differently from any external candidate if they go for an internal recruitment process.

In situations when redundancies are likely or fixed term posts are coming to an end, then any vacant posts must be considered if they are suitable for the post holders affected first. If they are suitable they must be ring fenced for those post holders.

The advertisement should include:

- The title and brief description of the job, including a summary of the skills and qualifications (if any) required.
- Details of the salary, pension, hours of work and nature of post i.e. permanent, interim, open to job share.
- The name, address, telephone number and contact for requesting further information
- The web address for more information and downloadable application materials

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- The closing date for completed applications.
- Interview date if possible
- The statement that " Friends and Places Together is an Equal Opportunity Employer"
- The Charity number
- Friends and Places Together logo

In addition to the Equal Opportunities statement, advertisements should clearly state that we positively welcome applications from black and ethnic minority candidates, and women. The ad should be drafted and placed by the recruiting manager in liaison with the Chief Executive.

It is important to place the advertisement in places where as many suitable applicants as possible can see it, and advertising should be as cost-effective as possible. Adverts should always be placed on the Friends and Places Together website.

4.4 Enquiries

All enquirers will receive a recruitment information pack detailing the requirements of the post. Wherever possible, this will be provided in electronic format. Application packs should be prepared to include:

- Standard Letter, personalised
- Standard application form
- Job description, and person specification
- Friends and Places Together equal opportunities statement and monitoring form
- Vision, mission and values statement
- Deadline for applications and the interview date
- Access details

Responses should remind applicants of the closing date for applications and give approximate notice of the short listing and interview dates. Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted and candidates will be advised accordingly.

Receiving Applications

All postal applications received will be date stamped and numbered. Applications returned by email will be stored in the relevant post folder in Outlook/Recruit. The details of each applicant will be added to the recruitment Schedule form. An applicant's list file will also be created.

The Chief Executive will keep all completed application forms secure and discreet during the recruitment process. The Chief Executive will be responsible for the removal of the front sheets giving personal details and kept secure. It is important under Data Protection principles to ensure that personal data (such as application forms) is shared only with those that need to know and who are involved in the recruitment process.

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Where it is necessary for applications to be taken off site for consideration, the utmost care should be taken regarding their security. For example, applications should not be left unattended in a vehicle or in any public place.

The equal opportunity monitoring forms will be removed and analysed prior to passing all applications to the Recruiting Manager responsible for the post. After analysis the individual forms will be destroyed, a copy of the analysis form will be passed to the Chief Executive for information and a copy kept centrally.

4.5 Selection

Shortlisting

It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager of the post to convene a short listing panel, as appropriate. The panel should ideally include people who will be working most closely with the new employee but not be managed by them. Short listing must be undertaken by at least two individuals who are experienced in the recruitment process and who will go on to be involved in the interviewing process. Panel members should be given a copy of this Policy and Procedure for information. Wherever possible, the selection panel should be made up of individuals of different races and gender.

Adequate time should be given for the short listing process.

Each member of the panel should read each application form (minus the front page) and they should individually assess each application according to the criteria of the person specification as agreed. A record on each applicant should be kept on the standard form. The panel shall designate one member as a chair person. The role of the chair person will be to facilitate all meetings and decisions of the panel and to introduce and make candidates welcome on the day. They will be in charge of ensuring the short listing goes smoothly and that all follow the same pattern and that the decision making process is followed carefully and according to the policy at the end of the day.

The panel together should then look at assessments of each individual panel member and attempt to reach a consensus on assessment. A shortlist should then be drawn up of these applicants who meet the defined criteria. It is necessary for the panel to keep a record of why each applicant is and is not shortlisted. The chair is responsible for co-ordinating the process.

Application forms from the unsuccessful applicants, together with the short listing notes, a copy of the person specification and the recording sheet of job applicants should be placed together and passed to the line manager for filing. The forms will be kept secure for not less than 6 months after the process is completed in case an unsuccessful applicant makes a case for unfair treatment. (Note: it is also useful to hold onto the forms for a period in order to answer any queries from unsuccessful candidates). After 6 months the forms will be destroyed.

Unsuccessful applicants at this stage should be notified, and their applications kept secure for not less than 6 months after the process is completed in case an unsuccessful applicant makes a case for unfair treatment.

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Candidates will only be shortlisted for interview if they meet the essential criteria defined in the person specification.

Members of the short listing panel are obliged to declare an interest to the Chair if they do business with, are related to or are a close friend or partner of any of the applicants (panel members may only become aware of a candidate's identity when they receive the interview papers with the names of the shortlisted applicants). The Chair of the selection panel must decide whether the panel member should withdraw or continue to be involved in the selection process. Where a member withdraws the provisions the chair will try and find a replacement. Where a replacement is found they will be able to interview even if they have not been involved in the short-listing. The panel must not go back to the beginning.

Pre-Interviews

A schedule of interview times should be devised by a Senior Manager.

Letters should be sent to short listed candidates inviting them to an interview at Friends and Places Together or an outside venue as appropriate. The letter should inform candidates of the date, place and time of the interview, accessibility of the venue, interview room, its approximate length, travel details and that travel expenses can be claimed. A map showing the location of Friends and Places Together and including access details should be included. Details or notice of a test should be sent to candidates. Candidates may also be telephoned in order to confirm the appointment.

Interviewing

The interview panel should consist of the Senior Manager or delegated representative such as the post holder's line manager, and the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees (or other delegates of the Board of Trustees). The majority of the panel should have some previous experience of recruitment and selection processes.

It is desirable that the panel members should have had equal opportunities training and at least one panel member ideally should be familiar with the recruitment process.

The recruiting manager should give each panel member a complete application form for each candidate to be interviewed, together with the job description, person specification, the question areas and details of any test that the interviewee has been asked to do.

Care should be taken by the panel to create as relaxed an atmosphere as possible. A panel member should act as chair to start and conclude each interview. The panel should be introduced to the candidates. There should be time available at the end of the interviews for the candidates to ask questions.

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Question areas

Candidates must be asked the same question areas, which should both be clearly put, and able to be re-phrased if not understood by candidates. Prompt questions may be asked if the candidate has not given a full answer. All candidates will be asked a standard format of questions, which will have been decided by the interview panel prior to the interviews. All questions must be related to the job requirements and the candidate's suitability to undertake the role. How each candidate matched the criteria set out in the specification must be recorded. It is essential that the Panel consider equal opportunities implications for example, do not ask questions of women that are not asked of men.

Interview times will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the post being recruited for. However, an interview should ideally not last for more than one hour, although extra time may be needed for some candidates; for example job sharers will need to be interviewed separately and then together.

All interviews for one post must be conducted by the same panel.

Where a job involves specific start and finishing times or attendance at some late meetings this must be stated clearly in the job description and reflected in the person specification. At the interview, candidates must be asked directly whether or not they are willing and able to work the specified hours and attend occasional late meetings

Skills assessment

An appropriate selection procedure should be used for each post. Procedures may vary, at its simplest this may involve straightforward interview and skills testing. Any skills tests (e.g. presentations, in-tray exercises, computer software tests) must be directly related to the role and measured against objective criteria.

As part of the selection process, candidates may do skills tests or presentations. These tests must be directly related to the role in question and must be measurable against objective criteria. Candidates must be informed of the details in the letter inviting them for interview. Details of any skills tests, including the criteria to be measured and the method of measuring must be provided in advance to the manager in charge of recruitment.

Interview notes should be taken by each interviewer. These notes should then be used by each panel member to rate each candidate according to the person specification criteria. (N.B. not against each other). A system of ranking e.g. using "met", "part-met", "not-met", should be used within each criteria and recorded on the standard interview form.

We may ask for potential candidates to meet the people that use the service to help with making our decision.

Deciding

The following method will be used by all Friends and Places Together selection panels to select the candidate:

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At the end of each interview each panel member will use the Interview Assessment Form to independently assess the extent to which she/he believes the candidate demonstrated that they meet the person specification requirements. The panel member must enter a 'score' for each person specification criterion and must specify whether each applicant is or is not appointable.

After all the candidates have been interviewed the Chair will list all the candidates assessed as appointable by individual panel members. The panel will then consider the entire list, deliberate and arrive at a collectively agreed and ranked list of candidates.

The post will be offered to the highest ranked appointable candidate and, if she/he refuses, to the next highest ranked, and so on.

The Chair of the panel must use the Decision sheet to specify the reasons for appointment and rejection of each of the interviewed candidates.

The Chair of the panel must inform the Chief Executive (or the Chair of the Board, in the case of selecting the Chief Executive) of the decisions of the panel and must pass her/him all the interview papers and notes for safekeeping.

If the Panel cannot reach a decision it may be necessary to re-interview. If so, it is useful to reconsider the interview process to ensure that all the important aspects of the person specification have in fact been covered.

The Panel may decide that no candidate is appointable and re-advertise the post.

In the case of appointing the Chief Executive, the selection process will be handled by the Board.

5 Confidentiality

All application details are treated with the utmost confidentiality. It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for confidentiality to be maintained.

6 Documentation

At all stages of the recruitment process, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to ensure that notes are kept detailing the reasons for selection or rejection of candidates. These notes could be called upon as evidence of the fairness of the process, either through an internal assessment or to support an external investigation. The notes should therefore be relevant to, and necessary for, the process itself. All records must be handed to the Line Manager (if the Line Manager is not the Chair) by the Chair of the panel.

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At the end of the recruitment process, all records will be retained in case of requests for feedback or the threat of litigation.

Successful candidates should be notified as soon as possible and offered the post subject to receipt of satisfactory references and other appropriate checks, e.g. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The successful candidate will receive the offer formally in writing and be asked to accept in writing.

In the event that a DBS disclosure is required, the successful candidate may commence work prior to the disclosure being received by Friends and Places Together, as this can take several weeks. It will be clearly stated that appointment is subject to a satisfactory disclosure, and that anything deemed inappropriate revealed by the disclosure may result in termination of employment. Friends and Places Together will also require the new appointee to restrict his/her duties pending the return of the disclosure.

Unsuccessful candidates should be written to as soon as possible.

Consideration of the satisfactory nature of the references should lie with the original selection panel.

7 Monitoring and review of policy

Annual reports on trends and statistics relating to recruitment and appointments will be provided to the Board of Trustees in order to review compliance and the effectiveness of the policy.

c. Volunteer

Volunteer Policy

In line with this mission Friends and Places Together seeks to involve volunteers to:

- ensure our services meet the needs of our clients
- provide new skills and perspectives
- increase our contact with the local community we serve

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Principles

This Volunteering Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Friends and Places Together will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to Friends and Places Together's work
- Friends and Places Together does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff
- Friends and Places Together expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work
- Friends and Places Together 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.

Practice guidelines

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of the involvement of volunteers. More detailed information, including copies of the various documents referred to, is provided in Friends and Places Together's Handbook.

Recruitment

All prospective volunteers will be interviewed to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their potential might be realised.

Volunteer agreements and voluntary work outlines

Each volunteer will have a volunteer agreement establishing what Friends and Places Together undertakes to provide them. In addition they will agree to a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking. Neither of these documents is a contract; Friends and Places Together has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteers. Each volunteer will also receive a Handbook.

Expenses

All volunteers will have their travel and other expenses reimbursed. Volunteers working a minimum of five hours per day will be able to claim expenses for lunch (for details see the Handbook)

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Induction and training

All volunteers will receive an induction into Friends and Places Together and their own area of work. Training will be provided as appropriate. Where possible volunteers will be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff.

Support

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. They will be provided with regular supervision to feed back on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

The volunteer's voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Friends and Places Together and its work.

Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Friends and Places Together's insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on Friends and Places Together's behalf.

Health and safety

Volunteers are covered by Friends and Places Together's Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which is in the Handbook.

Equal opportunities

Friends and Places Together operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. A copy is in the Handbook. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our equal opportunities policy.

Problem solving

We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure has been drawn up for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers. A copy of the procedure is included in the Volunteers Handbook.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

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d. Your induction

<Company> believes its employees are its greatest asset and recognises its responsibility to ensure they are afforded appropriate development throughout their employment. This development begins at the Induction stage when a new employee joins.

Our aim is to support and develop employees in their role so that they feel confident to undertake the responsibilities placed upon them and ultimately are able to contribute to the success of the organisation.

Induction will be spread over your first few months in post, and is generally planned on a first day, first week and first month basis. The content and duration of the induction programed will be dependent on the scope and complexity of your job, and your line manager will outline this in detail to you on your first day with us. Copies of your induction checklist and evaluation sheets will be made available to you by your manager on your first day with us.

e. Statement of Employment Terms and Conditions

As an employee of Friends and Places you will have received a document setting out specific terms and conditions of service as they relate to your post (if you have not received this, you will do so within 8 weeks of your commencement date). This includes details of:

- the names of the employer and the employee;
- the date when the employment (and the period of continuous employment) began;
- remuneration and the intervals at which it is to be paid;
- hours of work;
- holiday entitlement;
- entitlement to sick leave, including any entitlement to sick pay;
- pensions and pension schemes;
- the entitlement of employer and employee to notice of termination;
- job title (or a brief job description);
- Where it is not permanent, the period for which the employment is expected to continue or, if it is for a fixed term, the date when it is to end.
- either the place of work or, if required to work in more than one location, an indication of this and of the employer's address; and
- details of the existence of any relevant collective agreements which directly affect the terms and conditions of your employment

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Induction and Probationary Period Plan

Name:

Starting Date:

Line Manager:

Date	Topic to be covered	Who will cover topic
MONTH 1		
	Organisation Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of Service • The philosophy and values • Strategic direction and plan • The people we support 	Denise Nygate
	Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenses claims – Subsistence guidelines • Payroll • Finances and where the money comes from • Rules 	Denise Nygate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and procedures • Processes • Publications to read • Staffing and one page profile 	Denise Nygate
	Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laptop/PC • Working from home/office base • IT, printers and phones • Leave forms • responsibilities • Admin support 	Denise Nygate

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Date	Topic to be covered	Who will cover topic
	Role of Break with Mates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership • Facebook • Use of internet and personal information • Yearly plan and expectation of roles in the organisation 	Simon Sargent/James Eames
	Support and management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations of the role • Annual away day and plans 	Line Manager
	Role of Friends and Places Southend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathway to service • What is offered • To go out on home visit 	Lizzie Frances
	Staff meetings Normally monthly but can be 6 weeks Read past minutes and notes	
	Apprenticeships – meet college	Denise Nygate
	Job placement	Simon Sargent
“	Admin role	James Eames
“	Fundraising	Si and Lucy
“	Volunteers	Siona/Lizzie
“	Supervision	Line Manager
“		
MONTH 3		
To be arranged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing meetings with line manager • Further meetings with staff as identified by line manager to include focus/sounding groups 	
MONTH 6		
To be arranged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing meetings with line manager <p style="text-align: center;">End of Probationary period</p>	

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f. Your Attendance at Work

Friends and Places Together values good attendance at work and is committed to improving the general wellbeing of its employees to achieve this. Although we aim to secure regular attendance, we do not expect employees to attend when they are unwell.

i) Notification of Absence

Your line manager should be notified as early as possible if absence from work is anticipated for hospitalisation and other medical treatment.

If you are unable to attend work due to sickness or injury, your line manager must be notified by telephone before your normal start time or as soon thereafter as possible on the first day of absence, if possible indicating a date of return. Notification should be made by you personally unless impossible due to the nature of the illness where you should arrange for someone else to call on your behalf. During prolonged periods of absence, your manager should be kept informed of progress and an expected date of return.

Any employee who has been absent due to sickness and is found not to have been genuinely ill will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include dismissal.

ii) Sickness Payments

Payment of Occupational Sick Pay will be made on a sliding scale depending on length of service and sickness period. For more details please see the Handbook section on Pay and Benefits. From your first day of absence you will be required to complete a self-certification form available through your line manager on your return; if greater than 7 days you will require a statement of Fitness for Work from your G.P.

g. Hours of Work

Your normal hours and working pattern will be specified in your Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment.

The full-time contracted hours for all posts within the organisation are **38 hours per week excluding daily meal breaks. A daily unpaid lunch break of a minimum of 30 minutes must be taken if you work more than six hours daily.

Friends and Places Together reserves the right to vary your hours and pattern of working, following consultation and agreement with you.

Persistent poor timekeeping means that colleagues are put under pressure to cover your duties. This is not acceptable and will therefore be treated as a potential disciplinary offence under our disciplinary procedures.

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h. Flexible Working

Friends and Places Together has a policy of trying to assist staff to balance their work and home life, and is therefore willing to consider requests from staff to vary their working hours or work pattern. Such requests will be considered taking into account the impact on the organisation, work colleagues and any other relevant factors.

Any member of staff with at least 26 weeks service with the company may make a formal written request for flexible working arrangements. Should you wish to progress this you should speak to your line manager. Please note that only one such request may be made in any 12 month period and that flexible working is not an automatic or statutory entitlement.

i. Criminal Records Checks

All employees will be required to undergo a DBS Check. This is only in very special circumstances where your employment with us means you are likely to come into contact with children or vulnerable adults (or certain other particular circumstances). Should this be the case, we will discuss the situation with you prior to confirming your appointment (or relevant change to your job).

j. Conflict of Interest

Conflict of Interest Policy

All staff, volunteers, and management committee members of Friends and Places Together will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the Organization on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

The purposes of this policy is to protect the integrity of the Organisation's decision-making process, to enable our stakeholders to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and committee members.

Examples of conflicts of interest include:

- 1 A committee member who is also a user who must decide whether fees from users should be increased.
- 2 A committee member who is related to a member of staff and there is decision to be taken on staff pay and/or conditions.
- 3 A committee member who is also on the committee of another organisation that is competing for the same funding.
- 4 A committee member who has shares in a business that may be awarded a contract to do work or provide services for the organisation.

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Upon appointment each committee member will make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships, and posts held, that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. This written disclosure will be kept on file and I will be updated as appropriate.

In the course of meetings or activities, committee members will disclose any interests in a transaction or decision where there may be a conflict between the organisations best interests and the committee members best interests or a conflict between the best interests of two organisations that the committee members is involved with.

*Option 1: After disclosure, I understand that I may be asked to leave the room for the discussion and may not be able to take part in the decision depending on the judgement of the other committee members present at the time.

*Option 2: After disclosure, I understand that I will be asked to leave the room for the discussion and will not be able to take part in the decision.

Any such disclosure and the subsequent actions taken will be noted in the minutes.

This policy is meant to supplement good judgment, and staff, volunteers and management committee members should respect its spirit as well as its wording.

Date Adopted: _____

* chose which option you prefer.

k. Standards of Performance and Behaviour at Work

i) Appearance

Friends and Places Together does not seek to inhibit individual choice in relation to your appearance. However, you are expected to dress appropriately at all times in relation to your role, and to ensure that your personal hygiene and grooming are properly attended to prior to presenting yourself at work.

**If we have supplied you with a uniform of other apparel, then you must wear this at all times when required to do so; it is your responsibility to ensure that this is clean and presentable.

**If your work brings you into contact with the general public then you must remove all visible piercings with the exception of a single set of earrings (or one single earring), and you must ensure your dress and grooming standards reflect the values of your employer.

If you have any queries about what is appropriate, these should be directed to your line manager.

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ii) Company Premises

The use of an office at the rear of Crowstone Road is used. Staff will be given access codes to use the building to print out timesheets etc. A separate policy is currently being written for staff in the use of the building and its security.

*“...Friends and Places
is like a breath of fresh
air
From Judy – a parent
who uses the service*

Personal Property

Any personal property such as jewellery, cash, credit cards, clothes, cars, motorbikes or bicycles etc. left on > premises is done so entirely at your own risk. You are strongly advised not to leave any valuables unattended, either on our premises, our vehicles or in your own vehicle. We do not accept liability for loss or damage to any personal property whatsoever.

iii) Telephones & Correspondence

Company telephone / mobile phone or postal facilities must not be used for private purposes without prior permission from your line manager. If, for any reason, personal use is made of these items then arrangements must be made to pay the cost price of all services used. Abuse of these facilities will be considered a potential disciplinary matter.

iv) Smoking and Other Substances at Work

Legislation now exist which makes it illegal to smoke in enclosed public spaces. Smoking (**including e-cigarettes) is therefore strictly prohibited on premises (including entrances and exits) and vehicles.

Outside areas have been identified for those who wish to smoke during their break-time. Should you wish to avail yourself of these facilities, please speak to your line manager.

Bringing alcohol or any unlawful drugs to the workplace, and / or imbibing them there is strictly prohibited both during work time or during a period prior to work where the effects carry over to the workplace. Any such instances will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure and may lead to your summary dismissal.

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Confidentiality Policy

1. General principles

- 1.1. Friends and Places Together recognises that colleagues (employees, volunteers, trustees, seconded and students) gain information about individuals and organisations during the course of their work or activities. In most cases such information will not be stated as confidential and colleagues may have to exercise common sense and discretion in identifying whether information is expected to be confidential. This policy aims to give guidance but if in doubt, seek advice from your line manager.
- 1.2. Colleagues are able to share information with their line manager in order to discuss issues and seek advice.
- 1.3. Colleagues will avoid exchanging personal information or comments about individuals with whom they have a professional relationship.
- 1.4. Talking about the private life of a colleague is to be avoided at all times, unless the colleague in question has instigated the conversation.
- 1.5. Colleagues will avoid talking about organisations or individuals in social settings.
- 1.6. Colleagues will not disclose to anyone, other than their line manager, any information considered sensitive, personal, financial or private without the knowledge or consent of the individual, or an officer, in the case of an organisation.
- 1.7. There may be circumstances where colleagues would want to discuss difficult situations with each other to gain a wider perspective on how to approach a problem. The organisation's consent must be sought before discussing the situation, unless the colleague is convinced beyond doubt that the organisation would not object to this. Alternatively, a discussion may take place with names or identifying information remaining confidential.
- 1.8. Where there is a legal duty on Friends and Places Together to disclose information, the person to whom the confidentiality is owed will be informed that disclosure has or will be made.

2. Why information is held

- 2.1. Most information held by Friends and Places Together relates to individuals, voluntary and community organisations, self-help groups, volunteers, students, employees, trustees or services which support or fund them.

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- 2.2. Information is kept to enable Friends and Places Together colleagues to understand the history and activities of individuals or organisations in order to deliver the most appropriate services.
- 2.3. Friends and Places Together has a role in putting people in touch with voluntary and community organisations and keeps contact details which are passed on to any enquirer, except where the group or organisation expressly requests that the details remain confidential.
- 2.4. Information about students is given to the training organisation and the college, but to no one else.
- 2.5. Information about ethnicity and disability of users is kept for the purposes of monitoring our equal opportunities policy and also for reporting back to funders.

3. Access to information

- 3.1. Information is confidential to Friends and Places Together as an organisation and may be passed to colleagues, line managers or trustees to ensure the best quality service for users.
- 3.2. Where information is sensitive, i.e. it involves disputes or legal issues, it will be confidential to the employee dealing with the case and their line manager. Such information should be clearly labelled 'Confidential' and should state the names of the colleagues entitled to access the information and the name of the individual or group who may request access to the information.
- 3.3. Colleagues will not withhold information from their line manager unless it is purely personal.
- 3.4. Users may have sight of Friends and Places Together records held in their name or that of their organisation. The request must be in writing to the Chief Officer giving 14 days' notice and be signed by the individual, or in the case of an organisation's records, by the Chair or Executive Officer. Sensitive information as outlined in para 3.2 will only be made available to the person or organisation named on the file.
- 3.5. Employees may have sight of their personnel records by giving 14 days' notice in writing to the Chief Officer.
- 3.6. When photocopying or working on confidential documents, colleagues must ensure people passing do not see them. This also applies to information on computer screens.

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4. Storing information

- 4.1. General non-confidential information about organisations is kept in unlocked filing cabinets and in computer files with open access to all Friends and Places Together colleagues.
- 4.2. Personnel information on employees, volunteers, students and other individuals working within Friends and Places Together will be kept in lockable filing cabinets by line managers and will be accessible to the Chief Officer.
- 4.3. Files or filing cabinet drawers bearing confidential information should be labelled 'confidential'.
- 4.4. In an emergency situation, the Chief Officer may authorise access to files by other people.

5. Duty to disclose information

- 5.1. There is a legal duty to disclose some information including:
 - 5.1.1. Child abuse will be reported to the Social Services Department
 - 5.1.2. Drug trafficking, money laundering or acts of terrorism will be disclosed to the police.
- 5.2. In addition colleagues believing an illegal act has taken place, or that a user is at risk of harming themselves or others, must report this to the Chief Officer who will report it to the appropriate authorities.
- 5.3. Users should be informed of this disclosure.

6. Disclosures

- 6.1 Friends and Places Together complies fully with the CRB Code of practice (E File) regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information.
- 6.2 Disclosure information is always kept separately from an applicant's personnel file in secure storage with access limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties. It is a **criminal offence** to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.
- 6.3 Documents will be kept for a year and then destroyed by secure means. Photocopies will not be kept. However, Friends and Places Together may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the

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unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

7. Data Protection Act

7.1. Information about individuals, whether on computer or on paper, falls within the scope of the Data Protection Act and must comply with the data protection principles. These are that personal data must be:

- Obtained and processed fairly and lawfully.
- Held only for specified purposes.
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- Accurate and up to date.
- Not kept longer than necessary.
- Processed in accordance with the Act.
- Kept secure and protected.
- Not transferred out of Europe.

8. Breach of confidentiality

8.1. Employees who are dissatisfied with the conduct or actions of other colleagues or Friends and Places Together should raise this with their line manager using the grievance procedure, if necessary, and not discuss their dissatisfaction outside Friends and Places Together.

8.2. Colleagues accessing unauthorised files or breaching confidentially may face disciplinary action.

9. Whistle blowing

9.1. Where the Finance Worker has concerns about the use of Friends and Places Together funds, he or she may refer directly to the Chair or Treasurer outside the usual grievance procedure.

9.2. All colleagues hold the right to inform either his or her manager or one of the trustees if they believe that Friends and Places Together is being brought into disrepute by the actions of another colleague or trustee.

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Reporting a Suspected Malpractice (Whistle Blowing)

It is the duty of every member of staff and volunteer to speak up about genuine concerns in relation to criminal activity, breach of a legal obligation (including negligence, breach of contract, breach of administrative law), miscarriage of justice, danger to health and safety or the environment, and the cover up of any of these in the workplace. It applies whether or not the information is confidential.

Friends and Places Together is committed to ensuring that any staff concerns of this nature will be taken seriously and investigated. A disclosure to Friends and Places Together *will* be protected if the member of staff has an honest and reasonable suspicion that the malpractice has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur. Staff and volunteers who raise concerns reasonably and responsibly will not be penalised in any way.

Who this policy is for?

This policy is for people employed by or volunteering with Friends and Places Together for the purposes of this policy only, this is someone who is:

- Employed on a permanent or fixed term contract of employment
- An independent consultant
- A volunteer with Friends and Places Together
- Contractors and suppliers of services to Friends and Places Together

Procedure

Any individual who has reasonable suspicions of malpractice should initially take their concerns to their line manager. If they do not feel that this is the appropriate person, they should approach the Chief Officer, or if their concern is related to the Chief Officer, they should contact a trustee or member of the management committee. It is recognised that for some individuals, raising a concern under this procedure may be a daunting and difficult experience. An individual may choose to be accompanied or represented by their trade union representative or colleague at any stage of this procedure. All reported incidents will be investigated. All reports will be dealt with in confidence, with only staff who need to know, being informed.

The Chief Officer, trustee or management committee member will establish and record the basis of the concerns that have been raised and establish what further actions are required. The individual raising the concern will be advised of the outcome of the investigation as soon as possible, normally within two weeks of the date of their disclosure. Where a longer period is needed for investigation, the member of staff will be informed in writing.

The Chief Officer will be informed of all reported disclosures and the actions being taken. In the case of disclosures on alleged fraud and corruption, Accountant, Trustee with Financial responsibility and Independent auditor will be informed by the Chief Officer.

If an individual is not satisfied with the response received and any subsequent action taken, they should put their concerns in writing to the Chair of trustees who will arrange any further investigation what actions are needed and is appropriate. The Chair will send a written response to the individual concerned.

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Guiding principles

To ensure that this policy is adhered to, and to assure staff that the concern will be taken seriously, will:

Not allow the person raising the concern to be victimised for doing so;

Treat victimisation of whistle blowers as a serious matter that may lead to disciplinary action that may include dismissal;

Not attempt to conceal evidence of poor or unacceptable practice;

Take disciplinary action if an employee destroys or conceals evidence of poor or unacceptable practice or misconduct;

Ensure confidentiality clauses in employment contracts do not restrict, forbid or penalise whistle blowing;

Liaise with the other organisations (see section below) to whom staff report malpractice.

Independent advice and further reading

Further Information for charitable organisations can be found on the Charity Commission's website on:

http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Our_regulatory_activity/Reporting_issues/Trustee_employee_and_volunteer_guidance_index.aspx

Employees who feel unsure about whether or how to raise a concern or want confidential advice can contact the independent charity Public Concern at Work (<http://www.pcaw.org.uk>) on 020 7404 6609 or email helpline@pcaw.co.uk. Their lawyers can give free confidential advice on how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work.

Free information and advice can also be obtained from the Advice, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) – Telephone: 08457 47 47 47.

You may feel that it is more appropriate to report a matter to another organisation. Other organisations concerned with standards in the voluntary sector include:

The Charity Commission - 0845 300 0218

Audit Commission for local authorities and the National Health Service in England and Wales – 0844 798 3131

Health & Safety Executive – contact on-line; <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/index.htm> or in emergency 0845 300 9923

NHS Fraud & Corruption Reporting Line – 0800 028 40 60

Public Concern at Work and ACAS can advise on the circumstances when it is more appropriate to contact an outside body.

v) Computer, email and Internet use

If you have access to the Company's computers including email and access to the internet as part of your job, you must not abuse this by using these facilities for purposes unrelated to Company business.

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**Limited personal use of the internet is permitted during your formal breaks. All internet use is monitored and accessing pornographic or other unsuitable material, including auction or certain social networking sites is strictly prohibited and would be considered a serious disciplinary offence which may result in dismissal.

Only software packages properly authorised and installed by the Company may be used on Company equipment, you must therefore not load any unauthorised software onto Company computers.

If you have a Company email address, this is provided for responsible use on Company business and should not be used in any other way whatsoever.

You must not make reference to the Company or its services, or represent yourself on behalf of the Company on social media without formal permission from the Company to do so.

All staff must make themselves familiar with the Company's Internet & Email Policy available from your line manager.

vi) Receipt of Gifts

Your working relationships may bring you into contact with outside organisations where it is normal business practice or social convention to offer hospitality, and sometimes gifts. Offers of this kind to you or your family can place you in a difficult position. Therefore no employee or any member of his or her immediate family should accept from a supplier, customer or other person doing business with payments of money under any circumstances, or special considerations, such as discounts or gifts of materials, equipment, services, facilities or anything else of value unless:

- They are in each instance of a very minor nature usually associated with accepted business practice.
- They do not improperly interfere with your independence of judgement or action in the performance of your employment.

In every circumstance where a gift is offered, the advice of your line manager must be sought.

vii) Bribery and other Corrupt Behaviour

The Company has a strict anti-bribery and corruption policy in line with the Bribery Act (2010). A bribe is defined as: giving someone a financial or other advantage to encourage that person to perform their functions or activities improperly or to reward that person for having already done so.

If you bribe (or attempt to bribe) another person, intending either to obtain or retain business for the company, or to obtain or retain an advantage in the conduct of the company's

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business this will be considered gross misconduct. Similarly accepting or allowing another person to accept a bribe will be considered gross misconduct. In these circumstances you will be subject to formal investigation under the Company's disciplinary procedures, and disciplinary action up to and including dismissal may be applied.

I. Data Protection and Access to Information

Data Protection and Data Security Policy

1 Policy statement

Friends and Places Together –FandPT-looks after the information it holds about you, and respects your privacy. We take precautions to prevent your information being lost or falling into the wrong hands.

We make sure that the information we hold is as accurate as possible; we do not hold more information than we need; and we do not hold it longer than we need to.

We do not share your data with anyone else without your permission, except when we believe it is the only way to prevent harm to you or other people. If we do disclose information without your permission, this is authorised by a senior member of staff, and we will explain our reason to you at the earliest opportunity.

2 Introduction and general principles

FandPT is committed to good practice in the handling of personal data and careful compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

The most important risks which this policy addresses are:

- Inappropriate disclosure of personal data about service users that puts an individual at personal risk or contravenes a duty of confidentiality.
- Negligent loss of data that would cause concern to people whose data was lost and would seriously affect FandPT reputation.

Operational procedures and guidance to paid staff and volunteers set out more detailed ways in which these risks can be managed and the objectives achieved.

All staff and volunteers who may handle personal data are given induction appropriate to their role and training in the systems and policies of FandPT, including periodic refresher training and reminders.

Background information on the Data Protection Act can be found at the end of this policy.

3 Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees of FandPT recognises its overall legal responsibility for Data Protection compliance.

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Day to day responsibility for Data Protection is delegated to the Chief Officer as the nominated Data Protection Officer. The main responsibilities of the Data Protection Officer are:

- Briefing the board on their and FandPT Data Protection responsibilities
- Reviewing Data Protection and related policies
- Advising other staff on Data Protection issues
- Ensuring that Data Protection induction and regular training takes place
- Approving unusual or controversial disclosures of personal data
- Approving contracts with Data Processors (external contractors and suppliers of outsourced services)
- Notification (i.e. registration with the Information Commissioner)
- Handling requests from individuals for access to their personal data

All staff and volunteers are responsible for understanding and complying with the procedures that FandPT has adopted in order to ensure Data Protection compliance.

FandPT is not responsible for the activities of regional alumni branches, but provides them with details of alumni in their region along with guidance on the branch's Data Protection responsibilities.

4 Data collection

FandPT gathers data about people that use their service.

- Upon acceptance of using the services offered
- Periodically after any event may follow up and to ensure our records are accurate

When collecting data, FandPT will ensure that people that use the service:

- Clearly understand why the information is needed, what it will be used for and which other organisations or individuals it may routinely be disclosed to.
- Are given a clear opportunity to opt out of processing for secondary purposes (such as publicity) or disclosure to other organisations (such as alumni branches) where this would not jeopardise delivery of the service.

In order to achieve this all data collection forms – electronic or paper-based – use an agreed standard wording (adapted as necessary for each programme), to ensure that all Data Subjects are given consistent information and consistent choices.

5 Confidentiality & security

FandPT recognises that a clear policy on confidentiality of personal data – in particular that of staff, volunteers and members– underpins security. It maintains a policy that sets out which staff and volunteers are authorised to access which data and for which purposes. In particular this clarifies when data may be disclosed outside FandPT and whether such disclosures require the individual's consent.

FandPT maintains a security policy that sets out measures to protect data 'at rest' – including access being restricted only to authorised staff and volunteers – and measures to protect

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data 'in transit', whether it is physically removed from a secure environment or transmitted electronically.

All staff and volunteers are required to abide by any security measures designed to protect personal data from loss, misuse or inappropriate disclosure.

6 Data management

All data collection and recording systems are designed to ensure that the data collected is adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose. Where relevant, staff and volunteers are given training in good data recording practice to ensure that the data they record is appropriate.

FandPT takes reasonable steps ensure that information is kept accurate and up to date by asking data subjects at appropriate intervals to check their key information for accuracy and to notify Shared Lives Plus if there have been any changes.

FandPT maintains an agreed retention schedule based on legal and practical requirements.

7 Specific legal provisions

FandPT makes a standard charge of £10 for Subject Access, which may be waived at the discretion of the Data Protection Officer.

FandPT maintains an up to date Notification with the Information Commissioner as required by law.

All contracts between FandPT and external data processors are reviewed by the Data Protection Officer for compliance with Data Protection Act requirements.

8 Policy review

This policy will be updated as necessary to reflect best practice in data management, security and control and to ensure compliance with any changes or amendments made to the Data Protection Act 1998.

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Appendix: Data Protection Act background

Scope of the data covered by this policy

The Data Protection Act covers “personal data.” This is information about identifiable living individuals. It does not apply to information about organisations, companies or agencies but applies to named persons such as programme participants, volunteers or employees. This policy also covers personal information held by Shared Lives Plus that for technical reasons may not fall within the definition of personal data.

Data Controller

FandPT is known as the “Data Controller” under the terms of the Act because it decides why and how personal data is processed. As an organisation FandPT is responsible for compliance with the Data Protection Act, and in particular the eight Data Protection Principles.

Data Protection Principles

Compliance with the Principles is a legal requirement. The Principles, in brief, say that personal data shall be:

- processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless specific conditions are met;
- obtained only for one or more of the purposes specified in the Act, and shall not be processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes;
- adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to those purpose(s);
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;
- not kept for longer than is necessary;
- processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the Act;
- kept secure through appropriate technical and other measures to prevent unauthorised or unlawful processing or accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data;
- Not transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of Individuals in relation to the processing of personal information.

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m. Changes in Personal Information for Employment Purposes

It is important that our records are correct, as inaccurate or out of date information may affect your salary or cause difficulties in situations where contact is required for emergencies. You **must** notify your Line Manager immediately of all changes in the following personal information:

- Name
- Home address
- Telephone number
- Bank account details
- Examinations passed/qualifications gained
- Emergency contact
- Driving licence penalties (if you are required to drive on Company business)
- Criminal charge, caution or conviction
- Conflict, or potential conflict of interest

Personal data on employees is held in accordance with the provisions of the Company's Data Protection Policy which will be made available for inspection by you if required.

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4. Valuing Diversity and Dignity at Work

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Introduction

Friends and Places Together are here after referred to as the Organisation, strives for high standards both as an employer and as a provider of services. In so doing, we recognise the need for encouraging diversity and wholeheartedly support a policy of equal opportunities in all areas of our work and responsibilities.

This policy provides guidance to enable all who work with or for the Organisation to comply with anti-discrimination legislation. The policy will also address anti-discrimination issues involving areas that currently fall outside any legislation. Failure to follow the procedures in the policy may lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action.

The Organisation's aims and objectives will be achieved through action planning, effective monitoring and a willingness to tackle problems where they arise. The Organisation is committed to reviewing this policy on an annual basis. Through our training, publications, interaction with members and other activities, the Organisation will ensure those we work with know our statements of policy.

The Organisation will regularly review the implementation of its Equality and Diversity Policy and strategy. Where evidence is found of ineffectiveness, immediate remedial action will be taken to ensure implementation.

The Organisation urges staff, volunteers, trustees, management committee to be aware of the less obvious types of discrimination which result from general assumptions and pre-conceptions about the capabilities, interests and characteristics of individuals.

n. Definitions

Equal Opportunities ensures that policies, procedures and practice within the Organisation do not discriminate against its employees, volunteers and stakeholders. It is about treating people fairly and equally regardless of whom they are, their background or their lifestyle.

Diversity ensures that all people are valued as individuals and are able to maximise their potential and contribution to the Organisation and to the community. It recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and a different approach, which can make the way we work and learn more fun, more creative, more efficient and more innovative.

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Company number 08554307

Direct Discrimination, as defined in law, occurs when an individual is dealt with less favourably than other people on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, disability, sex, actual or perceived religion or belief or sexual orientation.

However in terms of this policy the definition is taken to be wider and includes, for example, colour, nationality, marital status or caring responsibility, age, mental health, political, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice puts people of a particular group at a disadvantage and is not justified in relation to the job, for example a rule about clothing that disproportionately disadvantages a racial group cannot be justified.

Victimisation means that if a person has made or is making an accusation of discrimination in good faith, it is unlawful to discriminate against them for having done so, or because they intend to do so or it is suspected that they intend to do so. People must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals.

Harassment means unwanted conduct based on race, sex or age etc. which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Harassment can be sexual, racial, directed against people with disabilities or indeed related to any characteristic exhibited by the individual. (See the Organisation's Harassment Policy for guidance where harassment has occurred).

Positive Action refers to measures taken to assist employees, or learners who have been under-represented in specific areas, to reach a level of workplace knowledge and competencies that is comparable with 'representative' employees. These measures could take the form of additional training or providing the job application form in other languages to encourage applicants from these communities. 'Positive discrimination' at the point of selection for work is not permissible.

Policy Statements

Diversity

The Organisation will actively encourage diversity to maximise achievement, creativity and good practice and to bring benefit to individuals and communities. The Organisation encourages all people it works with, and for, to contribute to an environment in which people feel comfortable expressing how they feel and what they need, knowing they will be treated with respect and that their contribution will be valued.

The way we work, train and learn within the Organisation reflects both the Mission and Objectives of the Organisation and the spirit and intentions of legislation that outlaws discrimination and promotes equality and diversity.

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The Organisation will make reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises and offer, where appropriate, additional support to trustees, staff and volunteers to ensure they are able to take a full and active part in the Organisation's work.

The Organisation will endeavour to deliver services in a way that genuinely recognises the importance of an inclusive society that brings opportunities and access, not barriers to individuals.

Equal Opportunities

The Organisation is an equal opportunities employer and provider of services. No job applicant, employee, volunteer, trustee, member or service user should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities. Nor will such person's sex, disability, race, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin, age, trade union membership or non-membership, be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

This principle applies to all aspects of the Organisation's activities as an employer and provider of services, including recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, benefits, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions of employment.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Equality and Diversity Policy are:

- To encourage, promote and celebrate diversity in all our activities and services
- To ensure equal access to jobs, volunteer opportunities
- To ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality including Equal Pay Act 1970, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Employment Rights Act 1996, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Employment Act 2002, Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003, Religion or Belief Regulations 2003, Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003 and Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.
- To promote equal opportunities in other areas not currently covered by legislation.
- To create environments free from harassment and discrimination.
- To maximise the use of resources in the best interests of staff, volunteers and service users.
- To confront and challenge discrimination where and whenever it arises, whether it be between colleagues, or in any other area relating to the Organisation's work.
- To make a willingness to accept and implement this policy to be a necessary qualification for any position in the Organisation.
- To ensure, through positive action and so far as is practicable, that all the Organisation premises and services are accessible to all people.
- To ensure that employment and advancement within the Organisation is determined by objective criteria and personal merit.

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Policy Implementation: Expectations

The Organisation recognises that passive policies do not provide equality and encourage diversity in employment/training/services. The Organisation will seek to promote equality and diversity within the following framework of responsibilities.

Responsibility for implementing and developing the policy rests with the Trustees. The overall co-ordinating responsibility for equal opportunities and management of diversity is delegated to the Denise Nygate - Manager

However, the Organisation believes that all who work with or for the organisation have an individual responsibility: to accept the policy and ensure a personal involvement in its application; to co-operate actively to ensure that the environment we desire is a reality. Therefore the Organisation requires individuals:

- To implement measures introduced by the Organisation to ensure equality of opportunity, diversity and non-discrimination.
- Not to harass, abuse or intimidate any other employee or participant on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital or civil partnership status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities.
- To inform management if they suspect discrimination is taking place.

The Organisation requires its Line Managers:

- To ensure that proper records of employment decisions are maintained and regular reviews of employment practices are carried out.
- To ensure that grievances are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner and in line with the Organisation's Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- To ensure that individuals within their area are aware of their legal responsibilities, and the organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- To promote actively the benefits of employee and participant diversity, in employment, services and training.

The Organisation will appoint and support Equality and Diversity Advisers who will:

- To support Line Managers, offer advice and make recommendations in relation to Equal Opportunities and Diversity and implementing relevant policies and procedures.
- To ensure that the highest standards of Equality Opportunities practice are observed in the delivery of the Organisation's services and to undertake training and development opportunities to ensure that competence is maintained.
- To collate and discuss relevant organisational information and make recommendations to the Manager
- To offer advice and guidance to members of staff, volunteers and organisations in the Organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures.
- To seek the views and opinions of employees, volunteers, customers and clients on the operation of the policy in his/ her locality/ area of responsibility, in particular to meet the diverse needs of the users.
- To facilitate training and discussion on Equal Opportunities and Diversity issues as appropriate.

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The person with overall responsibility for Equality and Diversity will:

- Ensure that Managers and Equality and Diversity Advisers are supported in their roles in regard to the Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures.
- Ensure Trustees and Managers are appraised regularly on the state of equal opportunities and diversity within the Organisation.
- Ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy and associated documents are reviewed on an annual basis.
- Review and approve policies, procedures and practices that impact on equal opportunities and diversity practice.
- Co-ordinate the delivery of an equality and diversity strategy and action plan.

Policy Implementation: Recruitment and Promotion

The Organisation strives to ensure that our trustees, staff and volunteers reflect the wider community.

Clear and accurate information on vacant posts should be available through advertisement, job descriptions, person specifications and interview. Vacancies should be advertised sufficiently widely to reach the widest possible range of candidates, either internal and/or external.

All recruitment material should not imply any preferred group, unless a genuine occupational qualification exists limiting a post to a particular group.

Applicants will be informed, through all recruitment material of the Organisation's commitment to Equal Opportunities and Diversity.

Person specifications may include 'essential' and 'desirable' requirements that are necessary and justifiable. Care, and advice where necessary, is needed to ensure these are not discriminatory.

Staff and volunteers should be encouraged to discuss their development and training needs through a process of regular support and annual appraisals.

Job titles that are discriminatory must be avoided.

Policy Implementation: Interviews and Selection

In line with the intentions of this policy, efforts must be made to select a recruitment panel, which is inclusive in terms of gender, disability and ethnicity.

The short listing panel will select candidates on the basis of an objective assessment of their match with the requirements as described in the job description and person specification; this will not take into account the gender, name, race, religion or belief, possible disability or age of the candidate.

The interview panel must take extreme care not to ask discriminatory questions which do not comply with the Organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy Statements, e.g. questions relating to race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital or civil partnership status or caring responsibility, sexual orientation, age, physical, sensory or learning disability,

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mental health, political or religious beliefs, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities.

Policy Implementation: Training

In line with the intentions of this policy, the Organisation will not discriminate in the provision of training courses/ opportunities wherever possible.

Appropriate training will be provided to enable trustees, staff, volunteers and committee members to perform their jobs effectively. The training offered will take into account the needs of all people.

Briefing on this policy will form part of the Induction Procedure for trustees, staff, volunteers and committee members

Enforcement

The Organisation recognises the need for a continuing commitment to genuine equal opportunities and diversity within the organisation. The effectiveness of the policy's aims and objectives can only be judged by how the policy operates in practice.

Policy Enforcement - Grievances

- Any staff member or volunteer who feels they have been a victim of discrimination or unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this policy should raise the issue through the Organisation's established Grievance Procedure.
- Any service user who feels he/she has been unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this policy should make a complaint through the Organisation's Manager who must report any such complaint to the management chair. If the complaint is about the manager this should be made through the Secretary of the management committee
- Any job applicant who believes that he/she has been treated unfairly and contrary to the intention of this policy should raise the issue with the Denise Nygate or the Chair of the Jackie Hardy
- Incidents of victimisation or harassment will be dealt with in accordance with the Organisation's Harassment Procedure. Where incidents of victimisation and harassment are proven, the issue will be dealt with under the Organisation's Disciplinary Procedure.
- The Organisation will not treat lightly or ignore grievances from members of disadvantaged groups on the assumption that they are over-sensitive about discrimination.

Policy Enforcement - Disciplinary Procedure

- Any member of staff found to be in breach of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Standard Terms of Employment.
- All incidents of **direct discrimination** are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- Incidents of **indirect discrimination** will be investigated to determine whether they should be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- Incidents of **victimisation** or **harassment** will be dealt with in accordance with the Organisation's Harassment Procedure. Where incidents of victimisation and

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harassment are proven, the issue will be dealt with under the Organisation's Disciplinary Procedure.

- Any volunteer, including Trustees or members of any committee, found to be in breach of this policy will be counselled on his/her actions and may, where necessary, be removed from the Organisation's volunteer register.
- Any member of any Committee or working group of the Organisation found in breach of this policy will be counselled on his/her actions and may, where necessary, be asked to leave the Organisation.
- Any service user found in breach of this policy will, where appropriate, be counselled on his/her actions and may, where necessary, be referred back to their organisation or refused future services from the Organisation.
-

Monitoring

The Organisation regards the collection/analysis of data as vital in informing change and improving performance. Where appropriate, statistics on the Organisation's services will be collected and analysed in relation to equality and diversity matters. We will review employee turnover and seek information on reasons for leaving. Local and national data or statistics will be used to benchmark our performance.

The Trustees will review annually equality of opportunity relating to the Organisation services. Recruitment and selection procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Denise Nygate who will report to the Jackie Hardy. All aspects of personnel policies and procedures shall be kept under review to ensure that they do not operate against the Equal and Diversity Policy.

In order to determine the impact of this policy it is important that a monitoring system be developed which will measure commitment, progress and effectiveness. The Diversity and Equality Policy will be monitored and reviewed as follows:

- The equality and diversity will be an agenda item at the Organisation team meetings.
- Denise Nygate will undertake an annual policy review. All relevant parties will be encouraged to submit comments for consideration.
- The review recommendations will be presented to the next Trustee meeting for their comments and ratification.

Where it appears that there may have been or there is a breach of the policy, the Secretary of the management committee will investigate the circumstances and action will be taken to counter any proven breach of policy.

a. Salary Arrangements

Your salary will be paid monthly in arrears on the 1st of each month by direct credit transfer to your designated bank account.

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Your basic pay was outlined in your letter of appointment / statement of terms and conditions. Any subsequent amendments to your basic pay will be notified to you in writing by the Company.

Part-time employees will be paid on a pro rata basis based on the hours they work. In all other aspects, their salaries will be paid in accordance with the pay arrangements for full-time employees of the Company.

If any queries arise with regard to pay, or if it looks as if a mistake has been made, speak to your line manager immediately so that they can take appropriate action. Unless agreed otherwise, any pay errors, whether of over or underpayment, will be rectified in the next salary payment.

Appropriate deductions will be made from pay including income tax and National Insurance contributions (NICs), which are subject to each employee's earning level, family status and the number of hours worked.

b. Overtime

Overtime is defined as all hours worked in excess of your full time contracted hours, which has the prior explicit approval of your manager.

Overtime is payable to posts which have been specifically designated as qualifying for overtime payment

c. Income Tax

If there are any changes in your personal circumstances which will affect your tax status, you should notify the Inland Revenue, who will automatically inform the Company of any changes to your tax code. Addresses of local offices and enquiry centres can be found here:

<http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/menus/officesmenu.htm>

d. Business Travel

You will be reimbursed for any expenditure necessarily incurred in order to do your job when working away from your normal place of work. Public Transport and accommodation costs will be reimbursed at actual cost – appropriate receipts must accompany all claims. Mileage rates when travelling by your own private transport are 40 pence per mile, which is claimed back by parents and expense policy and spreadsheet.

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e. Sickness Pay Provision

i) Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Most employees have a right to statutory sick pay (SSP) as long as they earn more than the lower earnings level. SSP is not however payable for the first three qualifying days of absence. (A qualifying day is a day on which you are normally expected to work under your contract of employment).

There is a limit of 28 weeks' SSP in any one period of sickness or linked periods. (Periods of sickness are said to be linked if the second period starts within eight weeks of the end of the first period.)

SSP is paid in the same way as ordinary pay and is liable to tax and National Insurance contributions.

Friends and Places Together reserves the right to refuse to pay sick pay if it has reasonable cause to think that an employee is not genuinely sick, if it has cause to believe that an employee is abusing the sick pay scheme, if an employee has failed to comply with the notification requirements, or has not supplied the appropriate certification. If the sick pay scheme has been abused, disciplinary action may follow.

Payments of sick pay may be terminated, suspended or reduced if an employee fails to notify the Company of relevant facts, or if their absence or continued absence is due to their taking an unwarranted risk (in or out of work), conducting themselves in a way that prejudices their recovery, abusing alcohol or drugs or other substances, or recklessly endangering the health and safety at work of themselves and others.

f. Pension Scheme

IN 2017 all staff will be paying into a company pension.

Friends and Places Together Financial Procedures

1.0 Introduction

These guidelines have been drawn up in line with Charity Commission recommendations.

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the Charity's resources are protected in order that the Charity can fulfil its aims.

It is important that all those working for the Charity whether trustees, staff or volunteers fully understand its financial procedures and take the issue of internal financial controls seriously.

The following controls should help ensure a basic level of protection for the Charity's funds.

2.0 Financial Controls

2.0.1 This covers

1. Handling Money

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2. Budgeting for Activities
3. Use of Cash in transactions
4. Fundraising and Sponsored Events
5. Petty Cash
6. Staffing expenses
7. Invoices
8. Banking and Custody procedures

2.1 Handling Money

- 2.1.1 At least two people are involved in handling and recording all monies received.
- 2.1.2 All Collection boxes are individually numbered and their issue and return is recorded.
- 2.1.3 All Collection boxes are sealed before use so that it is apparent if they have been opened before they are returned
- 2.1.4 All collection boxes are regularly opened and the contents counted.
- 2.1.5 General public collections are counted in the presence of the collectors and a numbered receipt given to them.
- 2.1.6 All cash collected is banked by the Charity without delay and without the deduction of any expenses.

2.2 Budgeting for Activities

- 2.2.1 It is vitally important that sufficient resources are available to pay for activities. Therefore a budget for each activity must be produced and agreed beforehand.
- 2.2.2. The Lead of each activity will further be required to complete a profit and loss spreadsheet for each individual event. This will clearly show who has paid and who still needs to be invoiced.
- 2.2.3 Most payments can be invoiced (e.g. Megazone, use of the youth club, day trips invoices paid before the activity).
- 2.2.4 It is important that costs for activities are worked out in advance and it is clear what is covered by the service and what additional funds are required.
- 2.2.5 The Break with Mates Activity Brochure is clear what is covered and anyone under 18 years old will be required to contact us to be given a clear breakdown as only the activity costs is required.

2.3 Use of Cash in transactions

- 2.3.1 In order that families can claim back funds (including transport costs – currently at 40p / mile), they will require receipts. This is because more activities are paid via individuals direct payments.
- 2.3.2 If individuals are paying or pass cash to us, they must automatically be given a receipt for these funds.
- 2.3.3 Receipts need to be stamped 'Friends and Places Together' and include the Charity Commission number and Company number.
- 2.3.4 A record must be maintained showing who has paid and who needs to claim funds back via their direct payment.

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2.4 Fundraising and sponsored events

- 2.4.1 Records are maintained for each fundraising event, in sufficient detail to identify gross receipts or takings and costs incurred for all events for which there is ticket income or gate money.
- 2.4.2 Tickets all are pre-numbered
- 2.4.3 A record is kept of all persons who have been issued with tickets to sell, and the ticket numbers that have been allocated to each person.
- 2.4.4 A record is kept of which tickets have been sold.
- 2.4.5 All money from tickets and any unsold tickets are collected
- 2.4.6 A reconciliation is made of receipts against tickets sold

2.5 Petty Cash

- 2.5.1 The Chief Officer, Break with Mates Coordinator and Friends and Places Coordinator are responsible for handling petty cash.
- 2.5.2 Each designated person will sign off an amount of funds to cover costs for volunteer's expenses for Friends and Places.
- 2.5.3 Breaks with Mates will be required to plan in advance of any activity how much cash is needed in order to ensure that enough cash is available to cover activities in the community.
- 2.5.4 Any funds not agreed will not be able to be claimed for or paid back.
- 2.5.5 All staff will need to complete spreadsheets for expenses. This must be signed off by their line manager taking into account what has been agreed by families when supporting them in the community.
- 2.5.6 Cash should be paid out of a petty cash float specifically kept for such payments, and not from incoming cash or by way of direct withdrawal from the bank account
- 2.5.7 Details of payments should be entered in a petty cash book
- 2.5.8 Supporting documentation for the cash payment should be authorised by someone other than the person who maintains the petty cash or the person making the payment
- 2.5.9 The balance of petty cash in hand, and the records, should be kept securely
- 2.5.10 Regular spot checks of the petty cash float should be made by an authorised person independent of the person who maintains the petty cash
- 2.5.11 The Chief Officer, Break with Mates Co-Ordinator and Friends and Places Co-Ordinator can co-sign any petty cash floats and check each other's funds to have a clear and accountable record.

2.6 Staffing expenses

- 2.6.1 All Staff must read and understand 'Staffing Expenses' within the Staff/Volunteers handbook.
- 2.6.2 Staff and Volunteers can claim for use of their own car if picking up clients and taking them out in the community (paid on a mileage basis).
- 2.6.3 It is expected that families will pay staff a fee directly. If not, then the Chief Officer will agree with the family a fair amount and invoice them back for the expenses. If the

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Chief Officer asks staff to help a family member or client out then funds are covered by a mileage record.

- 2.6.4 Bus fares are covered to and from the client's house. If individuals are using buses then as part of supporting them to be independent the bus fare can be claimed back.
- 2.6.5 If clients want support to attend an activity in the community then as a carer the fees should be waived. If not then the Chief Officer will agree an amount with the family.
- 2.6.6 Some families have a clear idea of what can be covered and some clients have limited resources, so it is important that the cost of the activity is agreed with the parent.

2.7 Invoices

- 2.7.1 All invoices must be sent to the Accountant for payment.
- 2.7.2 All invoices must clearly state the nature of the expense so that it can be easily identified in future.

2.8 Banking and Custody procedures

- 2.8.1 All Cheques and cash received must be kept securely, banked promptly and recorded in the accounting records.
- 2.8.2 Cheque and cash receipts should be promptly recorded in the accounting records.
- 2.8.3 Cheques and cash should be banked regularly and promptly.
- 2.8.4 Cash and cheques not banked on the day of receipt should be placed in a safe or locked cash box
- 2.8.5 Funds should normally be banked gross without deduction for costs or expenses
- 2.8.6 Insurance cover for cash in hand and in transit should be considered

6. Leave Arrangements

a. Annual Leave

Employees whether part-time or full-time are entitled to a minimum 20 days paid annual leave. A week's leave allows you to be away from work for a week – that is the same amount of time as your working week. If you do a five-day week, you are entitled to 20 days leave per year, if you do a four-day week the entitlement is 22.4 days leave etc. Your manager will let you know your annual leave entitlement for the current leave year. Annual leave is only paid for those staff who are on fixed term contract.

Holidays must be agreed with your manager as early as possible. The Company will where possible try to accommodate individual preferences for holiday dates but the needs of the business may have to take precedence, particularly where short or inadequate notice is given.

- The holiday year runs from 1st January to 31st December.

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- Leave for employees joining after the start of the leave year accrues at the rate of one twelfth of the annual entitlement for each complete calendar month of service
- Leave for employees who terminate their employment during the leave year is calculated on the same basis. If, however, the annual leave entitlement has been exceeded, a deduction calculated on the same basis will be deducted from the final salary payment.
- Holiday pay in lieu of accrued leave will be paid only on termination of employment and will normally be subject to a maximum of 10 working days.

Maternity Leave and Pay Policy

**Pregnant employees will be entitled to take 26 weeks' Ordinary Maternity Leave and 26 weeks Additional Maternity Leave, irrespective of their length of service or the number of hours worked each week.

You may not return to work during the two weeks immediately following the birth of your child (four weeks for women who work in factories).

You are free to choose when you would like your maternity leave to start, however, the earliest you can choose to start your maternity leave is during the 11th week before the expected week of your child's birth.

In certain circumstances, your maternity leave may start automatically earlier than the date you chose as the start date for your maternity leave. This applies where you are absent from work wholly or partly because of pregnancy at any time during the four weeks before the expected week of childbirth or if you give birth early.

If you have at least 26 weeks' service by the end of the 15th week before your child is expected to be born, you may be entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP), provided your average weekly earnings are at or above the Lower Earnings Limit for National Insurance.

SMP is payable for 39 weeks. For the first six weeks, SMP will be paid at 90% of your average weekly earnings. For the remaining 33 weeks, SMP will be paid at the standard rate which is prescribed by regulations and is adjusted from time to time. The Company will inform you of the applicable rate. If your average weekly earnings fall below the standard rate, SMP will be paid at 90% of your average weekly earnings throughout.

SMP will be paid subject to deductions for tax and National Insurance contributions in the normal way.

In order to be eligible for maternity leave and SMP, you are required to notify your line manager in writing by or during the 15th week before the expected week of your child's birth. You must inform your Line Manager of the following:

- you are pregnant
- the week in which your child is due
- the date you intended to start your maternity leave

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- the date from which you will be claiming SMP

You should enclose a MAT B1 certificate with your written notification signed by your registered doctor or registered midwife to confirm the expected week of childbirth.

You may change the date you start your maternity leave providing you give at least 28 days' notice in writing of either the new start date or the original start date (whichever is earliest).

Within 28 days of receiving your notice, the Company shall notify you in writing of the date when your maternity leave will end.

"...If any pregnant employees, or employees who have recently become mothers or who are breastfeeding are employed in positions which have been identified as posing a risk to their health and safety or that of their baby they will be notified immediately and arrangements will be made to eliminate the risks..."

Prior to your departure on maternity leave, your line manager will meet with you to discuss your rights and entitlements during maternity leave, the possibility of flexible working on your return to work and the level of contact you would like with the Company during your maternity leave. You should feel free to raise at this meeting any queries or concerns you have.

Your line manager may also offer you up to 10 days work during your maternity leave. It is up to you if you wish to work these days. The rate of pay for the work will be agreed in advance with you. Your right to maternity leave and SMP will not be affected.

During Ordinary Maternity Leave, you will continue to receive your contractual benefits and your normal terms and conditions will continue to apply, except for those terms relating to wages and salary. You will continue to accrue holiday.

During Additional Maternity Leave, the rights and obligations under your contract of employment are reduced, but you must still give notice in accordance with your contract of employment if you want to leave. In addition, you will continue to be bound by your obligations of confidentiality and loyalty. Only statutory holiday will accrue.

If any pregnant employees, or employees who have recently become mothers or who are breastfeeding are employed in positions which have been identified as posing a risk to their health and safety or that of their baby they will be notified immediately and arrangements will be made to eliminate the risks.

If you have concerns about your own health and safety at any time you should consult your Line Manager immediately.

You do not have to notify the Company separately of your return date. It will be assumed that you will come back to work on the date the Company has notified you is the end of your maternity leave period. However, if you wish to return to work before the end of your full

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maternity leave entitlement, you should give your line manager at least 8 weeks' notice in writing of your intended return date.

If you return to work immediately after a period of Ordinary Maternity Leave you will return to work in the same job you left before you started your maternity leave.

If you return to work from a period of Additional Maternity Leave, you will return to the same job you were employed to do. If this is not reasonably practicable, you will be offered a similar job on equally favourable terms and conditions.

If you decide not to return to work after maternity leave, you should confirm this in writing and give the notice required by your contract of employment.

On your return from maternity leave, your line manager will arrange a meeting with you to discuss any changes which have taken place during your absence. This will be an opportunity to discuss any issues relating to breastfeeding. You should also feel free to raise at this meeting any queries or concerns you have.

Parallel arrangements are available for the adoption of a child.

b. Paternity Leave and Pay

Statutory Paternity Leave is a maximum of two weeks' leave, following the birth of a child, taken in order to support the mother or care for the new child. It can be taken as a single week or two consecutive weeks. It cannot be taken as odd days or as two separate weeks.

Statutory Paternity Leave must be taken within 56 days of the birth. If the baby is born earlier than expected, it must be taken within 56 days from the date the baby was due.

To qualify you must have worked for the Company for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the expected birth week.

Statutory Paternity Pay is paid at a fixed rate per week (determined in legislation) or 90% of average earnings if that is less. It is paid less tax and National Insurance contributions in the normal way.

During Statutory Paternity Leave, you are entitled to all of your normal contractual terms and conditions as if you were not absent, apart from basic wages and salary. You have the right to return to exactly the same job, on the same terms and conditions after Statutory Paternity Leave.

Paternity leave and pay are also available for the adoption of a child.

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c. Shared parental leave

This leave entitlement is designed to give parents / adopters more flexibility in how to share the care of their child in the first year following birth or adoption. If you are eligible you can share up to 50 weeks leave, you and your partner can decide to be off work at the same time and/or take it in turns to have periods of leave to look after the child. To be eligible you must meet the following criteria:

- You (or your partner) must be entitled to maternity / adoption leave, or statutory maternity / adoption pay (or maternity allowance from the Government) and you must share the main responsibility for caring for the child with your partner. In addition, you and your partner will also be required to follow a two-step process to establish eligibility as follows:
- **Step 1 - Continuity test:** if you are seeking to take shared parental **leave**, one parent / adopter must have worked for the same employer for at least 26 weeks at the end of the 15th week before the week in which the child is due (or at the week in which an adopter was notified of having been matched with a child or adoption) and they should still be employed in the first week that shared parental leave is to be taken.

The other parent /adopter has to have worked for 26 weeks in the 66 weeks leading up to the due date and have earned above the maternity allowance threshold of £30 a week in 13 of the 66 weeks.

- **Step 2 - Individual eligibility for pay:** To qualify for shared parental **pay** the parent / main adopter must, as well as passing the Continuity test, also have earned an average salary of the National Insurance lower earnings limit or more for the 8 weeks prior to the 15th week before the expected birth / adoption.

d. Unpaid Parental Leave

As well as Shared Parental Leave, any eligible employee who has or expects to have responsibility for a child is entitled to take Unpaid Parental Leave to care for that child. This includes the child's registered father or anyone else who has or expects to have formal parental responsibility for the child. To be eligible to take Parental Leave, an employee must have been employed by the Company for at least one year.

Parental Leave consists of 18 weeks' unpaid leave for each child born or adopted, taken at any time up to the child's eighteenth birthday. Up to four weeks' Parental Leave can be taken in respect of each child, each year, in blocks of one week or more. Employees cannot take the leave in blocks of less than one week, unless the child is disabled. You must give your line manager at least 21 days notice of your intention to take Parental Leave.

Although the situation around pregnancy and adoption appears complex, it is normally quite straightforward to work out your entitlement. Therefore as soon as you know you are

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pregnant or have been matched with a child for adoption, please let your manager know as soon as is practical. We will calculate your entitlement and the relevant dates for you.

e. Time Off For Dependants

You are legally entitled to take a reasonable amount of time off to deal with certain prescribed emergencies involving certain dependants. This leave is called Time Off for Dependants. Time Off for Dependants can be taken, for example, if a dependant falls ill or is injured, if care arrangements break down, or to arrange or attend a dependant's funeral. A dependant is your child (including adopted child), husband, wife or parent. It also includes someone who lives in your household, and someone who reasonably relies on you, such as an elderly relative. Any time taken off must be necessary and reasonable in the particular circumstances. Time Off for Dependants is not paid.

7. Health and Safety

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

This is the Health and Safety Policy Statement of Friends and Places Together.

Our statement of general policy is:

- to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities
- to consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety
- to provide and maintain safe plant and equipment
- to ensure safe handling and use of substances
- to provide information, instruction and supervision for employees;
- to ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training;
- to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health;
- to maintain safe and healthy working conditions; and
- To review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the (Trustees/Directors) of Friends and Places Together. Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to Director

To ensure health and safety standards are maintained/improved, the following people have responsibility in the following areas
CEO/Director

All employees have to:

- co-operate with supervisors and managers on health and safety matters;

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- not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety;
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety; and
- Report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this policy statement).

Health and safety risks arising from our work activities

Risk assessments will be undertaken by Director.

The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to Chair/Trustee.

Action required to remove/control risks will be approved by Director.

The Director will be responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented.

Chair/Trustee will check that the implemented actions have removed/reduced the risks.

Assessments will be reviewed every two months or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

Consultation with employees

Friends and Places Together will consult with employees on the following:

- any new measure which may substantially affect their health and safety at work, for example new equipment, new ways of working and new procedures
- arrangements for getting competent people to help satisfy health and safety laws
- the information we give to employees on the risks to health and safety arising from their work, measures to reduce or get rid of these risks and what they should do if they are exposed to a risk, including emergency procedures
- planning and organising health and safety training and
- The health and safety consequences for them of any new technology we plan to introduce.

The information provided to employees will be in a form that can be easily understood.

Friends and Places Together will consult directly with employees through team meetings and face-to-face discussions.

Friends and Places Together will allow enough time for employees to consider the issues and give informed responses. Employees are encouraged to ask questions, raise concerns and make recommendations.

Friends and Places Together will take employees' views into account before a final decision is made, respond to any concerns and questions raised and explain the final decision and why it has been taken.

Safe equipment

The Director will be responsible for identifying all equipment needing maintenance.

The Director will be responsible for ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up.

Chair/Trustee will be responsible for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented.

Any problems found with equipment should be reported to the Director immediately.

Director will check that new equipment meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.

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Safe handling and use of substances

The Director will check that new substances can be used safely before they are purchased. Friends and Places Together does not currently use or store any substances which need a COSHH assessment.

Information, instruction and supervision

The Health and Safety Law poster is displayed in Main Office Leaflets are issued by the Director.

Health and safety advice is available from the Director.

Supervision of young workers/trainees will be arranged/undertaken/monitored by Director

The Director and Chair/Trustee is responsible for ensuring that our employees working at locations under the control of other employers are given relevant health and safety information.

Competency for tasks and training

Induction training will be provided for all employees by the Director.

Job specific training is not required for any jobs within Friends and Places Together

Training records are kept at/by Director.

Training will be identified, arranged and monitored by Director.

Accidents, first aid and work-related ill health

Health surveillance is not required in relation to any jobs at Friends and Places Together The first aid box(es) is/are kept in Main Office

The appointed person(s)/first aider(s) is CEO/Director

All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded in the accident book. The book is kept by Director in Main Office

Coordinator is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority.

Monitoring

To check our working conditions, and ensure our safe working practices are being followed, we will

Carry out inspections and spot checks

Investigate any accidents or sickness absences that occur.

Director is responsible for investigating accidents.

Director and Chair/Trustee is responsible for investigating work-related causes of sickness absences.

Director and Chair/Trustee is responsible for acting on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence.

Emergency procedures – fire and evacuation

The Director is responsible for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented.

Escape routes are checked by Director every day.

Fire extinguishers are maintained and checked by a registered and accredited Fire company every year.

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Alarms are tested by Director every week.
Emergency evacuation drills are the responsibility of Director and will be tested every week.

Fire Drill Procedure

A Fire Drill Procedure is carried out periodically and the procedure is on display situated by the Fire Extinguishers on each floor.

Board of Director's will be made available to support the Director with all tasks due to the legal obligation of the organisation and supporting Director in post with day to day running of the organisation.

f. Safe Guarding

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

<p>1. Introduction</p>	<p>Friends and Places Together makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.</p> <p>Friends and Places Together comes into contact with children and / or vulnerable adults through the following activities: break with mates, and friends and places Southend</p> <p>This policy seeks to ensure that Friends and Places Together undertakes its responsibilities with regard to protection of children and / or vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately. The policy establishes a framework to support paid and unpaid staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.</p>
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<p>2. Confirmation of reading</p>	<p>I confirm that I have been made fully aware of, and understand the contents of, the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for Friends and Places Together).</p> <p>Please complete the details below and return this completed form to Denise Nygate</p> <p>Employee Name :</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Employee Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>
<p>3. Legislation</p>	<p>The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together to safeguard Children 2010 • The Children’s and Family Act 2014 • The Care Act 2015 • The Adoption and Children Act 2002: • The Children act 2004 • Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 • Care Standards Act 2000 • Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 • The Police Act – CRB 1997 • Mental Health Act 1983 • NHS and Community Care Act 1990 • Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
<p>4. Definitions</p>	<p>Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and / or vulnerable adults wherever possible. In contrast, child and adult protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.</p>

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	<p>Abuse is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.</p> <p>It can take a number of forms, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical abuse • Sexual abuse • Emotional abuse • Bullying • Neglect • Financial (or material) abuse <p>Definition of a child A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).</p> <p>Definition of Vulnerable Adults A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may include a person who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is elderly and frail • Has a mental illness including dementia • Has a physical or sensory disability • Has a learning disability • Has a severe physical illness • Is a substance misuser • Is homeless
<p>5. Responsibilities</p>	<p>All staff (paid or unpaid) have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.</p> <p>We expect all staff (paid or unpaid) to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.</p> <p>Additional specific responsibilities</p> <p>Trustees have responsibility to ensure that safeguards are put in place</p>

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	<p>Friends and Places Together have responsibility to ensure the policy is achieved to and regulated and offer ongoing and relevant training for all new members of staff and volunteers</p>
<p>Implementation Stages</p>	<p>The scope of this Safeguarding Policy is broad ranging and in practice, it will be implemented via a range of policies and procedures within the organisation. These include:</p> <p>Safe recruitment Friends and Places Together ensures safe recruitment through the following processes:</p> <p>Disclosure and Baring Records The organisation commits resources to providing Disclosure and Baring Records check on staff (paid or unpaid) whose roles involve contact with children and /or vulnerable adults.</p>
<p>6. Communication training and support for staff</p>	<p>Friends and Places Together commits resources for induction, training of staff (paid and unpaid), effective communications and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding</p> <p>Induction will include regular training and update processes and procedures</p> <p>Training All staff who, through their role, are in contact with children and /or vulnerable adults will have access to safeguarding training at an appropriate level. Sources and types of training will include: Safeguarding, First Aid, Mental Capacity Act, Sexuality</p>
<p>7. Professional boundaries</p>	<p>Professional boundaries are what define the limits of a relationship between a support worker and a client. They are a set of standards we agree to uphold that allows this necessary and often close relationship to exist while ensuring the correct detachment is kept in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving and receiving gifts from clients: A typical statement would be Friends and Places Together does not allow paid or unpaid staff to give gifts to or receive

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	<p>gifts from clients. However gifts may be provided by the organisation as part of a planned activity’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff contact with user groups. A typical statement would be: ‘Personal relationships between a member of staff (paid or unpaid) and a client who is a current service user is prohibited. This includes relationships through social networking sites such as Facebook and bebo. <p>It is also prohibited to enter into a personal relationship with a person who has been a service user over the past 12 months.’</p> <p>You may also wish to include statements about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of abusive language • Response to inappropriate behavior / language • Use of punishment or chastisement • Providing personal contact details • Accepting money as a gift/ Borrowing money from or lending money to service users • Personal relationships with a third party related to or known to • Passing on service users’ personal contact details • Degree of accessibility to service users (e.g. not service users • Accepting gifts/ rewards or hospitality from organisation as an inducement for either doing/ not doing something in their official capacity • Cautious or avoidance of personal contact with clients <p>You should also refer to other relevant policies which provide guidance e.g. Code of conduct, e-safety, and computer misuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking family members to a client’s home • Selling to or buying items from a service user • Accepting responsibility for any valuables on behalf of a client
<p>8. Reporting</p>	<p>The process outlined below details the stages involved in raising and reporting safeguarding concerns at Friends and Places Together</p> <p>Communicate your concerns with your immediate manager</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Seek medical attention for the vulnerable person if needed</p>

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	<p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Discuss with parents of child Or with vulnerable person. Obtain permission to make referral if safe and appropriate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>if needed seek advice from the Children and Families helpdesk or Adults helpdesk</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Complete the Local Authority Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Incident Report Form if required and submit to the local authority within 24 hours of making a contact</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Ensure that feedback from the Local Authority is received and their response recorded</p>
<p>9. Allegations Management</p>	<p>Friends and Places recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its staff (paid or unpaid) within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation.</p> <p>Friends and Places recognises its legal duty to report any concerns about unsafe practice by any of its paid or unpaid staff to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), according to the ISA referral guidance document</p> <p>http://www.isa.gov.org.uk/PDF/ISA%20Referral%20Guidance%20%20V2009-02.pdf</p>

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<p>10. Monitoring</p>	<p>The organisation will monitor the following Safeguarding aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe recruitment practices • CRB/DBS checks undertaken • References applied for new staff • Records made and kept of supervision sessions • Training – register/ record of staff training on child/ vulnerable adult protection • Monitoring whether concerns are being reported and actioned • Checking that policies are up to date and relevant • Reviewing the current reporting procedure in place • Presence and action of Designated senior manager responsible for Safeguarding is in post
<p>11. Managing information</p>	<p>Information will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with the following policies</p> <p>All staff must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need to know basis only, as judged by the Designated Senior Manager.</p> <p>All staff must be aware that they cannot promise service users or their families/ carers that they will keep secrets.</p>
<p>12. Communicating and reviewing the policy</p>	<p>Friends and Places Together will make clients aware of the Safeguarding Policy through the following means</p> <p>Email, Text or Hard Copy and upon request.</p> <p>The policy will be reviewed by Denise Nygate every 3 years and when there are changes in legislation.</p>

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First Aid

The Company believes that best practice is to ensure staff have access to a trained First Aider or Appointed Person (someone who can take charge in the event of an accident). Details of these trained staff will be displayed on your local notice board or from your line manager and you should familiarise yourself with names and contact details.

g. Fire Safety

Employees should follow these steps to help prevent fires:

- Before you use any electrical appliances carry out a quick check to make sure that the cables, plugs etc are not damaged.
- Do not use any electrical equipment that shows signs of damage, even if you think it is only minor. Report any faults you find to your line manager and find an alternative appliance.
- Ensure that you place your rubbish in the proper waste bins. Do not overfill the bins, and ensure that your waste bin is accessible to the cleaners at the end of each day.

Action to take when the fire alarm goes off:

- Immediately stop what you are doing and walk (do not run) to the nearest available safe fire exit. If your nearest exit/route is obstructed, choose another route. Make sure that you are aware of the fire exits and routes in your area.
- Follow the instructions of your designated Fire Warden.
- Direction signs should indicate the route to your fire exit. These comprise a white arrow on a green background sometimes accompanied by the words 'FIRE EXIT' and also a pictogram of a running man. The arrows indicate the direction of the nearest fire exit.
- Do not use a lift to leave the building - always use designated stairs.
- Make your way to the appropriate assembly point.
- Once you are at the assembly point you should report to the Fire Warden, so that they can account for the people in their designated area.
- Do not leave the designated assembly point, or attempt to re-enter the building, until you have been instructed to do so by the Fire Warden.

Action to take if you discover a fire:

- RAISE THE ALARM! This can be achieved by breaking the glass on the call points or by shouting the instruction "Fire – call the fire brigade".
- Raise the alarm even if you're building is fitted with an automatic fire alarm system, which has not yet activated - you must not wait for it to do so of its own accord. The alarm must be raised for every occurrence of a fire, no matter how small it appears to be. This will ensure that people in the building have adequate notice to evacuate

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- should it begin to spread quickly. In addition, modern furnishings may allow the fire to develop unnoticed, so time is of the essence if everyone is to get out safely.
- Call the fire brigade at the earliest available, and safe, opportunity and do not attempt to tackle the fire unless you have been appropriately trained and can safely do so e.g. a small fire in a waste paper basket. Unless you have been trained you could be putting yourself or somebody else at risk.

h. Personal Safety

Generally, you should try to avoid working alone whenever this is possible. However, if you have to work alone, then you need to develop an awareness of the risks and how to minimise them.

Prior to making an appointment with someone you do not know, obtain as much information as possible about the person you are meeting and arrange to meet the person in Company premises. Always ring back the telephone number you have been given to confirm that it is legitimate. If a mobile number is given you should always ask for an alternative fixed line number.

If visiting, let your colleagues know where you are going, with whom and what time you are expecting to return. If you think that you are going to run over your original timescales, let your colleagues know.

If you are at all concerned that you are being placed in a dangerous situation through your employment, you must discuss this with your line manager.

LONE WORKING POLICY

Objectives

To protect staff from the risk associated with working alone whether they are on the premises, at venues used by groups, travelling alone on work duties or working in an isolated setting

To ensure that staff understand that Friends and Places Together as an employer, does not expect staff to expose themselves to unnecessary risks in the course of their work duties and that Friends and Places Together will support a member of staff if they leave a situation in which they feel at risk

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, lone working will be categorised into two distinct types of work:

Working alone in premises or venues used by groups

Travelling alone between the two categories above.

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GENERAL RULES

We must have details of your (work and personal) mobile number, your home contact number and a person to be contacted in case of emergencies. .

A personal alarm will be provided if requested

A record of daily movements should be kept in the calendar.

WORKING ALONE IN THE ORGANISATION PREMISES/VENUES

Having one person working alone in premises or venues is undesirable. However, as it is not practical to always ensure that two people are present then the emphasis of this policy is to reduce risk. When there is more than one person in the premises, there is still need for vigilance.

Before entering the building

Ensure that the premises look as you would expect them to do – no signs of damage or occupancy and no signs of doors or windows forced or unlocked when you expect them to be locked

If you have concerns do not enter but contact your line manager or ask a second person to enter the building with you. **Do not enter alone.**

On entering the building

Ensure that the building and contents are as you would expect them – If you have any concerns leave the premises and contact your manager.

Whilst working alone in the building

Work as near as possible to the telephone

Ensure that the front door is locked and that the security door and emergency fire exit doors are closed. **Do not** pull the security guard across the fire door until you leave.

Do not open doors unless you know or have checked the identity of any visitor

When talking to anybody you do not know on the phone, do not tell them you are alone in the building

If you hear the fire alarm, apart from the regular test on Thursday, exit the building in the usual way and contact your manager. If we are notified that there will be a fire alarm and it is known that you are scheduled to be the only person in the building you will be warned in advance.

If anybody appears in the office that you do not know, remain calm and non-threatening – ask who they are and who they are looking for, explain that the person they are looking for is not present and escort them from the premises. Then contact your manager or emergency contact.

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Always trust your instincts – if you do not feel comfortable about letting a person in the building, then ask them to return at a time when you will not be alone.

If you make an appointment with somebody for the first time or with somebody who you are not comfortable being with then arrange for somebody else to be in the office, or in the meeting with you, at the time of the appointment

On leaving the building

Ensure all doors are shut, close the grill on the fire exit door and lock, double lock the front door.

If an incident takes place

If an incident occurs where there is a breach of your personal safety, you should complete an incident report including the date, time, location and description of the incident including names and contact details of any witnesses if known. This should be given to your line manager. This should be done no matter how minor the incident as the policies stated here may need to be reviewed.

WORKING ALONE AT THE VENUES OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS

1. Try to only arrange appointments at the premises of other organisations if you know that there will be more than one other person present, if this is unlikely arrange the appointment at Friends and Places offices
2. If you arrive at the premises of another organisation and you are not comfortable with going ahead with the appointment then leave and report this to your line manager

TRAVELLING ALONE DURING WORKING HOURS

Travelling alone holds the same risks whether or not you are travelling for work purposes or pleasure. However, it is far more likely that during working time you will be travelling in unfamiliar areas and therefore the planning of the travel is far more important.

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust recommends that an individual plans their movements whether at work or in daily life.

P*L*A*N - For being safe out and about

Prepare yourself for the journey

Look confident

Avoid risk

Never assume

Prepare yourself for your journey

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Know exactly where you are going and how you are going to get there
Ensure that you have informed the office (by way of diary) or your line manager where you are going
Assess any risks there may be in doing the journey you are about to undertake
Ensure you have your personal belongings (e.g. keys, travel card) in your pocket and other items in a bag which sits close to your body with fastening innermost

Look confident

Stand tall and look as if you know what you are doing and where you are going
Be alert to what is going on around you
Do not wear a personal stereo
Carry a personal alarm
Ensure you have a working mobile phone with you

Avoid risk

Do not take short cuts unless they are as safe as the longer route
Do not change plans at the last minute

Never Assume

It won't happen to me
Do not ignore your instincts

REMEMBER NEVER PUT YOURSELF AT RISK – TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS!

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WORKING WITH SERVICE USERS WHO MIGHT LACK MENTAL CAPACITY POLICY

Principles

1. Friends and Places Together complies with the principles of the **Mental Capacity Act 2005** by first treating all of the people who use our services and prospective service users on the basis that they are able to take their own decisions.

The five statutory principles are:

1. A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity.
2. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps to help them to do so have been taken without success.
3. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because he/she makes an unwise decision.
4. An act done, or decision made, under this Act for or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be done, or made, in their best interests.
5. Before the act is done, or the decision is made, regard must be had to whether the purpose for which it is needed can be as effectively achieved in a way that is less restrictive of the person's rights and freedom of action.

How to tell if someone can make a decision

There are several things you should consider when assessing if a person can make a decision:

- if the person understands what decision they need to make and why they need to make it
- if the person understands what might happen if they do or do not make this decision
- if the person can understand and weigh up the information relevant to this decision

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- if the person can communicate their decision (by talking, using sign language or any other means)
- if the person can communicate with help from a professional (such as a speech and language therapist)
- if there is a need for a more thorough assessment (perhaps by involving a doctor or other professional expert)

You must not treat the person as unable to make a decision just because they make decision you don't agree with.

2. There might be some occasions when Friends and Places Together staff in the course of their support work become involved or find it necessary to enter into some decision making process on behalf of someone who cannot take a decision at the time that it needs to be taken. In respect of the involvement of a domiciliary care service this is most likely to be related to a care matter.
3. Friends and Places Together will take decisions on behalf of a service user only if there is evidence that they cannot take the decision (at the time it needs to be made) because of mental incapacity. It will co-operate with relatives and others involved with the service user in decision making on behalf of a person on the same basis.
4. It will not take or collude in taking decisions for a service user where, from its point of view, there is insufficient evidence and it does not appear to be in that person's best interests.
5. Friends and Places Together will only take a decision for one of its service users after it has exhausted every means of enabling the person to take it of their own accord. It will also show its actions in taking the decision are reasonable and in the person's best interests.
6. Where Friends and Places Together has information that suggests the person might be unable to take some decisions at some times it will carry out or contribute to an assessment of that person's mental capacity. It recognises that the assessment procedure should follow the two step assessment process recommended in the Mental Capacity Act's Code of Practice.

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Stage 1 diagnostic test

First, an assessment needs to be made as to whether there is impairment in the functioning of the mind. The approach is referred to as the 'diagnostic test', which requires evidence of a condition that can be shown to impair functioning such as to render the individual unable to make the decision. This test should be applied at the time the decision is to be made without regard to whether the condition is permanent or temporary. In addition to this, the assessment must be with reference to objective criteria rather than on assumptions drawn from appearance or prejudicial assumptions about that condition.

Stage 2 functional test

Secondly, an assessment needs to be made as to whether a person is unable to make a decision about a specific matter and therefore lacks capacity in relation to that specific matter. This is referred to as the functional test.

7. Friends and Places Together ensures that it complies with the all aspects of the law in the cases of service users who are subject to guardianship proceedings or who need legal protection on account of their lack of mental capacity. It includes here service users, who have assigned powers of attorney or who are subject to Court of Protection proceedings.
8. Friends and Places Together familiarises and acts upon any advance directives or "living wills" that its service users have chosen to make in contingency situations where they might lose the ability to take a decision. The agency also attempts to find out about any end-of-life plans so that a service user's wishes are known in the event of their death.

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Assessment of Mental Capacity

1. Friends and Places Together ensures that a person's needs assessment and service user plan of care contain all the information needed relating to a person's decision taking capacity and the decisions over which they might need help on account of their possible lack of capacity.

2. The information included indicates
 - a) Which decisions the person is able to take at all/most times,
 - b) Those that the person has difficulty in taking
 - c) Those that the person is unable to take.

3. In respect of each area of decision taking where there are difficulties or an inability to take decisions, the service user plan of care records the actions to be taken for the person that are deemed in their best interests.

4. The individual is always as fully involved as possible. Decisions are only taken on the basis of the best information available and the agreement of those concerned in the person's care and future. All decisions taken for that person are fully recorded and made subject to regular review.

5. Service users who lack mental capacity as any others, are only subject to any form of restraint when by not doing so would result in injury or harm to them or to other people. All incidents where restraint has been used follow the agency's procedures for reporting and recording.

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Staff Involvement

1. Friends and Places Together expects its support staff to implement the agreements and decisions that are identified on an individual's plan of care.
2. Friends and Places Together also expects its staff to involve service users in all day to day decisions that need to be taken by seeking their consent and checking that the actions to be taken are consistent with their plan of care if the individual service user lacks capacity at the time.
3. Where the service user needs to take a decision that lies outside of their ability at the time staff must do everything to help the person decide for her or himself.
4. Friends and Places Together expects its staff to avoid taking decisions on behalf of a service user unless they can show that it is necessary and the service user at the time is unable to take that decision her or himself. Any such incident must be fully recorded.
5. Friends and Places Together expects its staff to take decisions for service users lacking capacity only because they have reasonable beliefs that they are necessary and in the person's best interests. When in doubt that they can proceed in this way they must seek advice from their line manager.
6. Where there are concerns raised about Mental Capacity the Registered Manager will inform the allocated care manager or social services and discuss a referral for an assessment to take place and an independent mental capacity advocate (IMCA) to be appointed.

Training

We know that choice has become increasingly important for service users and we will attempt to advance this principle throughout our operations. We will ensure that every service user who receives our service has positively opted to use our agency.

We will try to provide service users with the chance to exercise choice about the support workers with whom they interact and will change the worker in instances when the service user requests it. We are particularly sensitive to matching workers and service users where issues of gender, culture or ethnicity play a role.

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8. Training and Development

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

1.1 The purposes of training for staff, volunteers and Trustees

1.11 Friends and Places Together has a commitment both to the development of increasing capacity in the voluntary sector to produce high quality services to the people of Islington as well as to

1.12 The career and personal development of all of those involved (whether as staff, managers or volunteers) in the work of Friends and Places Together

1.2 Training and Friends and Place's objectives

1.21 Friends and Places Together mission as a member Southend Association for Voluntary Service "providing efficient and cost effective services to the people of the Borough targeted at those people with the greatest need" can only be effectively promoted if we are ourselves a centre of good practice. This necessitates the employment of staff and the recruitment of volunteers and Trustees members who can provide advice, information and expertise on all aspects of Training will be crucial in this respect.

1.22 Due to the increasing complexity of charity law, the increasing onus on trustee liability and the diminishing funding base for the sector as a Mole, it is vital that training to enable staff to keep abreast of new developments is prioritised.

1.3 Friends and Places Together staff training budget

1.31 Friends and Place's staff training budget is currently set at £400 for the organisation for the year

1.32 Friends and Place budgets for staff training as part of its overall budget for staff costs, we therefore consider staff training to be an integral part of the cost of employing staff and all funding applications take this approach into account.

1.33 Pressure on budget in the last few years has led to cutbacks on a number of expenditure items. However we believe that continuing to earmark funds for staff training must continue to be a priority.

1.34 The figure of £400 is therefore a rough allowance for annual expenditure on staff. However Friends and Places Together will attempt to be as flexible as possible in meeting the training needs and demands of individual members of

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staff, and where necessary some more expensive training needs may need to be separately fundraised for.

1.4 **Assessment of staff training need**

1.41 Individual training needs:

These are assessed in two main ways:

1.411 In the first place through the regular supervision sessions that all staff have with their respective line managers. Discussions around training needs should be a core part of each supervision session and the training received by each staff member should be annually reviewed.

1.412 Chief Officer will put forward training opportunities to relevant staff as part of their specific roles in the community.

1.413 Requests to attend training courses or conferences will be cleared with the staff member's line manager and any expenditure must be properly sanctioned.

1.42 Group, team and other organisational training needs

1.421 Staff training needs may be best served by organising training for staff in groups as well as regular "away days" for the whole staff team. Assessment of need for this type of training input will arise either through staff meetings or line managers identifying common training needs.

1.422 Where possible funding for this kind of training will be found outside of the staff training budget, which will be prioritised for individual training.

1.5 **Training priorities and criteria**

1.51 Whilst wishing to allow the most flexible use of individual staff training budgets,

Chief Officer Will priorities work related training or training that is of direct relevance in improving the performance of staff in carrying out the different aspects of their job descriptions or addressing issues of direct relevance to Islington's voluntary sector.

1.52 Staff will however be encouraged to take up training possibilities around areas of personal growth or interest where this is appropriate and does not conflict with other more direct training needs as identified by line managers.

1.53 An important criterion will be the impact of the time spent training on the individual staff member's ability to carry out their own job description and manage their own workload as well as the impact on other staff who will be expected to cover for them while they are absent.

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2. ACCESS TO TRAINING

- 2.1 SAVS is able to offer a wide variety of courses to its staff (at no cost to Friends and Places Together) and where appropriate staff will be expected to attend courses run by Friends and Places Together rather than similar courses run by other agencies.
- 2.2 Friends and Places Together's courses can also be offered free to volunteers.
- 2.3 Friends and Places Together's Executive Committee are offered free attendance at up to four of Friends and Places Together's courses per annum.
- 2.4 Where appropriate Friends and Places Together will encourage volunteers and EC members to attend training events and conferences run by external agencies. Funding for attendance at conferences by staff or others representing Friends and Places Together will not come from the staff training budget.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Friends and Places Together will strive to priorities training opportunities for Friends and Places Together staff, volunteers and management committee members who have traditionally missed out on such opportunities.
- 3.2 Friends and Places Together will seek to facilitate attendance at conferences and training events by staff with children or other dependents. This will be achieved by approving expense claims for childcare, crèche provision etc. and in other ways as necessary.
- 3.3 Friends and Places Together will continue to promote training that furthers equality of opportunity or helps individuals and voluntary groups challenge oppression and oppressive behavior. Staff, volunteers and management committee members will be encouraged to attend such training and suitable programmes will be included in Friends and Places Together's Annual Training Programme.
- 3.4 Friends and Places Together staff and management committee members who might be involved in recruiting staff for the Organisation will be encouraged to attend an Equal Opportunities recruitment course.

4. IN-HOUSE TRAINING

- 4.1 Staff, volunteers and management committee members are encouraged to attend in house courses run as part of Friends and Places Together's training programme for voluntary organisations,
- 4.2 From time to time Friends and Places Together will run review days or staff training events which may involve using an outside trainer/facilitator.
- 4.3 Friends and Places Together will provide an induction session to all new EC members shortly after each AGM. (See Friends and Places Together's Induction Policy)

5. EXTERNAL TRAINING

- 5.1 Friends and Places Together will encourage staff, volunteers and management committee members to attend courses run by outside agencies in line with development agreed at supervision and in appraisals.
- 5.2 Friends and Places Together will keep training information course brochures readily available at Friends and Places Together's offices.

6. TRAINING FOR QUALIFICATIONS

- 6.1 Friends and Places Together will encourage staff to undertake training for relevant qualifications,
- 6.2 Reasonable time off for training and portfolio preparation will be allowed after discussion with line managers.
- 6.3 Regular support and reviews of progress will be made as part of staff supervision sessions.

7. EXTENDED OR LONG TERM TRAINING

- 7.1 Friends and Places Together recognises the need for staff to consider achieving a variety of appropriate qualifications that are relevant to their work for the organisation.
- 7.2 Line managers will consider using individual staff training budgets for this purpose and may identify underspend in the training budget as a whole to contribute towards the costs of this form of training.
- 7.3 Time off (to a maximum of 1 day off per week for a specialized period) to attend course modules will be given sympathetic consideration by managers and

regular reviews of the benefits to individual staff development will be undertaken as part of regular staff supervision sessions.

9. Leaving Friends and Places

a. Notice Periods

Unless your employment is terminated by agreement, or specified otherwise in your principal statement of terms and conditions, you or the Company are required to give a period of notice in writing as follows:

- one week's notice after one month's employment
- two weeks after two years
- three weeks after three years and so on up to 12 weeks maximum after 12 years or more.

These periods of notice will apply if you are dismissed on grounds of inefficiency or if your dismissal is the result of disciplinary proceedings in circumstances where summary dismissal is not justified. Your employment may be terminated without notice where dismissal follows disciplinary proceedings.

b. Working Notice

In all cases the Company reserves the right to enforce your full notice period. Your full remaining annual leave entitlement should be taken during your notice period in agreement with your line manager. Exceptionally, if this is not possible, your manager may agree to make a payment in lieu of this. If you leave any day other than the last working day of that month, that month will not count for annual leave purposes.

If you resign and are in possession of Company property (including computer files), you should make your manager aware of these, and arrange how they will be handed back to the Company. You remain bound by the confidentiality arrangements outlined in your contract of employment during this period.

In exceptional circumstances, if deemed appropriate and as an alternative to working your notice, the Company reserves the right either to transfer you to other suitable duties during your notice period or to require you to accept payment in lieu of any entitlement to notice.

c. Other Conditions on Leaving

On leaving, the Company will deduct from any money due to you such sums as you may owe to the Company. These may include, but are not restricted to, any loans,

relocation assistance, court orders and payment made for holidays taken in excess of entitlement.

If you leave without giving notice and without the Company's agreement, you are in breach of your contract and you may forfeit some or all of any salary due to you.

Before leaving, you must hand over to your manager all articles belonging to the company including your ID badge and any documents, equipment and computer software used at home. Documents and software include (but are not limited to) correspondence, diaries, address books, databases, files, reports, plans, records or any other medium for storing information. You should not retain any copies, drafts, reproductions, extracts or summaries of documents and software.

After you have left the Company, you must not:

- Solicit or seek to entice away any Company staff
- Use or divulge to any person or organisation any confidential information relating to the Company

Should your employment be terminated following disciplinary action it is likely you will receive payment in lieu of notice. However, as there are numerous reasons as to why someone is dismissed, payment in lieu of notice will be reviewed on an individual basis taking into consideration the reasons behind the dismissal.

Should you be dismissed for reasons of gross misconduct, your employment will be terminated immediately without the benefit of notice or payment in lieu of notice.

d. Retirement

In line with current legislation Friends and Places does not have an age where it expects employees to retire? It is however our policy to have regular workplace /appraisal discussions with all our staff where they can discuss performance and any development needs they may have, as well as their future aims and aspirations. Staff and their managers can also use this opportunity to discuss retirement planning should the employee wish to do so.

You should ensure that you inform your line manager at least 6 months before you plan to retire to ensure all appropriate arrangements are made (e.g. sourcing a replacement, mobilising your Company pension etc.).

10. Appendix 1 Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

SCOPE

The Company Disciplinary Procedure will be used only when necessary and as a last resort. Where possible, informal and/or formal counselling or other good management practice will be used to resolve matters prior to any disciplinary action being taken. The procedure is intended to be positive rather than punitive but takes cognisance of the fact that sanctions may have to be applied in some circumstances. An employee can discuss any part of this policy with their Line Manager. They can help clarify an employee's rights as well as give guidance and support where it may be needed. Every individual has the right to representation at any point during the disciplinary process.

SUSPENSION

Suspension is not disciplinary action. The purpose of suspension is manifold and can be used when it is necessary to remove a member of staff from the workplace pending an investigation for example, to allow time for a 'cooling down period' for both parties, for their own or others protection, to prevent them influencing or being influenced by others or to prevent possible interference with evidence. Only the Manager in charge of that individual, at that time or their superior, have the authority to suspend an individual.

An employee suspended from duty will receive written confirmation within three days of:

- the reason for the suspension
- The date and time from which the suspension will operate.
- The timescale of the ongoing investigation.
- the right of appeal to the immediate manager of the suspending manager should the suspension last more than 7 days

COUNSELLING

Counselling is an attempt to correct a situation and prevent it from getting worse without having to use the disciplinary procedure. Where improvement is required, the employee must be given clear guidelines as to:

- what is expected in terms of improving shortcomings in conduct or performance
- the time scales for improvement
- when this will be reviewed
- The employee must also be told, where appropriate, that failure to improve may result in formal disciplinary action.

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A record of the counselling should be given to the employee and a copy retained in their personnel file. It is imperative that any counselling should be followed up and improvements recognised and recorded. Once the counselling objectives have been met, any record of the counselling will be removed from the employees file.

If during counselling it becomes clear that the matter is more serious, then the discussion should be adjourned, and pursued under the formal disciplinary procedure.

PROCEDURE FOR FORMAL INVESTIGATION

Formal investigations should be carried out by the most appropriate manager who is not directly involved with the incident being investigated. This manager may involve others to assist with the investigation process. All the relevant facts should be gathered promptly as soon as is practicable after the incident. Statements should be taken from witnesses at the earliest opportunity. Any physical evidence should be preserved and/or photographed if reasonable to do so.

A report should be prepared which outlines the facts of the case. This should be submitted to the appropriate senior manager / Director who will decide whether further action is required. Where appropriate, this report may be made available to the individual and their representative...

In most circumstances where misconduct or serious misconduct is suspected, it will be appropriate to set up an investigatory hearing. This would be chaired by the appropriate Senior Manager / Director, who would be accompanied by another manager. The investigating manager would be asked to present his/her findings in the presence of the employee who has been investigated. Witnesses should be called at this stage, and the employee allowed to question these witnesses. The employee has a right of representation at this hearing.

Following the full presentation of the facts, and the opportunity afforded to the employee to state his side of the case, the hearing should be adjourned, and everyone would leave the room except the senior manager / Director Hearing the case, and the other manager. They would discuss the case and decide which of the following option was appropriate:

1. Take no further action against the employee
2. Recommend counselling for the employee
3. Proceed to a disciplinary hearing

All parties should be brought back, and informed as to which option has been chosen.

Should the decision be taken to proceed to a disciplinary hearing, then this may follow on immediately from the investigatory hearing if the following criteria have been met:

- the employee has been informed by letter that the investigation may turn into a disciplinary hearing, and that he has the right of representation
- he has been told in advance what the nature of the complaint is, and had time to consult with a representative

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- All the facts have been produced at the investigatory hearing, and the manager / Director is in a position to decide on disciplinary action.
- The manager should inform the employee and their representative that the hearing would now become a formal disciplinary hearing, and invite them to say anything further in relation to the case.

It may be appropriate at this point to adjourn proceedings, whilst necessary arrangements are made for a representative to attend the hearing at the request of the employee.

Should anyone who is subject to disciplinary action resign during the course of it, the action will cease unless there are extenuating circumstances which require its continuance. The subject of the discipline may also request that the disciplinary action continue.

WARNINGS

Examples of Minor Misconduct

Below are listed examples of misconduct which may warrant either a Verbal Warning or a First Written Warning. It is stressed however that this list is not exhaustive and that on all occasions a full and proper investigation must take place prior to the issue of a warning.

- Persistent lateness and poor time-keeping.
- Absence from work, including going absent during work, without valid reason, notification or authorisation.
- Smoking within unauthorised areas.
- Failure to work in accordance with prescribed procedures.
- Incompetence.
- Unreasonable standards of dress or personal hygiene.
- Failure to observe Company regulations and procedures.

Verbal Warning

A Verbal Warning is appropriate when it is necessary for the manager in charge to take action against an employee for any minor failing or minor misconduct.

First Written Warning

A First Written Warning is appropriate when:

- A verbal warning has not been heeded and the misconduct is either repeated or performance has not improved as previously agreed.
- An offence is of a more serious nature for which a written warning is more appropriate.
- The recurrence or accumulation of an offence/offences, if left, will lead to more severe disciplinary action.

Examples of Gross – Misconduct

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Listed below are examples of misconduct which may be considered to be Gross Misconduct and may warrant a Final Warning, Demotion or Dismissal. It is stressed however that this list is not exhaustive and that on all occasions a full and proper investigation must take place prior to the issuing of a Final Warning, Demotion or Dismissal.

- Theft, including unauthorised possession of Company property.
- Breaches of confidentiality, prejudicial to the interest of the Company,
- Being unfit for duty because of the misuse/consumption of drugs or alcohol.
- Refusal to carry out a management instruction which is within the individuals capabilities and which would be seen to be in the interests of the Company.
- Breach of confidentiality / security procedures.
- Bribing or attempting to bribe another individual, or personally taking or knowingly allowing another person to take a bribe;
- Physical assault, breach of the peace or verbal abuse.
- False declaration of qualifications or professional registration.
- Failure to observe Company rules, regulations or procedures.
- Wilful damage of property at work.
- Incompetence or failure to apply sound professional judgement.

Final Written Warning

A Final Written Warning is appropriate when:

- An employee's offence is of a serious nature falling just short of one justifying dismissal.
- An employee persists in the misconduct which previously warranted a lesser warning.

Downgrading or Transfer to another Post

This action is appropriate when:

- Previous attempts, via the disciplinary procedure, to rectify a problem have failed and this is a final attempt to solve a problem without having to dismiss an employee.
- An employee is considered by the Manager of the department to be incompetent or otherwise unfit to fulfil the duties for which he is employed but where dismissal is not thought to be appropriate.

Dismissal

Dismissal is appropriate when

- An employee's behaviour is considered to be Gross Misconduct.
- An employee's misconduct has persisted, exhausting all other lines of disciplinary procedure.

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Time Scales for the expiry of Warnings

Warnings issued to employees shall be deemed to have expired after the following periods of time.

- Verbal Warnings: 6 months
- First Written Warnings: 12 months
- Final Written Warnings: 18 months (or as agreed and recorded at the hearing)

These time scales remain provided that during that period, no further warnings have been issued in respect of the employee's conduct.

LETTER OF WARNING

All Warnings must contain the following information:

- The letter must be issued within 7 days of the date of the disciplinary hearing.
- The nature of the offence and where appropriate, that if further misconduct occurs, more severe disciplinary action will be taken.
- The period of time given to the employee for improvement.
- The employee's right to appeal to the manager directly above that of the one issuing the warning.
- A copy of the warning and any supporting documentation must be attached to the individual's personnel file.
- The employee must also receive a copy of the warning which in the case of any written warning will be sent to their home address by recorded delivery if not handed to them in person.
- In the case of a final written warning, reference must be made to the fact that any further misconduct will lead to dismissal, and that the employee has the right of appeal, and to whom they can make that appeal.

The letter confirming dismissal will contain the following information:

- The reason for dismissal and any administrative matter arising from the termination of their employment.
- The employee's right of appeal and to whom they should make that appeal

APPEALS

Every employee has the right to appeal against the outcome of a disciplinary hearing. The basis of an appeal should normally relate to one of the following areas:

- That the Company's Procedure had not been followed correctly.
- That the resulting disciplinary action was inappropriate.
- That the need for disciplinary action was not warranted.
- That new information regarding disciplinary action, has arisen

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An appeal should be put in writing. The letter of appeal may be constructed by the employee or their representative. The letter should contain the grounds for appeal and should be lodged within 10 days of receipt of the warning / dismissal letter. An appeal will be arranged within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal letter.

Appeals against Verbal and First Warnings

In the case of verbal and first warnings, the appeal will be heard by the manager next in line to the one who issued the warning.

Appeals against Downgrading, Final Warnings and Dismissal

The hearing and determining of appeals against final warnings and dismissal will be heard by the appropriate Director or Chief Executive. They may also involve another senior manager / Director not previously involved with the case.

When dealing with an appeal against a Final Warning or Dismissal written statements of case may be submitted no later than 2 days prior to the date of Appeal Hearing. No additional written evidence will be admitted by the Appeal Committee on the date of the Hearing.

Witnesses may be required by either party at an appeal hearing, dependent upon the circumstances and nature of the case. However, there is no specific obligation on either party to produce a witness. Either party must give 5 days prior notice that they intend to call specific persons involved or associated with the case under consideration.

It is the responsibility of the management representative and for the appellant to each arrange for the availability and attendance of any witness they wish to call.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The grievance procedure is intended as the tool by which a member of staff may formally have a grievance, regarding any condition of their employment, heard by the management of the Company. The aggrieved employee has the right to representation by, a professional organisation, a staff association or a colleague/friend.

In the event of a member of staff wishing to raise a grievance, it is preferable for the grievance to be satisfactorily resolved as close to the individual and their line manager as possible. It is understood however that this is not always possible and that a formal procedure is required to ensure the swift and fair resolution of matters which aggrieve the hospital's employees.

Time scales have been fixed to ensure that grievances are dealt with quickly, however these may be extended if it is agreed upon by both parties.

This procedure is not intended to deal with:

1. Dismissal or disciplinary matters which are dealt with in a separate procedure.
2. Disputes, which are of a collective nature and which are dealt with in a separate procedure.

Stage 1

An employee who has a grievance, should raise the matter with his manager immediately either verbally or in writing. If the matter itself concerns the employee's immediate manager, then the grievance should be taken to their superior.

If the manager is unable to resolve the matter at that time then a formal written grievance form should be submitted (see appendix 1). The manager should then respond within **2 working days** (i.e. the manager's normal working days) to the grievance unless an extended period of time is agreed upon by both parties. The response will give a full written explanation of the manager's decision and who to appeal to if still aggrieved.

Stage 2

In most instances the Company would expect the manager's decision to be final and for the matter to come to a close. However, in some circumstances the employee may remain aggrieved and can appeal against the decision of the manager concerned.

Friends and Places Together / Break With Mates

20 Crowstone Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 8BA

Website: www.friendsandplaces.org.uk www.breakwithmates.org.uk

Facebook Page: Break with Mates

Registered charity number 1159584

Company number 08554307

The appeal, to the manager next in line, must be made within ten working days of the original response to the employee's grievance. The appeal must be in writing (see appendix 2) and contain the original formal Grievance form. This manager will attempt to resolve the grievance. A formal response and full explanation will be given in writing, as will the name of the person to whom they can appeal if still aggrieved, **within 7 days**.

Where the 'next in line' manager at this stage is the Director with responsibility for the employees function, then the grievance should immediately progress to stage 3.

Stage 3

If the employee remains aggrieved there will be a final level of appeal to the Director responsible for the employees function. This appeal must be made in writing (see appendix 3), enclosing a copy of the original Formal Grievance form, to the director within ten working days of receipt of the Stage 2 response. This Director will arrange and hear the appeal with another management representative and respond formally with a full explanation **within 20 working days**.

Where a grievance is raised against a Director then the grievance will be heard by the Chief Executive.

There is no further right of appeal. Where however **both** parties agree that there would be some merit in referring the matter to a third party for advice, conciliation or arbitration, arrangements will then be made to find a mutually acceptable third party.

Grievance Procedure - Appendix 1

To:

From:

Dept:

Date:

Immediate Superior:

Dear

I wish to take a formal grievance out against:

In line with the Company Grievance Procedure. The details of my grievance are shown below:

Yours sincerely,

(Manager should respond to this formal written grievance within 2 working days unless an extended period for response is mutually agreed)

Grievance Procedure - Appendix 2

To

From

Dept

Date

Immediate Superior

Dear

On (within 10 days of the response to the initial formal grievance) my grievance against was heard by

I am not satisfied with the outcome of this meeting and would like to appeal to yourself for a further hearing of my grievance, in line with the Company Grievance Procedure.

I enclose a copy of the original letter regarding this matter and other correspondence and information related to it.

Yours sincerely

(Manager should respond to this formal written grievance within 7 days unless an extended period for response is mutually agreed)

Grievance Procedure - Appendix 3

To (Director):

From:

Dept:

Date:

Immediate Superior:

Dear

On (within 10 days of the response to the second stage of the formal grievance) I appealed to against the decision made at my initial grievance against

I remain dissatisfied with the outcome of this meeting and would like to appeal to you for a further hearing of my grievance, in line with the Company Grievance Procedure.

I enclose a copy of the original letter regarding this matter and other correspondence and information related to it.

Yours sincerely

(Director should respond to this formal written grievance within 20 working days unless an extended period for response is mutually agreed)

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

People wishing to make a complaint about the quality or level of service provided by Friends and Places Together – FandPT -should be encouraged to do so. FandPT aims to provide the best possible service to all that are involved in the organisation as well as families and individuals that use the services offered. The charity needs to know when it falls short of this ideal.

- 1 Any individual or organisation may make a complaint by writing to:
 - A. the Chief Officer – Companies address
 - B. the Chair of the Board of Trustees, c/o companies address – 20 Crowstone Road, Westcliff on Sea, SS0 8BA
- 2 When the complaint is regarding the Chief Officer of Friends and Places Together, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will take responsibility for investigating the complaint, following the process set out in paragraph 3 below.
- 3 For any other complaint, the Chief Officer shall:
 - a. Within fourteen days of receipt of the letter of complaint, acknowledge the letter in writing, setting out in that letter of acknowledgement the steps that will be taken to investigate the complaint.
 - b. log the complaint in the complaints register - which is open for inspection by:
 - i. any member of the Board of Trustees
 - ii. any person or representative authorised by the Board of Trustees
 - c. Investigate the circumstances leading to the complaint.
 - d. Communicate in writing the results of the inquiry and any action taken or to be taken to the complainant within 28 days from the letter of acknowledgement.
 - e. The person making the complaint shall have the right, if dissatisfied with the results of this inquiry, to appeal to the full Board of Trustees.
- 4 All complaints will be dealt with in confidence, except where the person making the complaint gives his/her permission for the substance of the complaint to be more widely discussed.

1. Appendix 2 - Contacts

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Name	Designation	Telephone	Email

2. Appendix 3 - Confirmation of Receipt of Handbook Form

Name:	
Designation:	
Place of Work:	
Line Manager:	

I confirm I have received a copy of the Friends and Places Together Staff Handbook and that I have read this and understood the contents.

I also confirm that I have sought clarification from my line manager on any issues outlined in the Handbook which I am not clear about.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form duly completed and signed to your line manager.