**WORK PLACE CHAPLAINCY SCOTLAND**

**Listening & caring - in confidence**

**VULNERABLE GROUPS POLICY STATEMENT**

Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all vulnerable groups, by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm, and from neglect and bullying.

We are committed to meeting this obligation by providing the highest level of care for them, through our Vulnerable Group procedures.

This policy and its procedures applies to anyone within Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland.

Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland will consider whether anyone who has a criminal conviction or caution for offenses spent, or unspent related to the abuse of vulnerable groups should be excluded from working with vulnerable groups or have access to them. This exclusion of such individuals is a position reinforced by UK Legislation and Guidance.

**OBJECTIVES**

Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland has responsibility to ensure that its activities are free from abuse and to ensure that it has put into place adequate measures to report proper concerns to the appropriate statutory body.

This Policy sets the following objectives:

* to ensure that all those who participate in any way whatsoever are aware of the Vulnerable Groups protection procedures set out in this policy;
* that the Staff and Volunteers of Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland are conversant with the vulnerable group procedures and ensure that they are implemented and that any concerns are raised promptly with the Team Leader;
* that all new volunteers who may work with vulnerable individuals or groups complete an application form which ensures that all offenses, spent and unspent are disclosed. (Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974);
* that all staff, Support and Development Group members and volunteers of Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland are aware of their duty to report any incident of alleged abuse.

**CODES OF PRACTICE FOR STAFF, SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP, VOLUNTEERS AND USERS**

***Recommended good practice***

* Within the bounds of protecting confidentiality, meet individuals in a public place, in order to avoid situations where an individual cannot be observed.
* Behave with grace and dignity avoiding unnecessary physical contact.
* Create a safe and comfortable situation.
* Maintain a written report of any incident or injury together with any subsequent treatment or action and immediately complete an accident report form and pass to the administrative coordinator immediately.

***Practice to be Avoided***

* Spending excessive amounts of time alone with members of vulnerable groups away from others.

***Practice Which Should Never be Condoned***

**You should never:**

* engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
* allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
* make sexually suggestive remarks to a member of a vulnerable group – even in fun;
* allow anyone to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
* allow allegations made by a member of a vulnerable group to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
* abuse your privileged position of power or trust anyone;
* cause a participant to lose self-esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual;
* show favouritism.

**DISCLOSURES**

Successful candidates to chaplaincy posts, both paid and voluntary, are required to undertake a Basic Disclosure check, the fee for which will be refunded in full by WPCS.

For certain positions, an enhanced disclosure or PVG will be required. This will be undertaken in partnership with the organisation served.

**Referrals**

Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland does not have a designated Vulnerable Group Officer but any further queries regarding referrals, training matters or issues of concern should be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer of Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland.