



A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC050063

Nourish Support Centre Volunteering Handbook



Thank you for joining our team of dedicated volunteers. Your contribution will make a real difference in Nourish being able to deliver their aims and objectives, and in turn make a real difference to the lives of families with additional support needs in Kirkcaldy and Fife.

This handbook provides essential information to help you thrive in your volunteering role. And while it is hoped it will provide you with all the information you may need, please remember one of Nourishes staff team is always available for you to chat any concerns, problems, or challenges, you may have, through with you.

Your named go to staff member is: _____

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Volunteering for Nourish
 - 2.1 Nourish Values
 - 2.2 Volunteer Induction
 - 2.3 Role Descriptions
3. Time Commitment
 - 3.1 Volunteer Arrangements
 - 3.2 Code of Conduct
 - 3.3 Volunteering while getting benefits
 - 3.4 Absence and leaving
4. Volunteering Policies and Procedures
 - 4.1 Insurance
 - 4.2 Expenses
 - 4.3 Confidentiality
 - 4.4 Whistleblowing
 - 4.5 Reward and Recognition
5. Teamwork and Support
 - 5.1 Collaborating with Staff
 - 5.2 Peer Support
6. Learning & Development
 - 6.1 Safeguarding
 - 6.2 Health & Safety
 - 6.3 First Aid
 - 6.4 Equality and Diversity
 - 6.5 Data Protection
7. Resources
 - 7.1 Contact Information
 - 7.2 Useful Links
 - 7.3 FAQs

1. Introduction

Welcome to your volunteering role with Nourish. We hope that you will really enjoy and benefit from your time with us. This handbook aims to provide you with the basic information you will need during your time as a volunteer. It contains information about Nourish, our policies and procedures, and what is expected from you in your volunteering role.

Because we have many different volunteering roles, this guide cannot include all the information you may need. So many things specific to your chosen volunteering role, will be covered in more detail during your induction and first few weeks at Nourish.

If you have any questions about the contents of this handbook as you work through it, please do not hesitate to talk to your named staff member

2. Volunteering for Nourish

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to the Nourish Support Centre family! Your decision to volunteer with us is the start of a meaningful journey, both for you and those we serve. At Nourish, we believe in the power of community, compassion, and the difference dedicated individuals like you can make.

As volunteers, you are at the core of our mission. Your commitment, energy, and passion enable us to support individuals and families in our community, providing the care and encouragement they need to thrive. Whether you are providing direct support, helping behind the scenes, or sharing your skills, your contributions are invaluable.

This handbook is designed to guide you in your role as a volunteer. Inside, you will find key information about our organisation, our values, and what we expect to ensure a positive experience for all.

Thank you for sharing your time and talents with us. Together, we can create a stronger, more supportive community.

Warm regards

The Nourish Support Centre Team

2.1 Nourish Support Centre's Mission

We aim to support and improve the wellbeing of people and families in Fife who have additional support needs. Nourish Support Centre provides much needed and life-changing support to families in Fife who have additional support needs.

Founded in 2011, Nourish was established by five parents who all had children with additional support needs. They wanted to address the significant gaps in support available for families in their situation and understand the daily challenges they face.

Having a child with disabilities affects the whole family and not only causes worries and anxieties, but it also often causes loneliness, isolation, poor mental health, and poverty. Parents also become carers, with other children in the home often also taking on a caring role. Simple everyday tasks and activities that many families take for granted, such as a visit to the local park, become a challenge and sadly, often not achievable.

With lived experience of having children with additional support needs, those at the helm of Nourish Support Centre ensure that our services meet the needs of our service users. By speaking with families using our services, and finding out where the gaps in support are, we ensure we deliver services that meet the needs of families with additional support needs in our community.

Our Mission Statement

- Bringing families together – meeting with other families in a similar situation provides vital support, reduces feelings of isolation, and improves wellbeing.
- Support for the whole family - Having a child with additional support needs usually means parents become carers, and siblings become young carers. We aim to support parents, carers, siblings, adults, and children with additional support needs. Extended family members also provide support, can also access our services.
- Holistic support in a one stop shop – we know the different challenges facing families with additional support needs and we understand the importance of being able to access a wide range of emotional, practical, and financial support in one place.
- Provide a one stop shop for families to access information on support available to them.

2.2 Volunteer Induction

We believe that new starters who receive a good induction benefit in many ways:

- Feel more at ease within your new volunteering role.
- You understand and buy in to the Nourish vision and purpose.
- Volunteers can quickly understand the standard of performance and behaviours expected of them.
- Volunteers who have clear guidelines and support are more likely to stay and grow within your role.
- You become productive more quickly once in your role.

We believe that, whether you volunteer in a retail environment or in a supporting role, the better your induction, the sooner and more effectively you can start delivering or supporting better outcomes for the families we support.

2.3 Role Descriptions

Volunteers participate in many areas of Nourish’s work and undertake a variety of roles; from one-to-one support of service users, sorting the books, clothes, and other donations in our charity shop, helping with fundraising activities and many things in-between.

Because we believe that volunteering should benefit both Nourish’s work and the volunteer we try to make our roles interesting and varied.

We also feel that volunteers like to know what is expected of them, and to be clear about what they should and should not do. Therefore, we have a written volunteering ‘role description’ for every type of volunteering opportunity that we offer.

You will have been given a copy of your role description and may wish to keep it with your handbook and other information about your volunteering.

As time goes on, you or the team you volunteer with may have ideas about how your role could be further developed, or you may feel ready to take on more or different volunteering roles than when you first joined us. If so, please discuss possibilities with your manager.

3. Time Commitment

3.1 Volunteer Arrangements

It is helpful to both yourself, your wider team, and your manager if certain details about your volunteering are agreed at the beginning of your volunteering journey.

You may therefore be asked to sign a *Volunteer Agreement** when you begin your volunteering role with Nourish.

This arrangement is a collaborative arrangement: It outlines not only what you are agreeing to do as a volunteer, but also what you can hope to receive from Nourish.

As a volunteer you have certain rights or things that you can reasonably expect from Nourish. For example, you should receive appropriate training, mentoring and support throughout your role and know who to turn to with problems or difficulties.

Similarly, as a volunteer for Nourish you also have certain responsibilities, or things that Nourish can expect from you. For instance, we would expect that you follow and abide by Nourish's policies that are relevant to your role and our volunteer code of conduct, which can be found on the next page.

Please note, the Volunteer Agreement is made in honour only and does not constitute a legally binding contract, simply a record confirming the understanding of issues discussed between you and your manager, human resources etc.

3.2 Code of Conduct

Purpose

Our Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behaviour expected from all employees and volunteers at Nourish. By adhering to these guidelines, we create a respectful, inclusive, and supportive environment for everyone involved.

Nourish Support Centre ask all employees and volunteers to carry out their role to the best of their ability and in a way that corresponds to Nourish Support Centre's aims and values and to recognise that your role places you in a position of trust, and you must undertake to always uphold that trust.

Respect and Dignity

- Treat all individuals with kindness, empathy, and respect.
- Value diversity and appreciate different perspectives.
- Avoid discriminatory language or behaviour.

Confidentiality

- Safeguard sensitive information about clients, families, and colleagues.

- Do not share confidential details without proper authorisation.

Professionalism

- Always maintain a professional manner. Develop and maintain appropriate working relationships, based on mutual trust and respect, and help to resolve any problems or difficulties.
- To be a good role model, for example avoiding use of bad language, innuendos, poor practice etc.
- Not enter sexual or inappropriate relationships with service users and/or invite children, young people, or service users to your home.
- To know and respect Nourish's policies and procedures.
- Uphold the reputation of Nourish Support Centre at all times.
- Dress appropriately for the workplace, please refer to Nourish Support Centre's *Dress Code Policy* for further guidance.
- To be dependable and punctual. If you are unable to attend, to phone to say so, giving as much notice as possible.

Communication

- Communicate openly and honestly and give enthusiastic constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Listen actively and considerately.
- Resolve conflicts constructively.

Safety

- Prioritise safety for all, including physical and emotional well-being.
- To observe health and safety measures in the area in which you are work/volunteering, for example making sure fire exits are clear, reporting any spills which may be a hazard etc.
- Not to be physically or verbally offensive.
- Report any safety or safeguarding concerns promptly.

Accountability

- Fulfil your responsibilities diligently.
- Not to smoke, vape, drink alcohol, or use illegal drugs whilst in the workplace or attend the workplace under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Volunteers: Honour your commitments and schedules.
- Employees: Fulfil your job duties effectively.

Social Media

- Represent Nourish positively on social media.
- Avoid sharing confidential information online.
- Please familiarise yourself with Nourish Support Centres Social Media Policies '*Easy Read*' guide

Non-Judgmental Attitude

- Approach all situations with empathy and understanding.
- Refrain from making assumptions or passing judgement.
- Treat people equally and with respect, being fair, honest, and considerate.

No-Blame Culture

- Encourage learning from mistakes rather than assigning blame.
- Focus on solutions and improvement.
- Support colleagues during challenging times.

We must all be accountable and recognise that, whether working alone or not, our role is always part of a team effort to achieve Nourish Support Centre goals, aims and objectives, and we all should be prepared to work within the guidelines given to attain these goals.

3.3 Volunteering while receiving benefits

Many people are concerned that volunteering might affect their benefits. This is not usually the case, but if you have any concerns, please talk to a member of the HR team and we will help you find out the information you need to be sure.

The Department for Work and Pensions has produced a booklet called A Guide to Volunteering While Getting Benefits, also available online [Volunteering and claiming benefits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-volunteering-while-getting-benefits) which may be helpful.

If you are receiving Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, or Incapacity Benefit, you should talk to your Benefits Advisor when you start volunteering. They may ask you questions about your volunteering role. Your manager will support you and give you the information you need to answer any questions.

You can volunteer for as many hours as you want to whilst on benefits – the '16 hour' rule no longer applies.

Nourish understands that volunteers in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance must be able to attend an interview within 48 hours of being asked and start work within a week of being offered a job. Nourish will support you to do this.

3.4 Absence and leaving

If you are unable to attend any scheduled volunteering session, it is important to inform your manager as soon as possible. The preferred notification method is by calling your manager, if you are unable to reach your manager by telephone then a social media message to your manager (not in the group chat) is acceptable. If your manager or contact person is not available, please inform a member of your team and/or HR.

Volunteers must provide advance notice of planned leave dates. Volunteers who cancel a scheduled session at short notice will be asked to complete an absence form on their return. This allows Nourish to better understand the reason for absences and provide support, training, or reasonable adjustments to better support our volunteering team.

When you decide to cease volunteering with us, we would ask that you give your manager as much notice as possible. You will be asked to complete an exit questionnaire. This will help us to

understand your experiences and your reasons for leaving and will therefore help us to improve our volunteering programme for the future.

4. Volunteering Policies and Procedures

4.1 Insurance

The following information gives a summary of Nourish Support Centre's insurance cover for volunteers.

Employer liability insurance

Nourish's Employer Liability Insurance policy provides cover for volunteers if an injury is sustained during their volunteering. All approved volunteers between the ages of 10 and 80 years undertaking duties on behalf of Nourish and under the general direction and control of Nourish's staff are covered.

Please note however, that accidents which occur whilst you are travelling to or from your place of volunteering are not covered by Nourish's policy.

Public liability insurance

Nourish Support Centre has insurance cover to protect itself against legal liability for bodily injury or damage, caused by volunteers to third parties or their property or to volunteers through the actions of Nourish. Our policy should respond to any claim that arises in the circumstances outlined above. As with all liability policies, negligence would have to be proven.

Before a volunteer commences their role, the responsible manager must ensure that a risk assessment is carried out. This is to ensure that you are fit for the voluntary work you have chosen to undertake:

- A full risk assessment of all duties that you are performing will be conducted at least annually or following any change in circumstances.

Personal effects and clothing

Volunteers' personal effects are only insured against fire damage and not against loss or theft. For this reason, you are advised not to bring valuables, large amounts of money etc. with you when volunteering. Nourish Support Centre provide secure lockers for volunteer use, please use these facilities responsibly and remove all belongings at the end of your scheduled volunteering session, to allow access for other volunteers.

Motor insurance

If you will be using your own vehicle during your volunteering, you must notify your own motor insurance company or broker of the exact use and ensure that you have the appropriate level of business insurance cover for that purpose. Please ensure that your manager sees the confirmation of insurance cover before you commence driving for Nourish. Nourish Support Centre's HR department will also need to see your driver's license including the counterpart and (if applicable) an MOT certificate.

Nourish Support Centre is concerned that all those who drive for Nourish as part of their volunteering role are legally compliant and to do so will ask all volunteers prior to sign a declaration that they comply with motoring laws and regulations and that they consent to Nourish Support Centre carrying out annual DVLA drivers licence checks on their behalf, to ensure Nourish Support Centre remain compliant.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Nourish Support Centre's insurance policies relate to you, please contact the HR department via email hr@nourishsupportcentre.com

4.2 Expenses

Nourish understands that paying expenses helps remove barriers for volunteers on low incomes. You are not paid for your time as a volunteer, but you may claim back money to cover reasonable expenses you incur as a volunteer, such as:

- Travel (to and from the place of volunteering)
- Any specialist equipment needed to complete your voluntary role.
- Support worker expenses (for example, for disabled volunteers or volunteers with chronic health conditions)

Any reasonable expenses you are paid by Nourish which will not usually affect the amount of benefit you get.

Any money you are paid that is not to cover a reasonable expense may stop your benefit or reduce the amount you get.

Please note that the Nourish Support Centre will review reasonable expenses with each individual volunteer and award expense limits on a case-by-case basis. This allows us to consider individual needs such as food can be more expensive or not as readily available for a person who has allergies or dietary requirements. Volunteers with limited mobility may need to use more expensive travel options such as a taxi etc.

When and where food and refreshments are readily available free of charge, expenses will not be paid unless dietary requirements are not met.

Please refer to Nourish Support Centre's *Volunteer Expenses Policy* for further information on the process for paying volunteer expenses and copy of Nourish's *Expenses Claim Form*.

4.3 Confidentiality

During the time you are volunteering with Nourish, you may become aware of information that is confidential to the organisation, other volunteers, or staff in your service. You will also have given personal information about yourself to Nourish.

As a volunteer for Nourish, you are in a position of trust. Therefore, any information that is provided to you in confidence should be treated as such and kept within Nourish workplaces. This may be information about the organisation or about the fundraising work you are involved with, internal change etc. The only time that this does not apply is if you have reason to believe that there is a safeguarding concern, or you have a worry about someone or something. On these

occasions you should follow Nourish Support Centres Safeguarding Policy and/or Whistleblowing Policy.

Confidentiality about volunteers

Any information given to the Nourish Support Centre about yourself will be treated confidentially and not passed on to other organisations unless you ask us to do so. This includes the details entered onto our electronic database.

4.4 Whistleblowing

Raising a concern in 'good faith' is a responsible and appropriate thing to do even if the concern turns out to be a misunderstanding.

If you become concerned about something that is happening at Nourish (or is not happening that should be) we encourage you to raise that concern. Nourish recognises that raising a concern may be difficult or daunting, and therefore will ensure that you are given support and advice around this.

As a first step, you should raise your concerns with your manager/main staff contact, either by talking or writing to them. If you feel unable to approach this person, or that they are the wrong person to approach in the circumstances, you can raise your concern with someone in Nourish that you trust.

The person who receives the concern will write to you within five working days to let you know whether any initial enquiries have been made and how the matter will be investigated. They will also advise you of who will support you and how. As far as is possible, concerns will be treated confidentially, and your identity will be protected if you so request. If this is not possible, you will be contacted to discuss why and to arrange advice and support around this.

4.5 Reward and Recognition

We all like to hear when someone thinks we have done a good job. Nourish aims to feedback these compliments via team meetings, catch up sessions, volunteer of the month nominees and our Annual Team Appreciation awards.

We will aim to seek your views on how you think Nourish is doing too. We value hearing about what aspects of your volunteering you value as well as where you think there may be room for improvement. The most effective way of giving feedback is by talking to your manager or a member of the HR team. You can also give feedback via email hr@nourishsupportcentre.com.

5. Teamwork and Support

Nourish believes that volunteering within a team offers several benefits. It helps individuals develop new skills and gain valuable work experience. Whether you are a student, job seeker, or simply looking to enhance your skills, volunteering provides practical learning opportunities.

Volunteering within a team, may also help develop useful connections and friendships, especially for those who may feel isolated due to life changes or relocation.

Additionally, research has shown that working together improves physical and mental health, as staying active and engaged positively impacts on your overall well-being.

And let us not forget, volunteering allows individuals to give back to their community and build confidence by making a meaningful difference.

5.1 Collaborating with Staff

Good collaboration between volunteers and employees is essential for the success of Nourish Support Centre. When employees and volunteers work together effectively, they can achieve remarkable outcomes.

Here are some key aspects of successful collaboration:

- **Clear Communication:** Both volunteers and employees should openly share information, expectations, and goals. Regular team meetings, updates, and feedback sessions help maintain transparency.
- **Respect and Appreciation:** Valuing each other's contributions promotes a positive environment. Employees should recognise the unique skills and dedication that volunteers bring, while volunteers should appreciate the expertise and commitment of employees.
- **Defined Roles and Responsibilities:** Clearly outlining roles prevents confusion and duplication of efforts. Volunteers and employees should understand their specific tasks and how they fit into the overall mission of Nourish.
- **Training and Support:** Employees can provide training, mentor volunteers, ensuring they understand processes and policies. Volunteers, in turn, can offer fresh perspectives and enthusiasm.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Collaboration thrives when both groups remain open to change. Employees should be receptive to volunteer ideas and volunteers should embrace and adapt to business changes and the changing needs of the charity.
- **Recognition and Celebration:** Nourish will acknowledge achievements and milestones reached. We will celebrate successes together, reinforcing a sense of shared purpose.

We all need to remember; successful collaboration is not about who is in charge; it is about working together towards a shared goal.

5.2 Peer Support

At Nourish Support Centre, we recognise the immense value of peer support for our dedicated volunteers. When volunteers collaborate and connect with one another, they create a supportive network that fosters growth, resilience, and a sense of belonging. Here is how we nurture this vital peer support:

- **Shared Experiences:** Volunteers often face similar challenges and triumphs. By us all sharing our journeys, we can offer empathy, encouragement, and practical advice to one another.
- **Learning Together:** Whether it is during training, mentoring, or learning and within team meetings, volunteers learn from each other. They exchange insights, techniques, and best practices, enriching their collective knowledge.
- **Celebrating Wins:** When a volunteer achieves a milestone or overcomes an obstacle, the entire team celebrates. This positive reinforcement boosts morale and reinforces the sense of community.
- **Listening and Validation:** Sometimes, volunteers need a listening ear. Peers provide validation, understanding, and a safe space to express their feelings.

So, to our incredible Nourish volunteers: You are not alone. Lean on each other, celebrate together, and continue making a difference!

6. Learning & Development

6.1 Safeguarding

Everyone has a responsibility to ensure the safety of children, young people, and vulnerable adults in all circumstances. Nourish Support Centre's safeguarding policy applies to all volunteers as well as to paid staff. Whether their role is in support services or not, all volunteers have a responsibility in this area.

Your line manager should provide you with a copy of our '*Easy Read*' Safeguarding Policy. They should ensure that you have read and understood this and its implications for you as a Nourish volunteer.

The Nourish Support Centre has a Safeguarding Leaflet. This leaflet is designed to provide volunteers with a basic understanding of Nourish's safeguarding policy and what you should do if you have a concern about the safety of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult. You should have been provided with a copy of this to sign and retain for your information.

6.2 Health & Safety

Nourish is committed to ensuring that it offers a safe and healthy environment for everyone, providing appropriate training for employees, maintaining equipment, recording any health and safety incidents/accidents, and providing first aid facilities. Each Nourish employee has a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others, not to put others in danger, notify Nourish of any health and safety risk or concern, injuries, or accidents, participate in health and safety training and use equipment appropriately.

6.3 First Aid

Nourish believes that the best practice in the event of an accident is to ensure staff have access to a trained First Aider or someone who can take charge. Details of these trained staff will be provided by the line manager, and the employee/volunteer should familiarize themselves with names and contact details.

First Aid boxes are available in all premises, you must familiarise yourself with where they are situated, if you need assistance locating the First Aid boxes please speak to your line manager.

An Accident Book is also available from the line manager, and it is the responsibility of every employee and volunteer to report and record any accident involving personal injury. Anyone who is absent from the workplace following an accident must complete a self-certification form, which clearly states the nature and cause of the injury.

6.4 Equality and Diversity

At Nourish Support Centre, we wholeheartedly embrace the principles of equality and diversity. Our commitment extends to every aspect of our work, from supporting individuals to encouraging an inclusive community. Here is what you can expect and in return what we expect from yourself as one of our volunteers:

- **Respect for All:** We celebrate the uniqueness of each person—regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, or background. Everyone deserves respect, dignity, and fair treatment.
- **Inclusive Practices:** Our policies and practices actively promote inclusivity. We strive to create an environment where everyone feels welcome, valued, and heard.
- **Training and Awareness:** We provide ongoing training to our team, volunteers, and stakeholders. This ensures a deep understanding of diversity issues and equips us to challenge biases.
- **Accessible Services:** Our services are accessible to all, regardless of physical or cognitive abilities. We adapt our approach to meet individual needs.
- **Zero Tolerance:** Discrimination, harassment, or exclusion have no place at Nourish. We maintain a zero-tolerance stance and encourage open dialogue.

Together, we will build a stronger, more compassionate community—one that thrives on diversity and champions equality.

6.5 Data Protection

Data protection awareness is a legal requirement for anyone dealing with data in the UK, for example customer information relating to gift aid, service user contact information etc.

If processing any sensitive information is part of your volunteering role, you will need to read Nourish Support Centre's data protection user guide, prior to overseeing any personal data within your role.

7. Resources

7.1 Contact Information

7.2 Useful Links

[Home - Nourish Support Centre](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/volunteering-and-claiming-benefits>

[Involving volunteers in your organisation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Help and guidance | NCVO](#)

7.3 FAQs

Here are some frequently asked questions and answers you might find helpful:

What are my specific responsibilities?

Your responsibilities will be included in your volunteering role document, if you have not received one, please speak to your line manager or the HR department.

How can I access training or resources?

We offer all volunteers core training sessions on relevant to your role. You will also be provided with resources, such as manuals, policies and procedure, online courses, and/or videos.

What is the process for reporting issues or concerns?

If you encounter any issues or have concerns, please reach out to your line manager in the first instance, if they are not available, please speak to any manager. We take all feedback seriously.

Are there any safety protocols I should be aware of?

Safety is crucial! Familiarise yourself with Nourish's health and safety guidance and procedures. If you have questions, ask your line manager.

How can I connect with other volunteers or team members?

Attend team meetings, social events, or join our Dream Team messenger platform to connect with fellow volunteers.

Nourish Support Centre is regulated by the Charity Commission. Being a registered charity means that we must always be accountable and transparent.