E-PORTFOLIO

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Reflection

During my time with I58, I completed key tasks that contributed to my personal and professional growth. Receiving my DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check was an important step in ensuring I could work safely with vulnerable individuals. It reinforced the importance of safeguarding and accountability, giving me confidence in my ability to serve with integrity and professionalism. I also attended a safeguarding course, which was invaluable. It refreshed my skills and deepened my understanding of how to recognise signs of abuse, my legal responsibilities, and how to respond to concerns. The course improved my communication and risk assessment abilities, enhancing my confidence in handling sensitive situations and prioritising the safety of those I serve. In addition to the more formal tasks, I also took part in a walking group that was started by our I58 team to help build stronger connections through shared experiences outside of our usual work. .

Looking back on it, I realise how special it was to step away from the daily routine and spend time with colleagues in such a relaxed and natural setting. It was a wonderful way to strengthen our teamwork and support one another. Walking together gave us the chance to chat, bond and connect without the pressures of work or the usual challenges we face as volunteers. It also allowed us to reflect on our shared goals and reaffirm our commitment to each other as a team.

My work at I58 involved serving tea and coffee, serving meals to guests, assisting with clothing from the donation bank and distributing healthcare packs. These activities brought me into direct contact with individuals from various backgrounds, each with their own unique challenges and stories. Most of the time, the guests were grateful and cooperative, but there were moments that tested my ability to manage emotions and deal with unpredictable behaviours. One incident in particular, stands out when a fight broke out between two guests.

The altercation disrupted the environment and I was unsure of how to handle the situation. It was unsettling to witness, and my initial reaction was one of anxiety and uncertainty. Thankfully, the situation was de-escalated by other volunteers but it highlighted the need for volunteers to be equipped with conflict resolution skills. On reflection, witnessing a fight between two guests was unsettling and left me feeling anxious and unprepared. Thankfully, other volunteers de-escalated the situation, but it highlighted the need for conflict resolution skills. It also reminded me that such incidents often stem from the stress guests face. This experience has motivated me to seek training in conflict management to handle similar challenges more confidently in the future. Another challenge arose when some guests began taking more than their fair share of clothing and supplies, creating tension and a sense of unfairness among the others. Firstly I was annoyed but on reflection, I could understand the motivation behind their actions, as many of the guests face a scarcity of resources and might feel the need to grab what they can when it's available. .

I realized the importance of clear guidelines to ensure fairness in the distribution process and I think in the future putting these in place would be beneficial to everyone

Reflecting on these incidents, I realise that they were driven by deeper struggles that the guests were facing. The fight, for example, was likely a manifestation of the stress and pressures they were under. Research shows that individuals experiencing homelessness are often dealing with heightened emotional and psychological challenges, which can contribute to unpredictable behaviours (Fitzpatrick, Bramley, & Johnsen, 2019). The scarcity mentality also played a role in the guests' behaviour with the supplies. Living in survival mode can drive people to act impulsively and take more than they need out of fear that resources will run out (Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013).

Understanding this deepened my empathy for the guests and gave me a better understanding of the complexities of their situations. It also made me aware of the importance of responding to such challenges with patience and compassion. Through these experiences, I have learned many valuable lessons. I've learned that challenging behaviours are often the result of deeper struggles, and that responding with empathy and understanding is key. I've also learned the importance of remaining calm and adaptable under pressure.

On a personal level, these challenges have helped me develop greater resilience and confidence in handling difficult situations. I now recognize that volunteering in such environments requires not only compassion but also the ability to remain level-headed and responsive to the needs of others.

Looking forward, I plan to build on the skills and insights I gained during my time with I58. One of my priorities is to seek additional training in conflict resolution and mental health first aid, as these skills are essential for handling high-pressure situations effectively. If faced with similar challenges in the future, such as a conflict or a guest's disruptive behaviour, I would approach the situation with greater confidence and composure, applying the strategies I've learned to de-escalate and seek support from colleagues when necessary. I would also advocate for clearer guidelines around the distribution of donated items, ensuring fairness while respecting the dignity of the guests.

This could involve implementing a token system or assigning volunteers to oversee the distribution process, which would help to prevent issues of unfairness and reduce tensions.

In conclusion, my time with I58 has been both challenging and rewarding. I've had the opportunity to develop valuable skills, such as conflict resolution, safeguarding and teamwork, while gaining a deeper understanding of the complexities of homelessness. Through reflecting on the challenging incidents I encountered, I have learned the importance of empathy, patience and adaptability in handling difficult situations. I feel more confident in my ability to contribute meaningfully to the team and to respond effectively in future volunteer roles.

I am grateful for the opportunity to work with I58 and to have gained such valuable experiences that will shape my future contributions to similar causes. The mission statement of the organisation "Bringing hope to the city and beyond" perfectly captures the mission and spirit of i58. It reflects the commitment to making a positive impact, not only within the local community but also extending its reach to those in need beyond the city. This vision of hope highlights their dedication to creating meaningful change, offering support and providing resources to those facing challenges, regardless of their location. It embodies the idea that hope and compassion can transcend boundaries, uplifting individuals and communities alike.

Reference

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Log Book

Student Name: Kayleigh

Name of Host Employer: Brian Hughes

Record of project work carried out

Date: 18/09/2024

Tasks completed: DBS check.

Reflection: Receiving my DBS check was an important step in ensuring I am equipped to work safely and responsibly with vulnerable individuals. The process reinforced the significance of safeguarding and accountability in my role. It gave me confidence, knowing that I meet the required standards of trust and integrity, and highlighted the importance of maintaining a professional and ethical approach in all areas of my work.

Date: 24/09/2024

Tasks completed: Attending a safeguarding course.

Reflection: I attended a 5-hour course on safeguarding. I learned so much and am grateful for the opportunity to recap existing skills and gain new insights. The course helped me become more aware of how to recognize signs of abuse or neglect, understand legal responsibilities, and respond appropriately to concerns. It also strengthened my communication and risk assessment skills, giving me greater confidence in handling sensitive situations effectively.

Date: 09/10/2024

Tasks completed: Giving out hot meals.

Reflection: I was a little apprehensive at the beginning as I wasn't sure how it was going to go. The evening was a success and we had lots of people attend.

I served tea and coffee to everyone who arrived and showed them where to go to receive food.

I enjoyed having conversations with everyone I served.

I was nervous to begin with but soon got over my nerves. The activity helped me develop my communication and hospitality skills, as I had to balance serving refreshments with guiding people and making them feel comfortable.

Date: 16/11/2024

Task completed: Distributing clothes and health packs to guests

Reflection: Guests were taking excessive amounts of clothes and shoes from the donations. It created a sense of unfairness among the guests, leading to frustration and complaints. I could see how difficult it must be for individuals in a situation where resources are limited, and they may feel the need to grab as much as possible in case it's their only opportunity. However, the imbalance created a tense environment that needed to be addressed.



This photo captures us walking at Llyn y Fan. We started a walking group alongside our work at i58, aiming to strengthen our team through shared experiences. Reflecting on this activity, I realize how meaningful it was to step outside of our usual routine and connect as a team in such a relaxed, natural setting.

Appendix A



Appendix B

This photo captures a joyful moment at i58, everyone gathered for their Christmas dinner with some of the volunteers serving. This reminds me of the beauty of community and the impact of small acts of love and kindness.



Appendix C

Receiving a certificate for safeguarding training was a proud moment for me, as it validated the time and effort I put into learning essential skills to support vulnerable individuals. The training not only enhanced my understanding of how to identify and respond to signs of abuse or neglect but also strengthened my confidence in handling sensitive situations responsibly. Holding this certificate symbolizes my commitment to maintaining high standards of safety and care in my work. It also serves as a reminder of the importance of ongoing learning and professional development in creating a safe and supportive environment for those in need.

Appendix

Appendix A : Walking group photo

Appendix B : i58 in action

Appendix C : Safeguarding training certificate