

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Catering Lead
Reporting to:	Day Care Coordinator
Grade:	£13.26 per hour - Band 4
Place of work:	The Venton Centre, York Road, Northampton NN1 5QJ
Hours of work:	25 hours per week Monday to Friday
Purpose of the role:	To lead and develop the Venton Centre's catering service as a key part of its ambition to become a thriving community hub. The postholder will be responsible for delivering a high-quality, sustainable catering offer that supports wellbeing, social connection and engagement across day services, community activities, events and income-generating opportunities. Working collaboratively with the Day Care Coordinator, the postholder will develop and continuously improve a catering service that is responsive, innovative and financially sustainable. Through menu development, customer experience, volunteer involvement and effective operational oversight, the role will ensure that food and dining experiences contribute meaningfully to the quality of life and wellbeing of Centre users. This role combines operational oversight of catering delivery with a strong focus on service development, community engagement and sustainability. It is initially offered on a 25-hour-per-week basis. However, as the Centre develops, there is potential for the role and hours to grow in line with service expansion and demand.
Main tasks and responsibilities:	Catering Service Development • Lead the development of the Centre's catering service, ensuring it meets the needs of clients and supports the organisation's strategic objectives. • Develop seasonal menus that promote healthy eating, wellbeing and customer choice. • Identify opportunities to increase use of the catering service and generate additional income. • Monitor customer feedback and introduce improvements that enhance the dining experience. • Work collaboratively with the Day Care Coordinator to review performance and implement service improvement plans.

Catering Operations

- Plan, prepare and serve nutritious meals and refreshments to a consistently high standard.
- Ensure menus meet nutritional, dietary, cultural and allergen requirements.
- Maintain high standards of food presentation and customer service.
- Ensure sufficient catering provision for all planned activities and events.
- Work with colleagues to support events, room hire and community activities that maximise use of the Centre and contribute to its financial sustainability.

Financial Management

- Manage catering budgets, menu costing and purchasing to achieve value for money.
- Monitor expenditure and identify opportunities to improve efficiency without compromising quality.
- Implement effective stock management systems to minimise waste and maximise value.
- Ensure stock rotation and storage comply with food safety requirements.

Volunteer Support

- Lead, support and develop volunteers, creating an inclusive environment where volunteers can make a meaningful contribution to the success of the catering service.
- Provide day-to-day guidance, coaching and encouragement to volunteers.
- Create meaningful volunteering opportunities that build confidence and encourage community participation.
- Ensure volunteers receive appropriate induction and mandatory training.

Customer Experience

- Foster a welcoming, friendly and inclusive dining environment.
- Build positive relationships with clients, visitors, volunteers and colleagues.
- Create positive dining experiences that encourage social interaction, wellbeing and a sense of community.
- Respond positively to customer feedback and suggestions.

Compliance and Quality

- Lead compliance with Food Hygiene, HACCP, COSHH, Health & Safety and Food Allergen legislation.
- Monitor catering standards and identify opportunities for continuous improvement.
- Ensure kitchen risk assessments, cleaning schedules and food safety records are maintained.
- Oversee kitchen maintenance and coordinate repairs with external contractors.
- Ensure equipment is maintained and used safely.
- Report maintenance issues promptly to the Day Care Coordinator.

Safeguarding

- Promote the welfare, dignity and independence of older people.

	• Report safeguarding concerns in accordance with Age UK Northamptonshire's safeguarding procedures. • Maintain confidentiality and professional standards at all times. General • Contribute positively to the wider work of the Centre. • Attend meetings and training as required. • Undertake any other duties appropriate to the level of the post.
The tasks and responsibilities shown above are not exhaustive and should be regarded only as a guide. The post holder will be expected to undertake any reasonable activities according to the needs of the service at the time. These will be subject to periodic review and may be amended to meet the changing needs of the service. The post holder will be expected to participate in this process, and Age UK Northamptonshire would aim to reach agreement as regards any changes.	



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Catering Lead	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
Catering for large groups of people	✓	
Experience of developing or growing a catering service	✓	
Knowledge / qualifications		
Good Standard of Education	✓	
Food Hygiene Certificate – level 3	✓	
City and Guilds in Catering		✓
Knowledge of food allergen regulations	✓	
Skills		
Cooking imaginative meals appropriate to older people's needs	✓	
Purchasing food within budget guidelines	✓	
Ability to motivate and support volunteers		✓
Ability to maintain records and documentation	✓	
Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities		✓
Good communication skills	✓	
Plans ahead and works in a systematic and organised way	✓	
Follows directions, procedures and policies	✓	
Able to remain calm under pressure	✓	
Adaptability	✓	
Team worker	✓	
Excellent customer service skills	✓	
Good organisational and time management skills	✓	
Commercial awareness		✓
Ability to identify opportunities for service improvement	✓	
Take ownership of problems and identify practical solutions	✓	
Other requirements		
Experience of working with older people	✓	

