



Introduction

This policy sets out Hastings Thrives' commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and valuing diversity.

Value Statement

Diversity and Equality is integral to our values, vision and how we work.

The charity is committed to raising the aspirations and educational achievements of **all** children in Hastings and to involve all members of the community in helping us achieve our main objective. Valuing different expertise and approaches is an integral part of how Hastings Thrives works.

Scope

This policy is designed to ensure that service users, staff, workers, volunteers, contractors and other stakeholders are offered equal opportunities regardless of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability (this covers physical and mental health as defined by the Equality Act 2010)
- Gender reassignment
- Marital status or civil partnership
- Pregnancy/maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

We seek to ensure that no one suffers, either directly or indirectly, as a result of unlawful discrimination. This extends beyond the individual's own characteristics, to cover discrimination by association and by perception.

Responsibilities

Hastings Thrives treats everyone who works for us and our service users with dignity and respect. Accordingly, all workers and contractors employed by or representing us have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect, in line with this policy and legal requirements.

The overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of this policy rests with the trustees of the charity

Our employees have guidance and instruction, through induction and/or other training, as to their responsibility and role in promoting equality of opportunity and diversity predominantly in the schools in which they principally work. Any organisation contracted to work with us will be expected to read and be aware of this policy along with other statutory policies.

Equality and Diversity in Service Provision

Hastings Thrives will ensure that none of its policies or practices discriminate directly or indirectly against any groups of service users or clients, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Complaints of unfavourable treatment by service users or clients are taken seriously and dealt with by the trustees.

Equality and Diversity as an Employer

Hastings Thrives will ensure that none of its policies or practices discriminate directly or indirectly against our employees in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

- Recruitment and Selection
Recruitment and selection practices are free from unlawful discriminatory criteria and we encourage employment of people from a range of backgrounds. Applications for positions within the charity or from sub contracted parties will be free from discrimination.
- How we Work
All staff are expected to work towards the positive organisational culture.
- Employing staff with a disability
We will make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers for employees with a disability.
- Bullying and harassment
Unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment will not be tolerated. Bullying is defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the complainant. Bullying should be distinguished from healthy debate/discussion and from legitimate management feedback and requests. Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individuals' dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns about employment practices and concerns will be taken seriously by the trustees

Employees will not suffer any negative treatment for giving constructive criticism or raising a genuine grievance.

Breach of this policy

At Hastings Thrives we care about the experience services users or client have with us. Any service user or client who feels that he or she has been treated in a way which is contrary to this policy should raise the issue as soon as possible to the trustees.

Any breaches of this policy by employees will be fully investigated and may lead to disciplinary action.

Legislation

Hastings Thrives will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our staff, volunteers and contractors do not unlawfully discriminate under

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
- The Employment Rights Act 1996;
- The Human Rights Act 1998;
- The Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000

- The Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002;
- The Civil Partnership Act 2006;
- The Work and Families Act 2006;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- And any other relevant legislation in force from time to time relating to discrimination in employment and the provision of goods and services.

Unlawful discrimination may be direct or indirect, and can take different forms, for example:

Direct discrimination - treating any individual less favourably than others on grounds of a protected characteristic

Indirect discrimination - imposing a requirement or condition equally which has a detrimental effect on protected groups, and which cannot be justified.

Harassment - unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose, intentionally or unintentionally, of violating dignity, or which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for an individual

Victimisation - treating a person less favourably because he or she has made or supported a complaint under the Equalities Act.

Discrimination by association - someone is discriminated against because he/she associates with someone who has a protected characteristic

Discrimination by perception - discrimination on the grounds that a person is perceived as belonging to a particular group, even if they do not in fact belong to this group.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and amended in line with new developments in Equality and Diversity best practice. The board of trustees is responsible for carrying out the review.

This policy approved	September 2017
To be reviewed: June 2020	Signed: