

### **Equality and Diversity Policy**

Herts Welcomes Syrian Families aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences. We recognise that individual differences bring value to our work and improve our ability to meet the needs of the organisations and the people with whom we work. Discrimination denies our human dignity, our freedom to be ourselves and our place in a free society. Herts Welcomes Syrian Families will not accept any form of discrimination in its work with and for the people of Hertfordshire and is committed to challenging disadvantage and inequality. Herts Welcomes Syrian Families is fully committed to valuing and promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of our work – recruitment, purchasing, employment practice, service delivery and service development.

To deliver on our diversity policy and make our commitment to diversity more visible Herts Welcomes Syrian Families will undertake the following:

- Incorporate diversity into our strategic business plan and the aims and objectives of Herts Welcomes Syrian Families
- Ensure that all Trustees, staff and volunteers have an understanding of and commitment to diversity and are able to advocate this on behalf of the organisation to the wider community
- Ensure that no one connected with the organisation receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, race, gender, religion and belief and sexual orientation.
- Develop and deliver services in accordance with our diversity policy.
- Work with groups in our community who are marginalised to ensure that they have full access to our services and are supported in their own development
- Herts Welcomes Syrian Families will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying against any employee, volunteer, Trustee or service user. (*see Annex A*)
- Ensure that we have in place employment practices that treat individuals with fairness and respect. This includes the recruitment process, training, flexible working and terms and conditions of employment.
- Adopting a set of ground rules which set out an expected code of conduct for employees, volunteers and trustees when engaged in activities on behalf of Herts Welcomes Syrian Families
- Ensure that premises used in relation to our work are accessible and inviting for all members of the community.

#### **Employment of Staff**

- Herts Welcomes Syrian Families is comprised entirely of supporters, registered members and volunteers who have direct contact with our clients. Herts Welcomes Syrian Families does not currently employ any staff. If and whenever it does employ staff it will follow a recruitment and selection policy which provides guidance to ensure that all recruitment and selection is carried out fairly and without discrimination.
- All volunteers having direct contact with our clients and any staff that may be recruited in the future will receive induction into the organisation and their new role. The induction process will be relevant to the role/job and take into account individual needs.
- Wherever possible Herts Welcomes Syrian Families will consider individual needs and circumstances of employees when agreeing objectives and works schedules.
- Opportunities for training where a need for individual development has been identified and discussed will be made available to all staff, volunteers and Trustees
- All staff will be encouraged to bring forward any concerns or suggestions they may have relating to diversity and equal opportunities.

#### **Service Delivery and Provision**

Herts Welcomes Syrian Families supports the development of a locally diverse voluntary/community sector and in doing so is committed to providing high quality services that are accessible to all irrespective

## Herts Welcomes Syrian Families

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of race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, illness, marital status or responsibility for dependents. Herts Welcomes Syrian Families aims to ensure that all of its services are delivered in line with this policy by

- Promoting equality and diversity in our work with other agencies or individuals
- Ensuring that all services are responsive to the changing needs of our clients in Hertfordshire.
- Ensuring that information on the services delivered by Herts Welcomes Syrian Families is widely available and where necessary targeted and adapted to ensure maximum awareness.
- Ensuring that new services developed to meet identified needs of our clients are based upon consultation and research with potential service users.
- Ensuring that service delivery is monitored on an ongoing basis and regular feedback is sought from our clients to inform future development.

### **Trustees**

The Board of Trustees membership (including co-opted members) should aim to reflect a fair balance and representation of the local community and should endeavour to redress any imbalance of under-represented groups.

### **Communications**

Herts Welcomes Syrian Families will endeavour to ensure that all communication whether internal or external is provided in accessible formats. We will when requested make information available in other formats and languages so as not to disadvantage people and use plain English in order to communicate effectively.

### **Contractors and Suppliers**

As part of our commitment to equality and diversity Herts Welcomes Syrian Families aims to work with other organisations/companies whose equality and diversity principles are compatible with our own.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

All Trustees, paid staff and volunteers will be expected to support this policy and its implementation and make a contribution to its ongoing development.

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that Herts Welcomes Syrian Families complies with its legal obligations with regards to equality and diversity rests with the Board of Trustees who will nominate one of the Trustees to ensure that the policy is implemented and to provide advice and support to the Board.

Monitoring of the Equality and Diversity Policy and its implementation is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees who will review the policy on an annual basis

### **Annex A**

Direct Discrimination – is treating one person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances or segregating them from others solely because they have, for example, a disability or illness. Refusing to employ someone who has the required skills because they are deaf or because they are pregnant would constitute such discrimination.

Indirect Discrimination – occurs where there is a requirement or condition which applies equally to everyone but which, in practice, has an adverse impact on a particular group and cannot be justified. For example an unnecessary physical or age requirement or the setting of language tests, where language skills or fluency are not really needed for a job.

Harassment - is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women in the workplace. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual and may be persistent or an isolated incident. The key is that the actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient.

Bullying – is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, is an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. For example ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail. Bullying and harassment are not necessarily face to face. They may also occur in written communications, email and phone.

Victimisation – occurs when a person is treated less favourably or is discriminated against because she/he intends to pursue their rights in respect of alleged discrimination.

*Source: National Association for Voluntary Community Action and ACAS leaflet “Bullying and Harassment at Work”*

### **Legislation**

Herts Welcomes Syrian Families’s commitment to valuing diversity is underpinned by its legal obligation to provide employment and services without discrimination under the following pieces of legislation

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Equality Act 2006
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- The Employment Equality Regulations 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998