

## Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Referenced Documents	
No.	Reference No. & Title
1	FR-HR-002 Staff Handbook - Discipline, Grievance, Harassment and Complaints
2	FR-HR-005 Recruitment Policy and Procedures
3	Complaints Policy

### Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Missing People’s Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion .....	1
3	Scope .....	3
4	Responsibilities.....	3
5	Implementation.....	4
5.1	Anti-Discrimination.....	4
5.2	Recruitment.....	4
5.3	During Employment.....	4
5.4	Service Users.....	5
5.5	Dealing with third parties.....	5
5.6	Training.....	5
6	Data Collection and Review.....	5
7	Applicable Legislation.....	6

## 1 Introduction

This policy aims to outline Missing People’s commitment to supporting diversity and ensuring equality of opportunity for staff, workers, volunteers, Trustees, job applicants, agency or temporary staff, and service users in terms of employment and access to services; and to provide guidance on anti-discriminatory practice. This policy is non-contractual and does not form part of any Terms and Conditions of employment.

## 2 Missing People’s Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Missing People embraces diversity and fully supports equality of opportunity and inclusion. We aim to encourage, value, celebrate and manage diversity and we recognise that talent and potential are distributed across the population. In addition to moral and social reasons for promoting equality of opportunity, it is in the best interests of this organisation to recruit and develop the best people to work in our organization from as wide and diverse a pool of talent as possible.

Wherever possible, we aim to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevents individuals or groups from realising their potential and contributing fully to our organisation’s performance and to develop an organisational culture that positively values diversity. The new positive action provisions held within the Equalities Act 2010 enable service providers to take proportionate steps to help people

overcome their disadvantages or to meet their needs.

Discrimination operates through commonly held assumptions and prejudices, which can be reinforced by laws, rules and customs. This makes discrimination appear normal and inevitable. Discrimination works by stereotyping people into different roles, by treating some people less favourably than others, or simply by ignoring them.

Missing People is committed to opposing all forms of discrimination including those based on the following protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010, namely:

- **Age** – Discrimination on the basis of an employee or job seeker’s age. For example, because someone is younger or older than a relevant comparable group.
- **Disability** - under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- **Race** - this includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. A racial group can be made up of two or more different racial groups (e.g. Black Britons).
- **Sex** – discrimination against an individual based on gender
- **Religion or belief** – Under the Equality Act 2010, religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. It also includes lack of religion. In other words, employees and jobseekers are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.
- **Gender reassignment** - A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts, or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The person does not have to be under medical supervision.
- **Marital status and civil partnership** - someone who is legally married or in a civil partnership. Marriage can either be between a man and a woman, or between partners of the same sex. Civil partnership is between partners of the same sex.
- **Sexual orientation** - Sexual orientation includes the following dimensions: sexual attraction; sexual behavior; emotional, social, and lifestyle preferences; and self-identification. The categories include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) and heterosexual people.
- **Pregnancy and maternity** – This includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is pregnant, has a pregnancy-related illness, is seeking to exercise her rights to maternity leave, or is on maternity leave.

This list is not exhaustive.

All forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not. The Equality Act 2010 also notes that discrimination can be in the form of:

- **Direct discrimination** - This occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic (see above) they have or are thought to have (see perceptive discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see associative discrimination below).
- **Indirect discrimination** - Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly

disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic and which cannot be justified in relation to the job.

- **Associative discrimination** - Direct discrimination against someone because they are linked or associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
- **Perceptive discrimination** - Direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.
- **Harassment** - Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.
- **Third party harassment** - Harassment of employees by third parties who are not employees of the organisation, such as suppliers or service users. Missing People has a duty to prevent harassment and may be liable if it is aware that harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions and does not take reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.
- **Victimisation** - Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination or harassment, or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

Missing People recognises that the creation of equality of opportunities requires more than passive opposition to discrimination; we are therefore committed to making reasonable adjustments, where needed, within the confines of the organisation's resources and operational needs.

### 3 Scope

This policy aims to protect employees directly employed by Missing People, workers employed via agencies, contractors in terms of employment, volunteers, Trustees, job applicants and service users. Additionally, it can still apply once someone is no longer employed by the organisation, for example when giving employment references.

Missing People will treat seriously any complaints by members of the above groups concerning unlawful discrimination on any of the stated grounds. The policy shall be taken into account by all Missing People's employment policies and practices, including those relating to Discipline, Grievance & Harassment (See Ref. 1), Recruitment Policy (Ref. 2) and Complaints Procedure (Ref. 3). In other words, Missing People will provide equality of opportunity, wherever possible, and equal treatment as an integral part of good practice.

This policy applies specifically to discrimination and equality of opportunity in respect of 'protected characteristics' as defined in the Equalities Act 2010. See also Section 7 for further applicable legislation.

### 4 Responsibilities

All staff has a responsibility to read, digest and support Missing People in implementing this policy in spirit and detail. HR is responsible for providing advice and guidance on equality and diversity issues, and to ensure this Policy document is kept up to date. For its part, Missing People will support its staff, volunteers, Trustees and service users in not tolerating any inappropriate, violent or abusive behaviour from colleagues, other organisations or service users.

Employees should draw the attention of their line manager to suspected discriminatory acts or practices or cases of bullying or harassment. Volunteers should draw attention to the Services Volunteers Leader or Services Manager Training & Volunteers.

## 5 Implementation

This section describes how the policy is implemented by Missing People.

### 5.1 Anti-Discrimination

The Leadership Team shall ensure that it acts in such a way that no individual or group referred to in this policy is discriminated against, in particular:

- by providing information in a way that is accessible, for example, large print, etc. if resources permit;
- by meeting in premises with facilities which are physically accessible e.g. lift, wheelchair ramp (an example of Positive Action);
- by creating staff awareness and dialogue on how Missing People approaches inclusivity;
- by facilitating inclusion and diversity discussions for all staff and volunteers across the organisation as required;
- Support individual needs of staff so they can participate and perform effectively
- Where relevant, include equality and diversity development actions in their strategic plan
- Champion, sponsor and promote the value of equality and diversity by inviting outside speakers to attend open discussions which will promote interest and further dialogue, as appropriate;
- by increasing knowledge of diversity by offering training across the organisation – but especially for Services staff and volunteers – in issues such as:
  - Supporting looked after children;
  - Honour based violence;
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) awareness;
  - Learning difficulties/disabilities.

### 5.2 Recruitment

The recruitment of paid workers and volunteers shall be undertaken in accordance with this policy, in particular:

- by endeavouring to ensure that posts are advertised in such a way as to encourage applications from all groups including those who experience discrimination;
- by preparing job descriptions which clearly set out what the worker is to do, and person specifications which recognise that relevant experience can be as valuable as qualifications or previous paid employment;
- by ensuring that in all selection procedures only factors relevant to the requirements of the post are taken into account, and that the spirit of this policy is adhered to;
- a statement declaring that we are an equal opportunities employer that values diversity is included in all recruitment adverts.

### 5.3 During Employment

The employment of paid workers and volunteers shall be undertaken in accordance with this policy, in particular:

- by providing training relevant to the needs of staff and designed to enable them to carry out their jobs irrespective of the protected characteristics;
- by ensuring that any staff member who, in the course of their work, displays attitudes contrary to this policy to any person whether by word, behaviour or other manner shall be liable to disciplinary action;
- by recognising and responding to the individual needs of staff, especially those who are carers (or who have dependants) or who have disabilities, and ensuring that, within available resources, support is provided to enable them to work effectively.

#### 5.4 Service Users

In every aspect of the planning, management, access, provision and monitoring of services, the Leadership Team and staff shall, subject to the resources available, seek to promote equality of opportunity in accordance with this policy, in particular:

- by seeking to identify and respond to the needs of those groups experiencing discrimination, altering priorities and methods of service delivery where necessary;
- by seeking the views of service users through an annual Service User Feedback Questionnaire;
- by improving physical access to the Charity for all individuals.
- that all complaints made by external parties will be investigated in accordance with Missing People's Complaints Procedure (Ref 3) and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.
- by ensuring our services are accessible to people whose first language is not English by providing an appropriate translation service by telephone

#### 5.5 Dealing with third parties

Missing People will not unlawfully discriminate in dealings with third parties. This applies to dealing with external suppliers of goods and services.

#### 5.6 Training

Missing People will ensure that all new employees, volunteers, and Leadership Team members will receive induction on the policy. HR will send a reminder to all staff and volunteers regarding the existence of this policy and encourage them to refresh their knowledge of the policy.

## 6 Data Collection and Review

This policy will be reviewed on an on-going basis and amended in line with new developments in Equality and Diversity policy and best practice.

Outputs from the Service User Feedback Questionnaire, HR records concerning Grievances and Discipline (subject to Confidentiality norms), Equal Opportunities forms gathered during recruitment for staff and volunteers, and other records that may be gathered from time to time will be considered when reviewing this policy. Such reviews will be undertaken by HR annually and reported to the Directors.

It should be noted that on occasions when this policy is breached, Directors will be notified by HR.

Note that Missing People complies with the requirement of the Data Protection Act through its own Data Protection Policy. Any data, either qualitative and or quantitative, required in order to monitor the requirements or the impact of the Equalities Act 2010, will be collected where it is reasonable, proportionate and practical to do so.

## 7 Applicable Legislation

This policy aims to ensure that Missing People does 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 2004
- 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, facilities or services.