

## Hesley Group Single Equality Scheme

Everyone receiving a service from, or being employed by Hesley Group will receive fair and equal treatment based on their abilities or needs, in all aspects of our employment and service provision.

Hesley Group prohibits acts of unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination.

### **1 Introduction**

Hesley Group respects the fundamental human right of every person not to be discriminated against on the grounds of Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation. Direct and/or indirect, associated or perceived discrimination, harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated within the workplace, or in the way services are delivered or functions and duties carried out. Hesley Group is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting community cohesion within our services. We will seek to protect the right of everyone not to be discriminated against and work to ensure equality of opportunity for all, so that each person is supported to realise their potential.

The aims of this scheme are to ensure that all individuals who receive a service from Hesley Group receive one that is delivered in a way that meets their needs and protects them from discrimination and harassment, also that all staff working for Hesley Group and all other partners take account of, make reasonable adjustments for, and celebrate people's diverse needs. To support this Hesley Group will do the following:

- 1 Clarify for people supported by Hesley Group Services (children, young people and adults), their families and carers, all staff and other partners, Hesley Group's position, understanding and application of equality and diversity in practice.
- 2 Provide a clear statement of principles in relation to Hesley Group's vision for an equal and inclusive provision of services and employment and demonstrates how the application of equalities and diversity good practice necessarily underpins the values of the organisation.
- 3 Outline Hesley Group's duty to comply with relevant legislation and other statutory requirements and makes public its commitment to go beyond basic compliance wherever possible, in order to improve the delivery of equality and diversity in the services provided and in the workplace.

- 4 Identify key groups that are most likely to experience ongoing discrimination and disadvantage.
- 5 Summarise how Hesley Group will ensure that equality and diversity is integral to all of its work at every level, informing service planning, workforce management and engagement with the wider community.

## **2 Underpinning Values**

Hesley Group's understanding of 'Equality and Diversity' is underpinned by the following values:

- 1 **Fairness:** We understand equality to be about fair and equal treatment but we acknowledge the need to move beyond just treating everyone the same and providing 'like for like'. This may mean responding to individuals differently, in order to meet their needs or address differing levels of disadvantage and discrimination in an essentially unequal society.
- 2 **Dignity:** We also understand equality to be linked to the dignity and worth of each individual. It is particularly important to identify, manage and prevent incidents of discrimination or harassment which, under Human Rights legislation, are judged to be an affront to people's dignity.
- 3 **Recognising and valuing difference:** We understand that we need to treat everyone as an individual.
- 4 **Understanding:** Our commitment to manage and value diversity includes the belief that employing a diverse and representative workforce will allow for better engagement and understanding of the needs of people supported by Hesley Group services.
- 5 **Promoting diversity:** Promoting the benefits of a diverse service helps to break down barriers and the negative attitudes, created through lack of understanding, misinformation and fear of the 'other' and helps to promote workforce cohesion and good working relationships.
- 6 **Code of Conduct:** All Hesley Group employees are themselves bound by the Code of Conduct for Hesley Group Employees, which is explicit in its obligations, that "all Hesley Group staff must not discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably against people who use our services, carers or colleagues. You must at all times respect people's diversity and not discriminate on the grounds of Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation. It is likely to be unlawful to do so unless this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. If you do not understand any of these issues please talk it through with your manager".