



Happiness Outdoors Project

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1.1 Policy Purpose

Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in Happiness Outdoors Project's (HOP's) employment or working as volunteers, whether temporary, part-time or full-time.

Provide equality, fairness and respect for all those participating in HOP activities including children, families and school staff.

Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

1.2 Organisation Commitments

The organisation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

Create a learning environment in all HOP activities that promotes space and opportunities for all participants to build positive emotions and outlooks and be more able to cope with change, adversity, uncertainty and uncomfortable feelings. Staff will treat all participants with empathy and non-judgemental acceptance to create a feeling of being listened to, valued and understood which increases self-respect, self-worth and self-acceptance, all cornerstones of emotional well-being.

Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against volunteers, fellow employees, colleagues and the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, colleagues and volunteers, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

5. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

7. Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

1.3 Agreement to follow this policy

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by Directors and has been agreed with employees and volunteers.

HOP also has access to the schools' policies for:

- Behaviour
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Promoting Fundamental British Values

These can be found on the schools' websites. These will be adhered to during HOP sessions.

1.4 Disciplinary and grievance procedures

Disciplinary and grievance procedures are detailed within the organisation's Complaints and Whistle-blowing policies. This includes with whom an employee or volunteer should raise a grievance.

Use of the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Approval and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Directors annually, as part of the financial planning cycle.

Version No	Approved By	Approval Date	Main Changes	Review Period
1.0	Directors	July 2024	Initial draft approved	Annually
2.0	Directors	September 2025	No main changes	Annually