Equal Opportunities Policy

Principles

Mentoring Plus is wholeheartedly committed to the principles of equal opportunity, both as an employer and as a provider of services to others.

Mentoring Plus makes all efforts not only to meet its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 but to promote equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination or other unfair treatment against any of its staff, potential staff, volunteers or users of its services.

This is applied regardless of heritage, faith or lack of, marital / civil partnership status, gender, sexual orientation, gender orientation, pregnancy or responsibilities for dependants, age, disability, working contract status, offending background where this does not contravene our Safeguarding Policy, or any other potential driver of discrimination.

Commitment to equal opportunities is a requirement for all Mentoring Plus staff. Discriminatory attitudes or behaviour of any kind are unacceptable at any time and may require disciplinary action.

We endeavour to review this commitment and its delivery regularly, and to ensure that all sections of the Mentoring Plus community are involved in our consultation processes.

1. Training

1.1 It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and trustees to ensure that all employees of the organisation are made aware of the provisions of this policy.

1.2 They also ensure that all volunteers are also made aware of the policy, in particular those provisions relevant to their role in service delivery.

2. Equal Opportunities in staff recruitment and advancement

2.1 Mentoring Plus is committed to develop and maintain working environments and practices which ensure equality of opportunity in both the recruitment and advancement of staff.

2.2 Advertisements for posts give sufficiently clear and accurate information to enable potential applicants to assess their own suitability for the post. Information about vacant posts is provided in such a manner that does not restrict its audience in terms of heritage, marital status, disability, age, part-time or fixed term contract status, sexual or gender orientation or faith. Recruitment for a specific gender, if ever relevant, respects the legitimate and

proven requirement for a Genuine Occupational Requirement under the Equality Act 2010.

2.3 Recruitment literature does not imply a preference for one group of applicants unless there is a genuine occupational qualification that limits the post to this particular group, in which case this is clearly stated.

2.4 All descriptions and specifications for posts include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job.

2.5 All vacancies are circulated internally.

2.6 Mentoring Plus ensures that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment which cannot be shown to be justifiable. Selection criteria and interview procedures ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. At least one member of every interview panel is equipped and trained in safer recruitment procedures.

2.7 The charity strives to ensure that its employment policy, practices and arrangements are flexible and will support, as far as is lawful, reasonable and practicable, specific needs and requirements of individuals and groups.

2.8 Mentoring Plus works towards retaining employees who become disabled or those with progressive disability where possible. It recognises that some disabled people may need assistance to attain or retain employment, and is committed to providing 'reasonable adjustment' in employment where possible.

2.9 The charity does not discriminate against any employee on the grounds of their personal views or activities except where those views are opposed and/or detrimental to the safe operation, principles and values of the organisation. See also the section on Trust and Propriety in our Safer Working Practices policy.

2.10 Mentoring Plus is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all staff, and to taking action against all forms of discrimination and harassment. It provides an effective response to deal with perpetrators, and provide support for complainants.

2.11 Mentoring Plus ensures that all training courses provided for its staff comply with equality of opportunity in their selection, content, methods, materials and assessment.

2.12 Mentoring Plus is required to request diversity and inclusion data from future employees, freelancers and volunteers. This information is requested after shortlisting.

3. Equal Opportunities in the Provision of Services

3.1 Mentoring Plus is committed to providing access to services which are relevant, attractive and accessible to all those who might wish to use them.

3.2 We embrace the wide variety of lifestyles and cultures in our community, and we encourage and support the opportunity for all to participate in community life while working with us.

3.3 Staff are required to be fully aware of their responsibilities in these respects and to ensure that systems of recruitment or referral to our service do not operate to

exclude or discourage participation and that our initiatives and projects are welcoming and attractive to all potential participants.

3.4 Volunteers are required to commit to our Equal Opportunities Policy in their contact with children, young people, families, third parties, staff and any other members of our community. Discriminatory attitudes or behaviour of any kind are unacceptable at any time.

3.5 Mentoring Plus ensures that no service user is subjected to unjustifiable discrimination in access to or delivery of any of its services. It also promotes equality, diversity and social inclusion amongst any service delivery or co-funding partners.

3.6 The charity ensures that children and young people and their families are aware of their rights and entitlements when receiving our services.

3.7 It is our commitment to work towards ensuring that all services, facilities and information systems are accessible with specific provision meeting individual needs where feasible and appropriate.

3.8 These aims are a priority in the provision of staff and volunteer training and the allocation of resources.

3.9 Complaints about services and/or potential breach of this policy will be dealt with promptly, and fairly and appropriately recorded, reported and actioned, following the relevant policies and procedures.

3.10 Third party service providers are made aware of our Equal Opportunities Policy and are required to agree to abide by it in the provision of their services via Mentoring Plus.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

4.1 The equal opportunities profile of all staff, freelancers, volunteers and children and young people working with us are systematically recorded and monitored.

4.2 This information informs planning for future access and implementation. It is the responsibility of the CEO and Trustees to monitor assessments and action plans to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Reviewed and approved by leadership group: Sept 2026 Next review due: Sept 2027	Reviewed and approved by trustees: Sept 2026 Next review: Sept 2027