



## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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This policy meets all the requirements of SEN and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice. It will be reviewed annually or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new legislation.

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# LifeBridge ASEND Equality and Diversity Policy

## 1. Aims

LifeBridge ASEND recognises that discrimination and victimisation are unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the organisation and its employees to use the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of LifeBridge ASEND to ensure that no employee, job applicant, volunteer or participant in any programme receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment, employment or participation on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics).

Our aim is that our workforce or participants on our educational programmes and those who attend LifeBridge Plus will be truly representative of all sections of society and each member of staff or young person feels respected and able to give of their best.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment or involved in the LifeBridge ASEND offer.

All members of staff, whether part-time, full-time, permanent or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. All individuals will also be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. Any individuals representing LifeBridge ASEND will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

We will discourage direct or indirect discrimination to staff, colleagues or service users because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or gender, and sexual orientation in the provision of LifeBridge's goods and services.

At LifeBridge ASEND we are committed to

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all individuals are recognised and valued;
- Promoting a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated;
- Making learning, development and progression opportunities available to all staff and learners;
- Promoting equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense;
- reviewing all our practices and procedures to ensure fairness;

## 2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is intended for all staff, learners, the governing body, directors and trustees of LifeBridge ASEND.

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this policy are communicated throughout the college, including to staff, learners and parents / carers
- Ensure that the policy is reviewed every two years or updated if any change to legislation
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Principal of LifeBridge ASEND

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the Principal of LifeBridge ASEND. Leaders and managers will ensure that they, their staff and young people operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination.

The Principal of LifeBridge ASEND will ensure that:

- All staff and young people who attend LifeBridge are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
- Grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- Records are maintained as appropriate.

Staff have a responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination and the positive attitudes of all individuals are crucial to the successful operation of fair practices.

### **4. Eliminating discrimination**

The college has obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and we endeavour to eliminate discrimination by staff and learners:

- recognising forms of discrimination and complying with this policy and arrangements;
- not discriminating in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimising, harassing or intimidating other individuals or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics;
- ensuring no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic;
- informing the Principal of LifeBridge if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

### **5. Fostering good relations**

The college has an important role in the local community, and fostering good relations is integral to contributing to community and social cohesion in the local area. Engaging effectively with our communities enables our young people to recognise and value the issues which are of importance to our communities.

We promote tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in Citizenship and Personal, Social and Development sessions and also in activities in other curriculum areas.

We organise college trips and activities in and around our local community and work with our young people to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.

## **6. Advancing equality of opportunity**

Within the workplace, we believe that having an organisational culture where equality and diversity is respected and supported is essential.

Advancing equality of opportunity involves in particular, having due regard to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in the community or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

At LifeBridge we encourage learners to find out about and how we can meet the diverse needs of our local communities, addressing disadvantages and barriers to equal access; enabling all voices to be heard in our engagement and consultation undertaken; increasing the participation of underrepresented groups; ensuring that people with a disability are not disadvantaged including with regard to employment opportunities.

## **7. Monitoring**

The Principal of LifeBridge will monitor and inform the governing body of any reported instances of discrimination and ensure appropriate action has been taken and recorded.

## **8. Review**

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed every two years or when there is a change to legislation under the direct supervision of the Principal of LifeBridge.