Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Equal Opportunities) Policy

We are committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. We aim for a staff team that is truly representative of all sections of society and the families we provide services for, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

We are committed to providing services which adhere to best practice guidance.

Please refer to the ACAS website for definitions of key terms (equality, diversity and inclusion) and links to the relevant legislation.

This policy's purpose is to:

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time.
- 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: 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.

PACE commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- Create a working environment which does not tolerate 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.
- This commitment includes training managers and all other staff about their rights and responsibilities under the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.
- 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 fellow employees, families, suppliers and the public.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, families, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of our activities.

- Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under our grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, 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.
- Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2010).
- 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.
- 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.