

## **Brighton Rainbow Families Aims and Values**

Brighton Rainbow Families is an informal social group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and other sexual and gender minority parents, prospective parents and their families.

We aim to create spaces for parents and prospective parents of all sexual and gender identities that are:

- Friendly
- Inclusive
- Safe
- Respectful

As our primary focus is on inclusivity, this should be at the heart of all our activities. We embrace diversity and want to ensure we attract, support and retain as wide a range of participants in our activities and events as possible. As a LGBTQ+ organisation we seek to encourage diversity through mutual tolerance and respect of others and expect these values to be adhered to by our committee members, volunteers and participants.

Our committee members agree to adhere to our Code of Conduct statement upon becoming a committee member.

We expect our volunteers to read and adhere to our Code of Conduct statement when becoming volunteers. We have produced volunteer guidelines to support our volunteers in their role.

As a social group, we do not have a formal membership. We do, however, expect participants in our networks to also adhere to our Code of Conduct statement and will signpost participants when enrolling or registering for our events or activities.

## **Brighton Rainbow Families Code of Conduct**

The purpose of our Code of Conduct is to ensure a safe and respectful environment for all our volunteers and participants and to uphold high standards of ethical behaviour for the organisation and committee. Our Code of Conduct extends to:

- Our online presence including our social media channels.
- Our informal network event organised by a participant under the Rainbow Families banner.
- Any formal event organised by the Rainbow Families Committee or nominated individual.

Our Code of Conduct supports this through:

- Promoting a culture of tolerance and mutual respect between participants and with people outside our network.
- Treating all participants fairly regardless of personal differences.
- A zero tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation of any kind.
- Dealing with any concerns against any committee member, volunteer or participant in a fair and robust manner.

Our Committee Members, volunteers and participants agree to:

- Read and agree to our Code of Conduct upon becoming a Committee Member or when enrolling or registering to participate in one of our events or activities, including those delivered online.
- Respect the equal rights, dignity and worth of every participant in our network regardless of ability, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, socio-economic status or any other protected characteristic.
- Help promote a culture of diversity and inclusion in all our activities.

- Be open and honest in dealings with others.
- Respect our zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, discrimination of participants, committee members and volunteers.
- Not act in a way that brings Brighton Rainbow Families or its interests into disrepute.

Our Committee Members further agree to

- Raise issues of concerns of participants or volunteers in an appropriate and timely way.
- Manage and deal with concerns or complaints raised by participants promptly, sensitively and fairly.

## **Raising and Resolving Concerns**

Participants and volunteers need to be able to raise any genuine concerns knowing they will be dealt with promptly, sensitively and fairly.

If a participant believes they are being treated in a manner that is against our Code of Conduct, it may be best to resolve the situation informally. Raising an issue at the outset may prevent it escalating or prevent a repeat of it. In many cases a committee member, volunteer or participant will be unaware that their behaviour is offensive and raising this is sufficient to resolve the situation.

In some cases an incident, particularly those relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation may be so serious that it is inappropriate to attempt to resolve this in an informal manner. In this case a participant or volunteer should raise the issue formally with a member of the committee.

Once raised the committee member will discuss the issue with one of the co-chairs as appropriate to the nature of the complaint.

The highest levels of confidentiality will be maintained in managing the complaint. Information about an investigation of a complaint must only be disclosed on a need to know basis.

A committee member would normally investigate the complaint, unless they are in some way implicated. In these circumstances, one of the co-chairs will carry out the investigation. Where the complaint is against a committee member, consideration will be given to whether individuals are suspended from their roles and responsibilities until the investigation has concluded.

An investigation will be thorough, impartial, objective and carried out with sensitivity.

The findings of the investigation will be discussed with the person raising the concern or complaint, although they may not be made aware of any sanction. This is normally carried out by the person completing the investigation.

Any action or sanction deemed necessary in response to the complaint will normally be carried out by one of the co-chairs, this may be an oral warning, or if more serious, a written warning.

If a second occurrence involving a committee member happens, following a written or oral warning, this could result in the removal from the committee permanently. If the incident is deemed a serious breach of the Code of Conduct, the committee member may be expelled from the committee without the need for a written warning.

In the event that a second occurrence against an identifiable volunteer or participant happens, the identifiable person may be requested not to participate in any future activities or events and be blocked from participating in Brighton Rainbow Families online social media channels. If a single incident is deemed to have brought the name or interests of Rainbow Families into disrepute or is considered to be significant harassment, bullying, discrimination or victimisation following investigation, the participant may be blocked from official Rainbow Families activities without the need for a written warning.

## **Appeals**

The subject of any complaint may appeal to the committee in respect of any action being taken within three calendar months of the decision being made and shall have the right to demand that the matter be re-evaluated by a panel of three arbitrators. These arbitrators must not be committee members involved in the original decision making process.

The panel may include an active participant of Rainbow Families who is not a committee member with agreement of a co-chair and the appellant. The arbitrators have the power to annul, annul subject to conditions or uphold the original decision. The panels decision is final.

Committee members who have been excluded and is upheld on appeal or who have not appealed may not restand for a position on the committee.