



## Rainbow Group Policy

### At a glance

This policy sets a framework for the principles of general expectations and guidelines for the Rainbow Groups

### Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to all beneficiaries, volunteers and staff who attend the Rainbow Groups and/ or the Youth Groups (separate to the Peer Group and Young Adult Support Group)

### Policy status

This policy is owned by the Board of Trustees. It is non-contractual and may be updated or changed by the Board at any time. Colleagues are reminded that it is their responsibility to keep up to date with policy changes.

### Policy aims

- To provide an environment which is safe and respectful for all
- To ensure all Rainbow Group attendees understand the behavioural expectations for all that attend the groups
- To promote self-esteem, self-discipline and positive relationships
- To create a positive environment with realistic expectations
- To emphasise the importance of being valued as an individual within the group
- To ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender identity, race, ability, sexuality, religion or beliefs

### Introduction

This policy outlines specific activities and situations that may arise within the Rainbow Groups and the expectations from the beneficiaries as well as the actions to be taken by the volunteers and staff at the groups.

This Policy demonstrates Harry's Rainbow commitment to the inclusion of all children and young people (hereinafter together referred to as "young people") and their families. Our belief is that they should feel welcomed, comfortable and supported when attending our groups. The understanding of the views and feelings, needs and rights of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and

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objects should be observed by all young people and their families who attend the groups. This aim, to which Harry's Rainbow is committed, requires support, encouragement and role modelling. Before attending their first group all families are given the opportunity to view this behaviour policy and agree to the expectations set within in. The agreement outlines the expectations from all at the groups to allow them to run in a manner that is positive, impactful and relaxed. In seeking to define expectation for the group, Harry's Rainbow acknowledges that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations which are either fulfilled or not.

### Attending the Groups

Beneficiaries will be invited to join groups once they have registered. Ideally they should have their memory boxes, but this is not essential.

Emails will be used as the main point of communication with regards to dates and times of groups. If a family indicates that this is not the best way to communicate with them, then we will find a way that suits them. Every registered family is given the opportunity to register for our web app that sends notifications regarding all groups. The private beneficiary page is also updated reagrding the groups.

An email will be sent prior to each monthly group and it is requested that anyone unable to attend informs the group co-ordinator by the date specified, to allow time for food requirements to be communicated the to the food providers. If a situation arises that impacts on the ability for attendance, we request that this is given as soon as possible, and preferably before the day of the group. There is an understanding that sometimes illness and life events will prevent adults being able to give this notice, so it is a request that this notice is given when possible.

Before their first session, beneficiaries will be required to complete a set of questionnaires that allow Harry's Rainbow to get an overview of their mental health and wellbeing as well as any conerns or issues they have. These will be repeated after a period of 6-12 months to allow Harry's Rainbow to see the impact the groups are having, as well as to inform future planned activities.

Sessions will include a creative activity as well as other activities. It is hoped that all who feel comfortable join in with the activities as these give beneficiaries tools that can help them in their bereavement journey. The Rainbow tools will provide much needed techniques and support so creating these, whilst not compulsory, is strongly encouraged. If activites offered do not appeal, then it may be suggested that the family would prefer the Peer Group which is less structured.

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If a family fail to turn up without notifying the Family Liaison or group co-ordinator beforehand then they will be contacted to see if the groups are still offering the support they need, and what can be done to further support their attendance in the future.

If a family fail to attend two sessions in succession with no contact made to the Family Liaison Officer or group co-ordinator, we will attempt to make contact by telephone and email to discuss the absence. If this attempt fails, we will assume that the family have decided the structured groups are not for them at this time and remove them from the email list so they will not receive invites to future groups. We will confirm this by letter.

There is the opportunity to attend structured groups in the future, if the family feel they are needed. This will be based on a conversation with the Family Liaison Officer who will make the final decision. Anyone who wishes to have less formal support is welcome at the Peer Groups. Family needs are regularly assessed through the questionnaires and informal conversations, so the chance to move to a more suitable group is always available.

The aim is for families to access the structured groups for enough sessions for the children to create their Rainbow Tools (approx 1 year). The tools are tangible, creative objects that support them in their grief, mental health and wellbeing and emotional needs. Access to the groups are decided and assessed by the Family Liaison Officer using information, discussions and questionnaires for on a case by case basis.

### Youth Groups

These run alongside one of the Rainbow Groups. They are open to all registered children aged roughly 11-16 years (school years 7 – 11). We have two groups, Youth Group 1 for children in years 7 – 9 at school, and Youth Group 2 for years 10 - 11. Any child who is old enough will be invited via their parents / carers / guardians email.

The attendance expected is the same as at the Rainbow Groups, with replies expected within the timescale given on the email. Due to the large numbers of beneficiaries in this age group, phone calls to follow up non repliers to emails will not happen. However, an option is given to the parent / carer / guardian to have this information via a letter. Every registered family is given the opportunity to register for our web app that sends notifications regarding all groups. The private beneficiary page is also updated regarding the groups.

As above, any non attendance with no notice will trigger contact from the Family Liaison Officer to see what can be done for further support. Two sessions in succession with no contact made to the Family

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Liaison Officer will trigger an attempt to make contact by email and telephone to discuss the absence. If this attempt fails, we will assume the young person has decided that the structured groups are not for them at this time and we will remove the parent / carer / guardian from the email list so they will not receive invites to future groups.

Youth Group 1 is run by Carol on behalf of Harry's Rainbow and Youth Group 2 is run by Arthur Ellis, a mental wellbeing organisation. They are both supported by Harry's Rainbow volunteers. These help the young people to understand, process and deal with grief as well as other thoughts and feelings they may have. The sessions are planned, but there is flexibility to allow us to meet the needs of the current group and listen to feedback around content and structure.

### Photography

A volunteer will be taking photos at all the groups. These are for our records as well as to use on social media. If a family does not wish for their photo to be taken or used on social media, they can let the person on reception know this. The volunteer taking the photos will also check before they take any photos and get verbal consent from all in the photo.

The volunteer on reception will ask each family as they arrive if they wish for photos to be taken and used on social media. They will note anyone who does not wish for this to happen and notify the volunteer who is taking the photos.

All photos will be taken on the charity I-Pad that has a coded entry. The I-Pad is kept locked away in the office when not in use.

If an external company is providing an activity, the same outlines will apply for their photography too.

Family members can take photos of their own children taking part in activities, but must ensure they do not include any other children in their pictures or the displays in the hall with photographs on.

### Food and drink

We provide this to make the session both sociable and enjoyable for all. Hot drinks must have lids on them at all times for Health and Safety reasons. Food can be taken anywhere in the venue, but must not be consumed at the craft activity table.

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Dietary requirements must be communicated to Rachel, the Family Liaison Officer, or the Group Co-ordinator, when replying to the email invite to allow them to communicate this to the food provider used.

All ingredients and dietary information is provided alongside the food on a printed sheet. The kitchen volunteer can provide this if required.

### Safeguarding including bullying

We have a separate Child Protection policy that is available to view via our website, alongside other important policies. There will also be copies of these available at the groups in a folder that is accessible to all.

Families are requested that they notify a volunteer or member of staff if they have to leave before the session ends, that way we can note attendees still present for safety reasons such as a fire alarm.

Any safeguarding concerns should be raised with the Family Liaison Officer in the first instance.

We recognise that young people who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves or be subject to abuse or other circumstances causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others. Where we suspect this to be the case, we will follow the procedures set out in our Child protection Policy.

If bullying in any form is suspected, then volunteers and staff will raise this with the Family Liaison Officer (or the safeguarding officer if they are not available). The Family Liaison officer (or safeguarding officer) will then discuss the matter with the child or children involved and their family in a private location to avoid drawing attention to the situation. If a parent, carer or child is concerned regarding this type of behaviour then they can approach any of the volunteers or staff.

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