Home-Start in Suffolk Ethical Fundraising Policy

Introduction
This policy is aligned to the Home-Start UK policy which is based on the information, guidance and best practice from the Charity Commission and the Institute of Fundraising. The following information states the rationale and actions to be applied to all areas of fundraising undertaken by Home-Start in Suffolk

General principles
It is the responsibility of the trustees to safeguard HSIS's assets, intellectual property, and reputation and to ensure all fundraising is aligned to the HSIS's mission, strategic objectives, and policies.

In handling the ethical issue of when to accept and when to refuse donations, the following practice should apply:

Trustees have a duty to maximise resources for HSIS. If they choose to refuse a donation, they have to be able to demonstrate to the Charity Commission that they have acted in line with HSIS's mission, strategic objectives, and policies.

The position of a charity towards a contentious donor is not the sum total of the personal beliefs of the staff members. Rather, it is determined by whether its charitable objectives are affected by association with that donor. It is the role of trustees to determine this.

Normally, trustees may argue for refusing a donation on one of four grounds:

- the money is associated with criminal sources
- the donor's objectives are materially opposed to those of HSIS
- receipt of a donation would lead to a decline in support for HSIS, and could be shown to result in a fall in the resources available to support families
- Where we know or have good reason to believe that a supporter lacks capacity to decide to donate or is in a vulnerable circumstance which means they may not be able to make an informed decision

Where these circumstances do not apply, or where no benefit is given to a donor in return for their gift, HSIS's interests are best served by raising as much money as possible and HSIS will accept a donation from whatever source.

The matter of judgement does arise in those circumstances where an association with a donor can be shown, as a consequence of their public reputation, to weaken perhaps by alienating other donors, partners, supporters, volunteers, or potential volunteers. If, on balance, acceptance of a donation weakens HSIS more than the money would strengthen it, then the funds should be declined.

Recognition needs to be made that different forms of association bring different degrees of benefit to donors, and different implications for HSIS in terms of bad or good publicity. Entering into a sponsorship or commercially related activity with a controversial company donor, might, for example, be considered differently from a donation from a corporate trust or via staff payroll giving.

Commercial partners will be selected on the basis of shared vision and values and declarations of interest will be recorded.

'Know your donor' principle is operated. Trustees are alerted if HSIS receives an unusually large donation or series of donations from an unfamiliar, unverified or anonymous source, particularly cash donations (in excess of 5k). Staff and volunteers are aware of this risk.

It is the responsibility of those involved with fundraising to alert the Treasurer and CEO to instances of potential conflict, the resolution rests with the Chair of the Trustees in consultation with the Board. Unverified or suspicious donations totalling £25,000 or more must be reported to the Charity Commission.

Donors and Funders

Donors are entitled to know how HSIS spends the money they give. An annual statement of accounts will be published. HSIS will endeavour to keep administration costs to the minimum needed to provide an effective service. Use of professional fundraisers will be authorised in advance by the trustees.

- HSIS is committed to respecting the privacy of its donor and offers the option of donating anonymously.
- Donor records will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible.
- Every effort will be made to honour a donor's request on the numbers and types of solicitations they receive.
- HSIS will not take advantage of mistakes made by the donor and funders.

Fundraising

- HSIS is committed to the principles of accountability and transparency in fundraising practice and seeks to operate according to the codes of practice set out in the Institute of Fundraising Codes of Conduct.
- Funding requests will contain truthful and accurate examples of the services provided by HSIS.
- HSIS will respect the dignity and privacy of those who benefit from our work.
- Print and media appeals will only name families and volunteers and use verbatim quotes with their prior agreement and in line with data sharing policies.
- It is often the difficult circumstances that families find themselves in which explain the need for HSIS's work and which prompt donors to give. It is legitimate and necessary for fundraisers to state these. It is also the responsibility of HSIS to present a balanced picture of its work, whilst not shying away from portraying the very difficult circumstances that families find themselves in.
- HSIS will not exaggerate facts relating to potential beneficiaries.

Receiving Donations and Grants

- Financial controls concerning movement of money are outlined in the HSIS Financial Statement.
- Funds will usually be banked within 5 days of receipt and thanked within 10 days of receipt.
- Funds will be used as per terms and conditions attached to the funds.
- Complaints will be dealt with as detailed in the HSIS complaints policy.

Recording, analysing, and reporting Donor and Funder information

- Grants will be recorded and monitored as per the terms and conditions.
- The names and addresses of donors and any other information about them will be recorded in accordance with the Data Protection Act. All such data will be regarded as confidential to HSIS and will not be sold or passed on to external bodies or individuals.

The cost of fundraising overall, and by activity will be monitored and analysed. A summary will be reported in the Annual Report.

Returning donations

Once a donation has been accepted it can only be returned if:

• the terms and conditions of the gift provide for it to be returned in particular circumstances; or

• where the law specifically provides for the gift to be returned in particular circumstances for example where an appeal does not raise sufficient funds. All returns must be authorised in advance by the trustees.

Further guidance can be found [at ciof.org.uk/](ciof.org.uk/)

Date policy adopted: 30th January 2025

Date policy to be reviewed: January 2028

Name: Rob Thacker……………………..Signed …