

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Scope

The Isle of Wight Youth Trust recognises that certain groups and individuals in society are discriminated against. It is the Charity's policy to comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

In accordance with the Equality Act, the Trust undertakes not to discriminate against any person on the grounds of:

- Sex
- Pregnancy or maternity leave
- Gender reassignment
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

2. The work of the Charity

The Trust aims to advance education and training of young people on the Isle of Wight through the relief of poverty, distress and sickness, and improvement and preservation of health for young people. The charity seeks to meet the need for an independent service which bridges the gap in the network of care provided for young people by the statutory agencies in the Isle of Wight.

Service User Approach

As a youth agency the Youth Trust offers any young person living on the Isle of Wight the opportunity to access the service for support. The Youth Trust welcome referrals from all areas of the Island and under the Equality Act 2010 hold no discrimination (other than as a youth agency there is a specific age range).

In order to give each young person, the best outcome possible each new referral is discussed during the weekly triage meeting as to the best way forward which would include matching to the most suitable practitioners. This is further assessed at an assessment session between the young person and the assessor. At assessment, a discussion will take place about how the young person would like to work, ie: talking therapy, CBT, creatively. If they have a preference this will be noted.

To make the service easily accessible a young person can self-refer, face to face, by phone and email or via the online referral system. The range of referral methods gives young people the most accessible pathway suited to their individual needs. If a young person is struggling to attend sessions, they can access a travel fund which will provide bus fare for themselves and parent, if appropriate for the whole course of their sessions.

A wellbeing hygiene unit is situated in the main offices which is available for all young people to take any supplies they may require; it contains a range of day to day hygiene supplies.

3. Employees

The Trust is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the grounds mentioned above. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training, pay or any other benefits will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

The charity recognises that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice, but that it also makes sound business sense. This equal opportunities policy will help all those who work for

us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

4. Volunteers

The Trust believes that everyone has the right to volunteer. No volunteer will be discriminated against on the grounds mentioned above.

The Trust recognises the value of volunteers and their potential contribution to the aims and services of the charity. We expect all staff, whether paid or voluntary, to be treated with the same level of respect and dignity, with volunteers being included in all areas of the business. Training and development opportunities will also be made available, as for paid staff, and we expect volunteers to treat their role and contribution seriously and diligently.

5. To whom does the policy apply?

This policy applies to all:

- Job applicants and potential applicants
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Clients
- Office-holders such as Trustees
- Contract Workers and Sub-Contractors
- Students and apprentices
- Former employees

6. Youth Trust commitments

- Promoting equality of opportunity and fair participation in employment for all persons
- Eliminating occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, disability discrimination, victimisation and harassment
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with dignity and respect
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Fulfilling all its legal obligations under the anti-discrimination legislation and the associated codes of practice
- Complying with this equal opportunity policy and associated policies
- Regarding all breaches of this equal opportunities policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings
- This policy is fully supported by the Board of Trustees and the senior leadership team.

7. Implementation

In order to implement this policy, the Trust will:

- Communicate the policy to employees, job applicants and relevant others (such as contract workers and sub-contractors).
- Incorporate compliance with the policy into the job descriptions of all staff.
- Provide equal opportunities training and guidance where appropriate.
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion are aware of their responsibilities under this policy.
- Incorporate equal opportunities information into the charity's general communications practices.
- Obtain commitments from other persons and organisations, such as sub-contractors or recruitment agencies, that they too will comply with this policy in their dealings with our organisation, clients, workforce and volunteers.
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of this policy.

8. Premises

The Trust will make every effort to ensure their services are accessible to people with disabilities, making a commitment to deliver them through community-based, accessible venues across the Island.

9. Complaints

The Trust recognises that employees have a right to complain about discrimination and harassment should it occur. The Trust has established an internal grievance procedure to deal with such complaints. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Every effort will be made to ensure that employees making complaints of discrimination and harassment, and others who give evidence or information in connection with a complaint, will not be victimised (i.e., they will not be discriminated against in retaliation for their actions). Victimization is also discrimination contrary to the anti-discrimination legislation and to this policy. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Victimization will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

In addition to the Trust's internal procedures, employees have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination or harassment to an employment tribunal under the anti-discrimination legislation.

However, employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under the internal grievance procedure first.

10. Accessible Information Standard

The Accessible Information Standard is a guidance document that considers best practice to ensure that everyone has access to information in a way and format they can understand. The Trust commits to providing accessible information and will use this standard as a guide wherever possible.

11. Responsibilities

Responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy lies with the Head of Operations and the SLT. All Trustees, paid staff and volunteers have a responsibility to comply with it.

A breach of this policy will be dealt with by following the relevant grievance or disciplinary procedure.

CODE OF PRACTICE

The Trust will not accept discrimination in its activities or in the recruitment, training, support and conduct of volunteers, staff or users, on the grounds outlined in the policy statement.

Provision of activities

Despite limited resources, we will:

- Ensure that our services respond to the needs of a wide range of clients. We aim to reach our maximum potential yet remain realistic about what can be offered. Any limitations that exist are not intended to preclude any individual from benefiting from a service.
- Provide information and advice and where relevant signpost people to appropriate services.
- We will strive to use venues and facilities that take into account the needs of vulnerable children and young people (or where relevant their parents), including those in a wheelchair, those with an autism spectrum condition, those with hearing/visual or speech impairments.
- We will engage with children and young people to better understand their needs

Publicity

- We will avoid using jargon and abbreviations in all publicity to aid clarity.
- Any images or pictures will reflect the range of people we want to attract.

A written outline of the activities and services will be provided to all relevant community groups and statutory agencies to clearly explain how to access the activities and how we prioritise people on any waiting list.

Publicity material will also be made available in other formats in order that it can be accessed or enhanced via IT or other systems to aid communication to those with visual or hearing impairments.

Involving people

We will encourage people from all backgrounds to be involved as volunteers, users, staff or senior leadership team members so that we have a broad range of knowledge, skills and perspectives in the group.

Recruitment, support and training procedures will be clear, will apply to all and will be flexible enough to take into account the needs and circumstances of particular individuals. We will publicise that we support equal opportunities in general publicity material, volunteer recruitment, job adverts etc. Staff awareness is essential to the implementation of policy.

Recruitment, support and training of volunteers

- We will advertise volunteering opportunities in places and in mediums which will attract a wide range of people.
- We will match volunteers to appropriate tasks and not ask for unnecessary requirements.
- Volunteers will be provided with a clear description of their role.
- We will be sensitive to particular requirements/attributes volunteers may have.
- All volunteers will be offered induction, information training and support to enable them to be confident in fulfilling their role. Volunteers will discuss their additional support needs with their supervisor on a regular basis and we will strive to meet identified needs. The assumption will be avoided that age and retraining do not go together, as adaptability and the ability to acquire new skills are not related to age.

Recruitment of staff, support and training

- Recruitment will be on merit and potential.
- All jobs will be advertised where appropriate unless posts are being filled as a result of redundancy.
- All candidates will follow the same assessment process. Reasons for not short-listing and final interview decisions will be recorded on the application forms and kept for 6 months.
- We will take a positive approach to the development of staff.

A provision will be made in budgets for training and support to be offered to:

- Allow re-entry to employment for new employees or former employees who have had a career break.
- Staff who wish to develop new skills to enhance their performance.
- People from disadvantaged groups to enable them to progress and be promoted within the organisation.

Related Policies

- Volunteer Policy
- Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy

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