

Equality & Diversity Policy

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Date approved:	23/02/2023
Approved by:	Board of Trustees
Date of last update:	23/02/2023
Period for review:	Every three years
Policy Scope:	Organisation wide
History of changes:	-

1. Aim of this policy

HYCC recognises and values people's differences and will assist them to use their talents to reach their full potential. The organisation will do all it can to ensure it recruits, trains, and promotes people based on qualifications, experience and abilities for all roles within the organisation.

This policy is designed to ensure that HYCC complies with its obligations under equality legislation and demonstrates our commitment to treating people equally and fairly. HYCC is unreservedly opposed to any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. (Known as protected characteristics defined by government: age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation).

Using fair and objective employment practices, the organisation aims to ensure that:

- All employees and potential employees are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment.
- All employees, volunteers and service users (by service users we mean young people and their families, as well as centre hirers) have the right to be free from harassment and bullying of any description, or any other form of unwanted behaviour. Such behaviour may come from other employees or by people (third parties) who are not employees of Hungerford Youth and Community Centre, such as customers or clients.
- All employees, volunteers and service users have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination.
- All employees, volunteers and service users have the right to be free from discrimination because they associate with another person who possesses a Protected Characteristic or because others perceive that they have a particular Protected Characteristic, even if they do not.

2. Scope of this policy

The policy applies to:

- Job applicants

- Employees
- Students on work experience or placements
- Volunteers including trustees
- Service users

The policy applies to all stages of employment including recruitment and selection, promotion and training.

3. Definitions of Direct and Indirect Discrimination

Direct discrimination

This is when an employee or applicant is treated less favourably than someone else because of their:

- Gender identity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity leave
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Race
- Religion, belief or culture
- Age

And that there is no genuine occupation requirement for it.

People also must not be discriminated against because they are on a part time or fixed term contract.

Indirect discrimination

This is where there is a working condition, practice or rule that disadvantages one group of people more than another. In other words, it is more difficult for people from one group to comply with the requirement. Even if it is done accidentally indirect discrimination is unlawful. Indirect discrimination is only allowed if it is necessary for the way the business works, and there is no other way of achieving it.

Discrimination arising from disability

This is where a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected to their disability where it cannot be objectively justified. This only applies where the organisation knew or could reasonably be expected to know that the person was disabled.

Associative Discrimination

This is where someone is treated worse than someone else because they are associated with someone with a protected characteristic.

Perceptive Discrimination

This is where someone is treated worse than someone else because there has been an incorrect assumption that they have a protected characteristic. This applies even if the person does not possess the characteristic.

Third Party Harassment

This is where an employee is harassed by a third party who is not an employee e.g., volunteers or service users. The organisation becomes liable if it has happened on at least two occasions, that it is aware that it took place and have not taken steps to prevent it happening again.

4. Policy Statement

As an organisation, we value the variety of different views, outlooks and approaches that a diverse workforce bring. This assists us to provide improved services and increase our understanding of our service users/clients. We will do all we can to ensure no one will receive less favourable treatment or is to be disadvantaged by requirements or conditions, which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

5. Responsibilities

Employees and volunteers (including trustees) of HYCC have a duty to act within this policy, ensure it is followed and to draw attention to any suspected discriminatory acts or practices. Responsibility for promoting awareness of this policy and monitoring that it is being followed rests with the Board of Trustees.

Breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy by employees

Breaches of this policy by employees will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy by volunteers (including trustees)

Breaches of this policy by employees will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Employees, volunteers and trustees are also personally liable under equality legislation for any act of unlawful discrimination.

6. Equality & Diversity in practice

In carrying out the policy, HYCC will carry out the following actions:

Particular attention will be placed on the following:

- Use of selection criteria that does not unlawfully discriminate in recruitment and promotion procedures
- Requiring entry to employment /volunteering or progression within it to be based on merit
- Not discriminating in opportunities for recruitment, training, promotion or transfer of employees or volunteers

- Ensuring that every individual is assessed according to their personal capability to carry out a given job/role
- Ensuring that all employees are given equal treatment in regards to terms and conditions of employment, provided they do the same or broadly similar work, or work of equal value
- Ensuring equal opportunities and non-discrimination in the operation of grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Ensuring that all relevant requirements of the Equality Act in relation to disability are met and adhered to. This will include making reasonable adjustments to ensure access to employment or volunteering tasks and opportunities.
- Ensuring that any amendments to any legislation relating to discrimination are met and adhered to.

7. Implementation of the policy

All employees, trustees and volunteers will be involved in creating an equitable environment and one that values diversity. This will be done as follows:

Communication

Communication of the policy to job applicants and employees/ volunteers through:

- Making available a copy of the policy to prospective applicants;
- Ensuring all new starters have the opportunity to discuss the policy with line managers/ colleagues;
- Making use of team meetings to discuss the policy and defining areas where practice could be improved.

Working with Partners

In selecting our partners, we will consider their commitment may to Equality and Diversity by:

- Asking to see their policy

Users of our Service

We will make our services accessible by:

- Considering whether information should be available in alternative formats e.g. easy read;
- Considering locations where the organisation's services are promoted /advertised;
- Considering accessibility of locations from which the service is provided;
- Considering the diverse make up of our staff/ volunteers in relation to your service users;
- Considering the impact of proposed new services on the user group.

8. Reporting discrimination /potential discrimination

Employees who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should in the first instance and where at all possible, report it to their manager or a trustee. Employees are entitled to raise the issue through HYCC's Grievance Procedure if it is felt necessary.

Volunteers who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should in the first instance and where at all possible, report it to the youth worker. Volunteers are entitled to raise the issue through HYCC's Grievance Procedure if it is felt necessary.

Service users who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise the issue through HYCC's Complaints Procedure.

Employees, volunteers and service users should also use this approach if they feel that they been the subject of harassment from someone who is not an employee HYCC. HYCC will not tolerate any harassment from third parties towards its employees, volunteers and service users and will take appropriate action to prevent it happening again.

If an employee, volunteer or service user witness behaviour that they find offensive in relation to age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, disability, gender identity, race, religion, belief or culture and sexual orientation, even if it is not directed at them; they should also use these procedures.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Board of Trustees to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the needs and practices of the organisation.

The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that policy or practices should be altered.

Commented [LM1]: Does this also cover Volunteers?

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