



Equality and Diversity Policy

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INDEX

1. Introduction	Page 3
2. Accessibility	Page 3
3. Scope and Eligibility	Page 3
4. Definitions	Page 3
5. Main principles	Page 4

1. INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees (The Board) of Wendover Youth Centre (WYC) is firmly committed to equality and diversity in all its activities and takes this responsibility seriously.

WYC is open to all regardless of ethnicity, social background, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity, marital status and national origin. We will not tolerate attitudes or behaviour that amounts to discrimination.

2. ACCESSIBILITY

If any aspect of this policy or procedure causes you difficulty on account of any disability that you may have, or if you need assistance because English is not your first language, you should raise this with Admin admin@wendoveryouth.co.uk who will make appropriate arrangements.

3. SCOPE AND ELIGIBILITY

This policy sets out our views and procedures in regard to Equality and Diversity and applies to all employees, workers, volunteers, trainees (collectively referred to as “workers” in the remainder of this policy) and young people.

This policy is not contractual, it does not form part of employees’ terms and conditions of employment.

Wendover Youth Centre reserves the right to amend this Policy and any accompanying documentation from time to time.

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 Equality

Equality is about ensuring that individuals or groups of individuals are not treated differently or less favourably, on the basis of their specific protected characteristic.

Promoting equality should remove discrimination across all areas, and in particular in relation to protected characteristics (see 4.3). Bullying, harassment or victimisation are also considered as equality and diversity issues.

4.2 Diversity

Diversity aims to recognise, respect and value people’s differences to contribute and realise their full potential by promoting an inclusive culture for all workers and young people.

4.3 Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. Within this act there are a number of specific characteristics which are set as 'Protected Characteristics' these are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy, maternity & breastfeeding
- Race (colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We recognise all agender identities and class them under gender reassignment. Any young people or workers with one of these identities are therefore protected and treated equally.

5. MAIN PRINCIPLES

5.1. Types of discrimination

There are various types of discriminatory behaviours prohibited by this policy. The main types are:

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs where one person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic set out in this policy. By way of example, refusing to promote a pregnant employee on the basis that she is shortly due to go on maternity leave would be direct discrimination on the protected characteristic of the employee's sex. Other types of direct discrimination are:

Associative discrimination - this is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. For example, an employee is discriminated against because his/her son is disabled.

Perceptive discrimination - this is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. For example, where co-workers believe the individual is gay. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when an unjustifiable requirement or condition is applied, which appears to be the same for all, but which has a disproportionate, adverse effect on one group of people. This is discrimination even though there was no intention to

discriminate. For example, a requirement for UK based qualifications could disadvantage applicants who have obtained their qualifications outside of the UK; this could amount to indirect discrimination on the grounds of race.

Victimisation

Victimisation is defined in the Act as: “Treating someone detrimentally because they have done a ‘protected act’ (or because you believe that a person has done or is going to do a protected act).”

A ‘protected act’ could be:

- Making a claim or complaint of discrimination (under the Equality Act).
- Helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information.
- Making an allegation that you or someone else has breached the Act.
- Doing anything else in connection with the Act.

Harassment

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.” It is important to remember that it is not the intention of the harasser but how the recipient perceives their behaviour, which determines whether harassment has occurred. Conduct constituting harassment can be perpetrated using electronic forms of communication and includes emails, texting and any other form of electronic communication.

Bullying

Bullying is “the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.” The actual behaviour of bullying can occur either face-to-face or online. The behaviours can be and includes:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding possessions, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc. If a worker spots that a young person is involved with this type of bullying, this is a safeguarding concern and should be raised with the designated safeguarding lead.
- Online/cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty messages, social exclusion
- Indirect – can include the exploitation of individuals.

All workers are encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development and progression opportunities. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

5.2 Application of this Policy

This policy applies to all conduct in the workplace and also to conduct outside of the workplace that is related to your work (e.g. at meetings, social events and social interactions with colleagues) or which may impact on WYC's reputation (e.g. the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy, that could be linked to WYC).

Some specific applications of this policy are listed below:

- We promote respect for other people and treat everyone fairly;
- Young people and adults are able to meet together in a positive and accepting environment where they are safe from harm, abuse, harassment and intimidation;
- Young people and adults recognise and challenge prejudice and discrimination;
- Everyone has an equal opportunity to be considered as a Volunteer Leader;
- All Leaders will have equal access to training opportunities;
- All young people will have equal access to WYC activities and training opportunities;
- The Policy is applied when recruiting staff and volunteers;
- We monitor what we do to meet any legal requirements so that this Policy is implemented properly and understood by all;

5.3 Breaches of this Policy

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If you believe that you may have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, you should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with your line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority. If such an informal approach is unsuccessful, or inappropriate you may decide to raise the matter through WYC's Disciplinary & Grievance Policy.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure. WYC will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result.

A person found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under WYC's Disciplinary & Grievance Policy.

Workers may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning that they can be sued by the victim.