

Children North East

Equality and Diversity Policy

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Ref	Description	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Date of Review
SD21	Issued	Feb 2011	HR Department	Senior Staff	Oct 2013
SD21	Review	Oct 2013	HR Department	Leadership	Oct 2016
SD21	Review	Mar 2017	HR Department	Leadership	Oct 2020

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, promote equality and diversity for all and not to unlawfully discriminate on grounds of:

- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- race/ethnicity
- marriage/civil partnership
- pregnancy/maternity
- disability
- age
- religion or belief.

1.2 These categories are known in the Equality Act 2010 as protected characteristics.

2. COMMITMENT

2.1 Children North East is committed to creating a culture in which diversity is valued, equality of opportunity actively promoted and unlawful discrimination is not tolerated.

2.2 Everyone will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All staff, students and volunteers will be encouraged to develop to their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised in the best interests of the organisation.

3. SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies to all job applicants, staff members, students, volunteers, trustees, external partners, suppliers, third parties and children, young people and families.

4. AIMS

4.1 Children North East recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of individuals and promote a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying*. The overall aims of this policy are to:

- develop a diverse workforce
- provide a safe environment free from unlawful discrimination in which individual differences and the contributions of all individuals are recognised and valued
- ensure all individuals are treated fairly, with dignity and respect
- ensure appropriate training, development and progression opportunities are available to all individuals
- ensure equal opportunity to access services provided by Children North East.

(*Further information about victimisation, harassment and bullying can be found in Appendix 1 of the organisation's Grievance Procedure. Advice can also be sought from the HR Department.)

5. RESPONSIBILITY

- 5.1 The ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with Children North East's Board of Trustees. It is important, however, that measures to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote diversity and equality of opportunity should be understood and supported by all Children North East staff, students and volunteers.
- 5.2 On joining the organisation, Children North East Trustees, staff, and volunteers will receive information about this policy as part of their induction.
- 5.3 All managers, staff, students and volunteers must ensure that they do not:
- unlawfully discriminate against anyone
 - persuade or pressure another person to unlawfully discriminate
 - knowingly aid the organisation to do so.
- 5.4 Individuals can be held personally liable for any act of unlawful discrimination.
- 5.5 Acts of unlawful discrimination are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the organisation's Disciplinary Procedure. If unlawful discrimination is proven it will constitute gross misconduct and could lead to summary dismissal.
- 5.6 Children North East will comply with and respond to changes in legislation in relation to Equality and Diversity.

6. SERVICE PROVISION

- 6.1 Children North East is committed to equality of opportunity for everyone using its services. The organisation will prioritise its services notwithstanding contractual requirements and target its resources to respond to communities and groups in need.
- 6.2 Services are designed and publicised to reflect these commitments and are monitored accordingly. Subject to resources, Children North East will endeavour to provide its services in ways and in premises which are accessible to the communities it seeks to serve.
- 6.3 Any individual or group wishing to make a complaint about any aspect of service provision should follow the procedure outlined in the Children North East's Complaints Procedure.

7. MONITORING

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by Children North East's HR Department to assess its effectiveness and any need for amendment. As part of this process, specific monitoring data will be collected, collated, analysed and

reported by the HR Department on a quarterly basis to the HR Sub-Committee for evaluation.

8. INFORMATION

- 8.1 If you would like further information you can contact the HR Department or you can contact:

Equality Human Rights Commission England
Arndale House
Arndale Centre
Manchester
M4 3EQ

Telephone: 0845 606610

9. STATUS OF THIS PROCEDURE

- 9.1 This procedure does not give contractual rights to individual staff members. Children North East reserves the right to amend this policy at any time and the organisation will publicise any changes to policies or procedures through the management systems.