

MILFORD ON SEA COMMUNITY CENTRE

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Milford on Sea Community Centre (The Charity) is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The Charity seeks to ensure that equality and diversity principles underpin all areas of its work.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our visitors, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The Charity, in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities, is also committed against unlawful discrimination of the public.

The policy's purpose in respect of staff and volunteers is to:

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time and for our volunteers, partners, suppliers, users of our services and Trustees.
- Not unlawfully discriminate. The Equality Act 2010 protects characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

The Charity commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
- To ensure accessibility to the Centre for staff, volunteers and visitors.
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- This commitment includes training all employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

- All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.
- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Service Delivery

- The Charity seeks to ensure that its services are accessible to all sections of the community ensuring that this applies to those most at social, economic or educational disadvantage.
- The Charity will attempt to ensure that none of its policies discriminate directly or indirectly against any group or individual.
- The Board of Trustees and staff will adopt annual work plans which will specifically address the equality and diversity aspects of all areas of work.
- The Charity will attempt to find ways of making its service accessible to everyone, including people for whom English is not a first language, people with visual or hearing impairments, and people who live in remote rural areas and/or who cannot easily travel.
- The Charity will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all its activities are carried out in premises which are accessible to people with mobility difficulties.

- The Charity will be sensitive to the particular needs of service users by trying to provide for example, translations, childcare facilities run by vetted carers and, when providing food, having regard to religious and other dietary requirements.
- The Charity will operate a variety of means to allow people to contact staff and trustees.
- The Charity will be concerned especially with people and communities that are disadvantaged and excluded and will find ways to support the representation of their interests.

This policy will be reviewed annually and monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found at the Office in the Centre. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Control

Policy Revision Number: 2021.1

Next Review Date: October 2022