



## Equality of opportunity

### 1.8 Valuing diversity and promoting equality

#### Policy statement

##### Persons Affected – Service Users

We will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all our children that attend our centre, particularly those that arise from their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, ability or disability. The Bumblebee Children's Charity are committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families. We aim to:

- provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity; and
- make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of The Bumblebee Children's Charity.
- meet the medical dietary and cultural needs of our users.
- Value each child as individual and unique.

#### Procedures

##### *Admissions*

The Bumblebee Children's Charity is open to all members of the community.

- We advertise our service widely.
- We reflect the diversity of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.

- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to The Bumblebee Children's Charity, on the basis of colour, gender, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a Travelling community or an asylum seeker.
- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

### *Employment*

- Posts are where appropriate advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
- We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service. This ensures fairness in the selection process.
- All job descriptions include a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.
- We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

### *Training*

- We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish.
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for promoting equality, valuing diversity and inclusion.

### *Curriculum*

The curriculum offered at The Bumblebee Children's Charity encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all children and their families and visitors. We do this by:

- making children feel valued and good about themselves;
- ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments;
- making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities, e.g. recognising the different learning styles of girls and boys;
- positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
- avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials;
- celebrating a wide range of festivals;
- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- differentiating the curriculum to meet children's special educational needs;
- helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;
- ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning; and
- ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages.
- encourage children to communicate freely with any member of staff and to be involved in planning and decision making where appropriate.

#### *Valuing diversity in families*

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life.
- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of The Bumblebee Children's Charity and to contribute fully.
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.

### *Food*

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met.
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them.

### *Meetings*

- Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of The Bumblebee Children's Charity.
- Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and in translation - to ensure that all parents have information about and access to the meetings.

### *Monitoring and reviewing*

- To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them annually to ensure our strategies meets the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.
- We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents to see

## **Persons Affected**

### **All The Bumblebee Children's Charity Staff and all Volunteers.**

It is the responsibility of every individual, both staff and volunteers to eliminate discrimination by ensuring the practical application of the equal opportunity policy and reporting incidents of discrimination to the Principal.

All allegations of discrimination will be treated seriously. Any discrimination is totally unacceptable to the Association and anyone found to be discriminating will face disciplinary action.

Sexual and racial harassments are forms of discrimination on the grounds of a person's sex or race. Any such behaviour will be considered a disciplinary offence. All allegations of harassment will be treated seriously and all practical steps taken to prevent the behaviour continuing.

The Bumblebee Children's Charity will not discriminate or treat any individual less favourably on the grounds of:

- Gender, including pregnancy, the possibility of pregnancy, or circumstances related to pregnancy.

- Age
- Religion
- Ancestry, including colour and perceived race
- Disability
- Nationality or national origin
- Sexual orientation
- ethnicity
- religion or creed, or religious belief, religious association or religious activity
- gender-determined characteristics or circumstances
- marital or family status
- source of income
- political belief, political association or political activity
- physical or mental disability or related characteristics or circumstances, including reliance on a dog guide or other animal assistant, a wheelchair, or other remedial appliance or device

As an employer, The Bumblebee Children’s Charity aims to ensure that no job applicant, or staff member – paid or unpaid, receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age or sexual orientation and others listed above.

The Bumblebee Children’s Charity recognises its duties to employees, volunteers and service users under the Equality Act 2010 and believes that its policies conform to these.

*Definitions under Equality Act 2010:*

- **Equal Opportunities** – it aims to ensure that policies, procedures and practices do not unfairly discriminate against our employees, volunteers, stakeholders and service users. It aims to treat people fairly and equitably regardless of whom they are, their background or their lifestyle.
- **Diversity** – it aims to ensure that all people are valued as individuals and are able to maximise their potential and contribution. It recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and a different approach that can make the way we work and learn more fun, more creative, more efficient and more innovative.
- **Direct Discrimination** - as defined in law, occurs when a person is dealt with less favourably than other people because of a ‘protected characteristic’. These are defined in the Equality Act 2010 as being:
  - **Age** – a person of a particular age group, but does not apply to those under the age of 18.
  - **Disability** – a person who has a physical or mental impairment, where the impairment has a substantial and long term effect on the person’s ability to carry out day-to-day activities.
  - **Gender Reassignment** – a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process, or part of a process, for the purpose of reassigning the person’s gender by changing physiological or other attributes of gender.
  - **Marriage or Civil Partnership** – Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as civil partnerships. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples.
  - **Pregnancy and Maternity** – a woman who is pregnant has a protected characteristic for the whole pregnancy and for a period of 26 weeks from the day she

gives birth (in the case of a still born child the 26 week period exists if the birth takes place after the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy). A woman who has given birth and is breast-feeding has a protective characteristic when accessing premises, services and public functions.

- **Race** – a person or group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality, including citizenship, and ethnic or national origins. A racial group can include more than two distinct racial groups; e.g. Black Britons would comprise of those people who are both black and who are British citizens.
- **Religion or Belief** - a person's religion, religious or philosophical belief, lack of religion or lack of religious or philosophical belief. A belief will affect a person's choices or the way they live for it to be considered a protected characteristic.
- **Sex** – a person who is a man or a woman.
- **Sexual Orientation** – a person's sexual attraction towards a person of the same sex, another sex, or people of both sexes.

This Policy uses a wider definition of characteristics and includes caste, caring responsibility, mental health, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, and union activities.

- **Associated Discrimination** is direct discrimination against a person because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.  
E.g. a person is refused entry to the library because the person they are with has limited mobility and uses crutches to help them move around.
- **Discrimination by Perception** is direct discrimination against a person because it is perceived that they possess a particular protective characteristic.  
E.g. a man who is perceived to be a woman because they have a high voice on the phone is refused access to a men only service. This would be sex discrimination because the man has wrongly been perceived to be a woman.
- **Indirect Discrimination** occurs when an apparently neutral practice, provision or criterion puts people with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage compared with others who do not share that characteristic, and when applying the practice, provision or criterion cannot be objectively justified.  
E.g. The Bumblebee Children's Charity has a policy of reminding people of forthcoming appointments by phone. This would indirectly discriminate against deaf people as they would not receive a reminder of their appointment.
- **Victimisation** means subjecting a person to detrimental treatment because they are or are believed to be bringing proceedings under the Equality Act; giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the Equality Act; doing any other thing for the purposes or in connection with the Equality Act or making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act.  
A person must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals or being subjected to a detrimental effect.  
E.g. a patient makes a complaint to a service provider where they were obtaining treatment because they felt they were discriminated against for being gay. The complaint is resolved, but if the person who provides the treatment refuses to treat the gay client this would be victimisation.
- **Harassment** means unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment is any conduct of a sexual nature that is unwanted by the recipient, including verbal, non-verbal and physical behaviours, and which violates the victim's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for them. Harassment can be sexual, racial, ageist, directed against people with disabilities or indeed related to any protected or other characteristic exhibited by the individual. E.g. A male employee is disabled and is claiming harassment against his line manager after she frequently teased and humiliated him about his disability. A female employee shares an office with the male employee and she too is claiming harassment, even though she is not disabled, as the manager's behaviour has also created an offensive environment for her.

- **Harassment by a third party** means unwanted, repeated conduct by a third party based on a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for a person and where the employer does nothing to prevent it from reoccurring. A third party is defined in law as not being the employer or employees of the employer, such as customers or clients.

E.g. A manager of a Benefits Office hears from one of his staff, who is gay, that he is feeling unhappy after a claimant made homophobic remarks in his hearing. The manager is concerned and monitors the situation. Within a few days the claimant makes further offensive remarks.

The manager reacts by having a word with the claimant, pointing out that this behaviour is unacceptable. He considers following it up with a letter to him pointing out that he will ban him if this happens again. The manager keeps the gay employee in the picture with the actions he is taking and believes he is taking reasonable steps to protect the employee from third party harassment.

- **Positive Action** can be taken when it is clear that a group of people who share a protected characteristic and who are, or could become, employees, volunteers or service users, suffer a disadvantage linked to that characteristic, have disproportionately low levels of participation, or have different needs from a service as compared to other groups.

The positive action must be proportionate and aim to increase participation, meet different needs or overcome disadvantage. The positive action must be appropriate to its aim and other actions would be less effective in achieving this aim or likely to cause greater disadvantage to other groups.

Positive action could take the form of additional training or providing a job application form in other languages to encourage applicants from these communities. 'Positive discrimination' at the point of selection for employment is not permissible.

The Bumblebee Children's Charity aims to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal opportunity to enter employment and volunteering. In so doing, it will fully consider making reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises to ensure that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability. In addition, when staff members become disabled in the course of their employment, every effort will be made through reasonable adjustment, retraining or redeployment to enable them to remain in the employment of The Bumblebee Children's Charity.

Entry into our employment and promotion or change of post is determined by personal merit.

**Legal framework**

- The Equality Act 2010
- Children Act, 2004
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

This Policy was adopted by The Bumblebee Children’s Charity and will be reviewed yearly.

Sign & Date .....  
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Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Name of signatory            Alison Stonham

Role of signatory            Charity Principal