

Waddington Street Centre Limited

Equal Opportunities Policy



Waddington Street Centre is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our service users (known as Waddy Members), and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

Waddington Street Centre is also committed to preventing or eliminating unlawful discrimination of our service users or the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- Promote equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether permanent, temporary, part-time or full-time
- Prevent unlawful discrimination because of the 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 (Equality Act 2010)
- Identify and confront 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

Waddington Street Centre commits to:

- Encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- Creating 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 managers and employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality and diversity policy. Staff are responsible for ensuring that their conduct upholds equal opportunities in employment and prevents 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, service users, customers, suppliers and the public.

- Taking seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, service users, 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.

- Making opportunities for training, development and progression 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).
- Reviewing employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitoring the make-up of the workforce with respect to 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.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality and diversity policy, and the supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

The equality and diversity policy is fully supported by management and the centre board of trustees.

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in the centre operation's manual which is located in the manager's office. An employee should raise a grievance with the centre manager. If the grievance is against the centre manager the Chair should be contacted.

Use of the 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.

Date this policy was approved by the Board of Trustees: 28th September 2020