



SOUTHEND YMCA EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Southend YMCA seeks to treat all people as individuals and in a fair and in a consistent way. We will operate within the spirit and the practice of the Equality Act 2010 by promoting a culture of respect and dignity and actively challenging discrimination.

We will support employees and volunteers to demonstrate the principles of diversity and inclusion in their everyday activities and roles. Individuals with different cultures, perspectives and experiences are at the heart of our Charity.

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the charity's ethos, enables consistency and quality across the charity and is related to the following legislation:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Education (Charity Performance Information) (England) Regulations 2001
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010

We understand that the Equality Act 2010 combines and builds upon the existing legislation covering discrimination and promotion of equality of opportunity.

We recognise that this Act brings together into one Act those areas now known as 'protected characteristics' that qualify for protection from discrimination such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. We are opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination against individuals or groups whatever their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. This is unfair and unlawful.

- We recognise the ongoing struggles of people who come from the LGBTQ+ community to be accepted and treated without discrimination
- We recognise the ongoing struggles of people of colour to be treated without discrimination and in a societal context where institutions have modelled structural racism
- We recognise the ongoing struggles of people living with disability who are still excluded because of the inaccessible physical realm
- We recognise that these groups have to campaign to achieve equal rights. The necessity for this action highlights entrenched social injustice, which limits access to housing, jobs, services and economic sufficiency. Furthermore, these groups may be victims of hate crime

So we will actively seek to advance equality of opportunity, respect and celebrate difference and promote good relations between different peoples. We all have a responsibility to ensure equality permeates in to all aspects of the life and work of the and that everyone is treated equally irrespective of age, disability, gender

reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We want everyone connected with Southend YMCA to feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

We have high expectations for all children and young people and aim to provide them with every opportunity to succeed by providing the highest standards of service offering activities which are balanced, differentiated, relevant and exciting. We monitor the progress of children and young people to ensure they achieve positive outcomes and goals. We will embed opportunities to learn about equality in our projects,

We are opposed to any member of the charity personnel or others connected with the charity being victimized, harassed or bullied by another based on assumptions about their status in the afore mentioned categories or on any other grounds. Also, we will not discriminate against anyone because of their political affiliation.

In order to achieve the aims of this policy we will take measures of positive action to encourage or facilitate the employment or training of minority or disadvantaged groups as we recognise that the avoidance of discrimination is not sufficient in ensuring that equality exists in this charity.

We will work diligently, to maintain a positive ethos where all members of the Southend YMCA community work well alongside each other developing positive working relationships.

We want children, young people and their parents and carers to come to Southend YMCA to enjoy the meaningful experiences that we offer. They must feel valued and special. We want them to have a sense of pride in themselves and the work of Southend YMCA.

We want our staff and volunteers to see the importance of our work, and to derive a sense of fulfilment from their work. Above all we want them to feel valued.

We wish to work closely with the Youth Board and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

Southend YMCA has made a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, equality impact assessments will be undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We aim to be judged at least good or upper quartile performing in all inspections by ensuring that standards for all children and young people are higher than charities of a similar size and that standards continue to improve faster than the national trend.

Southend YMCA believes it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements.

2. AIMS

1. To put into practice the requirements of the Equality Act 2010

2. To promote anti-discriminatory action and equality of opportunity, through targeted interventions and projects in the charity
3. To avoid unconscious bias and treat everyone equally irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other protected characteristic.
4. To minimise the distress and disruption to people with characteristics covered by the Equality Act
5. To achieve the highest standards of service provision for all children, young people and their families irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other protected characteristic.
6. To work with other partners and the local authority in order to deliver on this policy.

3. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

3.1 ROLE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEE DIRECTORS

The Board has responsibility to:

- Comply with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010 and wider equalities legislation
- Set equality objectives and monitor their achievement
- Have in place accessibility plans to provide full access to the charity's building/s for disabled people
- Annually publish the Charity's compliance with the Equality Act 2010

The Board has responsibility for ensuring:

- Funding is in place to support the policy
- That this policy (and all policies) are maintained and updated regularly
- The annual monitoring and evaluation of this policy

The Board has delegated powers and responsibilities to the CEO to:

Ensure that this policy is implemented and embedded into the culture of the charity and that all staff and volunteers comply with the policy and are supported to do so through training.

3.2 ROLE OF THE CEO AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

The CEO (with the support of the Senior Management Team) will provide leadership and vision in respect of equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Together they will set high expectations for all children, young people and their families, and to offer them every opportunity to succeed by ensuring the highest standards of service delivery. Activities will be balanced, differentiated, relevant and exciting and lead to positive outcomes

The CEO with the support of the Senior Management Team will ensure that:

- The Equalities Policy is embedded into the culture of the charity and that all staff, volunteers, children, young people and their parents/carers are aware of and comply with it
- Equal opportunities is covered in project content ,improvement plans and monitoring and evaluation

Should incidents of racism, bullying and other inappropriate behaviour occur managers will deal with these with reference to the law, the charities complaints, safeguarding and anti-bullying procedures. They may seek advice from the charity’s Designated Safeguarding Lead and from appropriate agencies in order to support children, young people and their families/carers.

3.3 ROLE OF ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff and volunteers must abide by and adhere to this policy and act as positive role models to promote equality, inclusion and good relations throughout the Southend YMCA furthering an ethos of respect and tolerance. Children and young people should be encouraged to share their experiences of different cultures, religions etc. and diversity should be reflected in displays and resources

All staff and volunteers must:

- Challenge inappropriate language behaviour; racial harassment and bullying and report any concerns to their manager
- Have high expectations for all children and young people, set individual targets and monitor progress to ensure they achieve positive outcomes and reach their potential ;
- Provide stimulating, relevant and exciting activities that will motivate and challenge children and young people using a variety of methods and materials which reflect the diversity of our community
- Activity plans, schemes of work etc. must be differentiated to provide full access for all children and young people – this will include the provision of specialised resources for children and young people with disabilities;

3.4 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WILL BE:

Taught through induction, ground rules and activities that they can have a role in challenging bullying, bias, and stereotypes. They can treat others with respect, use appropriate language and behaviours and promote equality, inclusion and good relations. They will know how to report incidents of discrimination and harassment and feel assured that adults will listen to them and act on their concerns.

4. RECRUITMENT PROCESS

We are an Equal Opportunities employer and we adhere to the principles of equal opportunity in all aspects of the recruitment process.

We welcome applications for vacant posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex

and sexual orientation. As appropriate we will actively target people from diverse communities in our outreach and recruitment to ensure the charity is representative.

5. COMPLAINTS

The Complaints Policy and Procedures will be used for children, young people, their families and other agencies.

Complaints from staff and volunteers will be dealt with using the grievance and disciplinary procedures as set out in the Staff Handbook.

6. RAISING AWARENESS OF THIS POLICY

Parents/carers will be made aware of this policy through communications with home, meetings with charity staff during intake, via information displays etc. They will be encouraged to take an active role in the life of the charity and their children's progress by attending assessments, celebration events etc.

We will raise awareness of this policy via: marketing materials; the charity website

TRAINING

All staff and volunteers have opportunities for training on induction and through periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this charity.

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the CEO or the nominated Trustee.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Board of Trustee Directors for further discussion and endorsement.

See appendices:

- Monitoring Implementation and Policy Effectiveness Action Plan
- Equality Impact Assessment

