



## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

**FURZEDOWN YOUTH CENTRE  
WELHAM ROAD  
LONDON  
SW16**

**August 2024**

## **Introduction**

Furzedown Youth Centre (FYC) was built on the premise that God created all people equal and everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. This policy statement sets out the means by which FYC will ensure that all young people, volunteers, staff and Board members are treated fairly and without discrimination.

FYC welcomes young people and volunteers regardless of race, gender, culture, sexuality or religion. FYC is committed to promoting equal opportunities and creating an ethos where prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour is challenged whenever and wherever it occurs, and to operating an appropriate code of practice to deal with all forms of harassment.

## **Legal Obligations**

### **Equal Opportunities and Discrimination (Equality Act 2010)**

The Equality Act came into force in October 2010 and replaces all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales – namely the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, The Civil Partnership Act 2004, the Employment Equality Regulations 2003 (religions and belief and sexual orientation).

**The Equality Act 2010** protected characteristics are:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In valuing diversity FYC is committed to go beyond the legal minimum regarding equality.

The **Equality Act 2010** harmonises and strengthens and replaces most previous equality legislation. The following legislation is still relevant:

- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Work and Families Act 2006.
- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended).

At FYC our aims are:

- to develop an awareness of the responsibility of everyone to promote equal opportunities for all
- to enable our users to grow significantly towards their potential
- to combat discriminatory practices and stereotyping in activities and curriculum materials
- to encourage appreciation and respect for the richness of cultural and personal diversity
- to encourage people to have non-discriminatory, non-stereotyped views of themselves, of society and of their roles within it
- to encourage consideration of the widest possible range of educational, training and non-vocational courses

The ultimate aim is to enable everyone, whatever their personal status to have access to power, decision making and earning potential; and to enable them to have the opportunity to use their own experiences and perspectives to examine, and if necessary redefine, what constitutes power, skill and achievement.

## **Definitions**

**Equality and Diversity Policy** is about enabling individuals to achieve their full potential by:

- Respecting each person as an individual, regardless of their personal status
- Providing equal opportunity and access to all aspects of FYC and its programmes and activities
- Challenging the myths and stereotypes that provide false grounds for

unequal treatment of the groups to which they belong.

**Personal status** refers to gender, age, race, colour, nationality, ethnicity (or national origins), marital status, disability, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity.

**Discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourably than another, based on or as a result of their personal status.

**Indirect discrimination** means discrimination by the imposition of requirements which, although equally applicable to all possible applicants, may nevertheless be discriminatory because:

- The number of persons of the same personal status who cannot comply with the requirement is considerably smaller than the number who can; and:
- The requirement cannot be shown to be justified.

For Example

All care will be taken to guard against discrimination on the basis of possible unjustified pre-judgement that individuals, because of their personal status, possess characteristics that would make them unsuitable for employment.

### **Range**

This statement refers to all activities of FYC, young people, volunteers, employed staff and Board members.

### **Rationale**

Discrimination on any grounds is unjust and damaging to the person affected as well as being a waste of human potential.

It also damages the discriminators, reinforcing their distorted view of society and its history, and of their own identity.

Education has a major role to play in combating discrimination, enabling all people to achieve their potential, and providing them with opportunities that will equip them for life in a rapidly changing society.

### **Policy Statement – Young People**

FYC is committed to the respect, care and development of each individual's dignity, value and potential as a human being. To this end, equality and diversity should permeate every aspect of its life and work. Legislation and passive support are not enough. Discrimination on any grounds affects everyone and tackling it must be the responsibility of all. Such discrimination is incompatible with good Church and community development and educational practice.

### **Entitlement**

All young people using FYC are entitled to full access to a broad and balanced range of activities and curriculum, which both reflects and challenges the realities of society and the wider world.

They are entitled to be treated with respect, equality and value whatever their personal status.

They are entitled to respect for their religious or cultural beliefs and requirements.

They are entitled to protection from harassment and discrimination.

At FYC young people are defined as between the school years of 6 and 13.

## **Policy Statement – Volunteer Workers**

FYC relies on the services of volunteers at all levels of its operation. FYC's Board members consist of a team of volunteers from a range of backgrounds, but also includes representatives from the paid staff. FYC is committed to its volunteer's programme, from the recruitment and involvement of volunteers to the promotion of their participation and development.

## **Implementation**

These procedures and guidelines are designed to promote good practise in all areas relating to volunteers and to incorporate the recommendations of the Safeguarding Policy.

No applicant for voluntary service within FYC or any voluntary worker in the course of their service will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, disability, colour, age, nationality or ethnic origin.

Acceptance as a volunteer worker will be based on personal merit and the apparent ability to operate in accordance with the Aims and Objectives of FYC.

Any person wishing to become a worker at FYC should first complete an application form.

Potential volunteer workers will then be called for an informal interview, which will probably be conducted by a session leader and/or Board member.

Two references will be taken up.

All potential volunteers will be subject to a confidential check on any criminal background relating to work with children or young people (see related Safeguarding Policy).

If volunteers are unhappy with any matter relating to FYC they should follow the procedure in the Comments and Complaints Procedure.

## **Policy Statement – Employed Staff**

Furzedown Youth Centre strives to be an equal and diverse employer and will, regardless of its size and number of employees, aim to ensure that:

- Every applicant for a job shall be given equal opportunity whatever their personal status.
- Persons already employed will be made aware of the provisions of this policy.
- The application of any collective agreements, recruitment, training and promotion policies will be solely on the basis of job requirements and the individual's ability and fitness for that work.
- All persons responsible for the selection, management and promotion of employees will be given information and/or training to enable them to minimise the risk of discrimination.
- Appropriate training will be provided to enable workers to perform their jobs effectively.
- Encouragement is given to all workers to take advantage of opportunities for training.
- Recruitment literature will not imply that there is a preference for one group of applicants as against another unless there is a genuine occupational requirement, which will be clearly stated.
- The most effective ways will be employed to bring job vacancies to the attention of potentially disadvantaged groups.
- Applicants for posts will be given clear, accurate and sufficient information through advertisements, job descriptions and interview, to enable them to assess their own suitability for a post.

- Employment policies and procedures are kept under review, in appropriate cases by formal monitoring routines, to ensure that they do not operate against equal opportunities.
- Where it appears that equal opportunities are not being offered, circumstances will be investigated to see if there are policies or criteria, which exclude or discourage workers and if so, whether these policies and criteria are justifiable.
- Appropriate action is taken where necessary to redress the effects of any policy or criteria that are found to have unjustifiably limited the provision of equal opportunities.
- Particular care is taken to deal effectively through the grievance procedure with any complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment.

### **Complaints Procedure**

All young people, volunteers, staff and Board members must use the Comments and Complaints Procedure to report anything that is contrary to this statement of equal opportunities.