

Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Policy

The 4 Friends House is committed to the principles of diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion, and recognises the importance of adhering to these principles at all times. All that we do will reflect our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion in practice.

Diversity, equality and inclusion together form a positive approach to recognise that everyone is different and can make and bring their own unique contribution, experience, knowledge and skills to the organisation. The 4 Friends House promotes dignity and respect for all, and an environment where individual differences and the contributions of all employees are recognised and valued.

The 4 Friends House will not unlawfully discriminate against any individuals including those with protected characteristics such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation in line with the Equality Act 2010.

This policy is written in accordance with all legal requirements, ACAS guidance and best practice.

OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

We recognise that both the people who work for us – or who we may want to recruit to do so – and those who use our services are individuals with different needs which may impact on their ability to access many services in our community including our own services.

WHY THIS POLICY EXISTS

The Equalities Act 2010 sets out the legislation around equality, including what is required of employers in the UK.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that The 4 Friends House operates in line with this legislation and that no service user, job applicant, employee, secondee or volunteer (including Trustees) is unfairly or unlawfully discriminated against in their dealings with The 4 Friends House.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all areas of The 4 Friends House work and to all staff, by which term we mean all employees, volunteers – including trustees –, seconded staff, agency staff, interns, students on work placement and anyone who is subcontracted to undertake specific duties. Wherever this policy refers to staff or employees it includes everyone mentioned here unless specifically stated otherwise.

The principles set out in this policy will also be reflected in all contracts and project plans. We will expect anyone we sub-contract or with whom we work in partnership to work in line with this policy or to demonstrate that they have their own appropriate equality policy and practices in place.

It is a condition of employment that all employees respect and act in accordance with this policy. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary procedures being instigated which could lead to dismissal.

All employees will be required to read this policy on joining the organisation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff are responsible for familiarising themselves and acting in accordance with this policy. Employees should inform their manager if they know or suspect that discrimination or harassment is occurring.

Managers will ensure that this policy is communicated to all staff and will provide advice and guidance to staff regarding their conduct along with sources of available support.

Managers are required to exercise leadership in this field by encouraging inclusion, discouraging prejudice and modelling appropriate behaviour. They must also take speedy and appropriate action to deal with any breaches of the policy, or behaviour that could lead to a breach of the policy. Any identified breaches of the policy should be dealt with using the Disciplinary, Grievance or Dignity at Work policies. Managers are responsible for applying employment practices, policies and procedures fairly and consistently, and for highlighting and addressing any practices which could lead to discrimination.

The manager will ensure that this policy is implemented and operated reasonably and fairly, provide advice and guidance to individual members of staff and line managers and oversee provision of any letters and documents required.

ZERO TOLERANCE

Although treating anyone differently because they have one or more of the protected characteristics is illegal, the Act only specifies two types of discrimination that apply to all of the protected characteristics: direct discrimination and victimisation. Appendix 1 sets out which types of discrimination apply to which protected characteristics.

The 4 Friends House has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics, whether or not the Act applies the specific form of discrimination to a specific characteristic.

MONITORING

The 4 Friends House will maintain records of gender, ethnic origin, age and disability for all employees and for internal and external job applicants.

This information will be collected and stored in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR) and will only be used to monitor compliance with the principles of diversity, inclusion and equality. The information will be analysed at regular intervals by managers. Where possible, and dependent on the type of service, we will also monitor the following characteristics of the people using our services: Age, Disability, Ethnicity, Sex, Sexual orientation.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed periodically – and in any case every year – by The 4 Friends House Team. It will in any case be reviewed any time it is invoked and use suggests that changes or clarifications are needed.