

Equality Policy & Statement on Equality

Children Heard and Seen is committed to implementing and promoting equality in its activities, services and practice. It realises that discrimination exists in society (whether protected by law or not) and believes that this prevents potential and ability from being realised in young people and others.

Children Heard and Seen will not tolerate discrimination based on:

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexual orientation or identity
- Disability
- Health
- Age
- Political or religious belief
- Socio-economic background
- Refugee or asylum seeker status

As a provider of a service to the community, Children Heard and Seen accepts the responsibility to promote equality and challenge discrimination wherever it occurs. This document sets out the main consequences of this commitment and the action to be taken to achieve equality.

Children Heard and Seen recognises that some because of their past or present experiences, say or do things which would otherwise be unacceptable and incompatible with Children Heard and Seen's Equality Policy. Where this is the case Children Heard and Seen will challenge other's perspective and support with a view to promoting an understanding of the value of Equality.

Children Heard and Seen realises that a genuine commitment to equality must operate on all levels:

- Children Heard and Seen will prevent unfavourable treatment, directly or indirectly, upon individuals from any group facing discrimination in its recruitment and deployment of human resources. Where discrimination does occur, it will be dealt with through the agreed procedures. This will be achieved by following the Children Heard and Seen Equality Policy.
- Children Heard and Seen will seek to prevent discrimination and ensure equal representation in the services it provides, the structures that it facilitates and the practice through which it carries out its work. This involves the development of greater diversity in the management committee, networks and membership, to ensure a genuinely wide representation.

Responsibility

The Trustees of Children Heard and Seen has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. However, all employers, volunteers and those working with or on behalf of Children

Heard and Seen have a duty as part of their involvement with Children Heard and Seen to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice. Those responsible for recruiting volunteers to work in Children Heard and Seen projects are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of Children Heard and Seen Equality Policy and adhere to it while working as Children Heard and Seen volunteers.

Children Heard and Seen will bring to the attention of all trustees, employers, volunteers and those working with on or behalf of Children Heard and Seen the existence of this policy and will provide such training as is necessary to ensure that the policy is effective and that everyone is aware of it.

If any trustee, employee, volunteer, or those working with on or behalf of Children Heard and Seen feel that they have been, or are being discriminated against, in any way, they are entitled to pursue the matter with Children's Heard and Seen's Project Manager.

All instances or complaints of discriminatory behaviour will be treated seriously.

Complaints or allegations of an unfounded or malicious nature will also be treated as serious.

Disabled Access

Children Heard and Seen will endeavor to ensure, as far as is practicable, that all the premises it uses have disabled access. When considering new premises, every effort will be made to ensure such premises are fully accessible.

Use of Language

Trustees, employees, and volunteers and those working with on or behalf of Children Heard and Seen should avoid and challenge the use of language which, in any way, belittles anyone

Where the language used has a personal impact on others, and it has been made clear to the person concerned that their use of such language is unwelcome and/or offensive, disciplinary action may be taken if they persist with it.

All materials used or developed by Children Heard and Seen will be judged in the light of the promotion of equality, and those considered to be discriminatory will not be used.

Sexual Harassment

No volunteer or service user should be subject to sexual harassment.

This is interpreted as unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature including:

- verbal sexual abuse
- physical contact
- repeated remarks which an individual finds offensive

If it has been made clear to the person concerned that their behaviour is unwelcome and they persist with it, then the service user or volunteer who is the recipient of the behaviour will be entitled to make a formal complaint.

Monitoring and Review

The Policy will be constantly reviewed by the management committee to ensure that no Member of the group is put to a disadvantage either, directly or indirectly. This monitoring will apply to the practices of staff and volunteers, the member organisation, the composition of the Committees and the provision of services.

It is the responsibility of every individual to eliminate discrimination and to ensure the practical application of this Policy.

The Trustees of Children Heard and Seen will review this policy annually.

Adopted on: May 24th 2014

Last updated: 09/06/2024