



Equality and Diversity Policy

Community By Nature (CBN) is committed to taking all reasonable steps to provide an environment in which all employees, volunteers, learners, children and young people, service users and visitors are valued, treated with respect and that is free of discrimination or harassment based upon race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership disability or age.

CBN does not discriminate nor tolerate discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership, disability or age. CBN strives to practice and promote equality in all aspects of its activity and services. This applies to job applicants, employees, volunteers, learners, children and young people, service users and visitors.

CBN is committed to complying with equality legislation namely: the Equality Act 2010 and its guidance set out in Equality & Human Rights Commissions Codes of Practice, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

All employees and volunteers at CBN will be made aware of the provisions of this policy and will play a vital role in its implementation. CBN recognises that achieving the objectives of this policy relies on the compliance of CBN management, employees and volunteers.

CBN's CEO is responsible for ensuring that the equality and diversity policy is implemented and that its effectiveness is regularly monitored. The CEO is also responsible for ensuring:

- All employees and volunteers receive appropriate information and training on equality and diversity
- CBN's centre is fully inclusive for employees, volunteers and service users
CBN will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure our service provision and practices and environments are fully inclusive.
- All employees and volunteers are aware of, and understand this equality and diversity policy which relates to all aspects of CBN's services.
- This equality and diversity policy is consistent with current legislation and guidance.

- All other CBN policies and procedures are kept under review to ensure they do not operate in a discriminatory manner or against its commitment to equality and diversity.
- Appropriate action is taken wherever harassment or discriminatory behaviour, language or attitudes become apparent.
- An investigation is carried out following any allegation of discrimination or harassment according to the provisions of the staff disciplinary procedures and all information is recorded.
- Information is collected and monitored on employees, volunteers, learners and children and young people to ensure CBN's employment and volunteering opportunities and services are open and accessible for all individuals in Merseyside regardless of race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership disability or age.

Recruitment, advertising and selection

CBN is an equal opportunities employer and will take all reasonable steps to recruit and promote employees based solely on merit and competence. CBN will advertise job vacancies in a variety of media sources and outlets and in a variety of places. Advertisements will encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced individuals.

The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs and will be based on the job requirements and the individual's suitability and ability to do, or to train for, the job in question. All applications will be processed in the same way and person specifications/job descriptions will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Wherever possible, all applicants will be interviewed by at least two interviewers and all interview questions will relate to the requirements of the job.

CBN will make all reasonable adjustments to work provisions, criteria and practices or to work premises in order to ensure that a person with a disability is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a person who is not disabled.

Equality Procedures

All CBN employees and volunteers have a legal obligation to act in accordance with this policy. All CBN employees and volunteers are expected to take positive steps to contribute to a working, learning and play environment where all colleagues, learners and children and young people and service users are treated with equal respect, concern and value regardless of their race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership disability or age.

To realise the objectives of this policy, all CBN employees and volunteers will:

- Ensure they treat all employees, volunteers, children, young people, learners, service users and visitors with respect and equal concern and value.
- Encourage employees, volunteers, children, young people, learners, service users and visitors to treat each other with respect and equal concern and value.

- Ensure that CBN services are welcoming and available to all learners, children and young people, service users and visitors regardless of race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership disability or age.
- Have regard for promoting understanding, respect and awareness of diversity and equality issues in planning and implementing CBN learning programmes and support activities and play/forest school activities.
- Ensure all cultural, religious and other individual needs are met, understood and communicated to all other employees, volunteers, learners or children and young people involved.
- Act as positive role models to children and young people and learners and service users by displaying and promoting respectful behaviour, language and attitudes and challenging any discriminatory incidents
- Report any discriminatory behaviour or incidents of harassment directed towards themselves or any other individual to the Operations Manager or CEO without delay.

Harassment

Harassment is defined by CBN as intentional offensive behaviour which is found threatening or offensive.

Examples of Harassment and Discrimination

Harassment and discrimination can manifest itself in a variety of ways, some overt and others much less so. Some examples include:

- The use of patronising words or actions towards an individual, including name calling, insults and jokes.
- Demeaning comments about an individual's appearance or ridiculing an individual
- Threats made against an individual or group of people because of their race, nationality, ethnicity or disability.
- Graffiti or any other written insults or the distribution of discriminatory literature.
- Physical assault or abuse against an individual or group of people because of their race, nationality, ethnicity or disability.

Addressing Racial Harassment and Discrimination

CBN will not tolerate any form of harassment or discrimination which occurs on the grounds of an employee's/volunteer's/learners/service user/child/young persons/visitors' race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership disability or age.

If an employee, volunteer, learner, child or young person or service user becomes aware of an incident of harassment or discrimination occurring at CBN, they should report the incident to the Operations Manager or CEO without delay.

If an employee/volunteer suffers harassment or discriminatory behaviour they should if possible, raise it with the individual concerned and point out that the behaviour is

unacceptable. If they feel they are unable to speak to the individual, they should raise it with the Operations Manager or CEO without delay.

The Operations Manager or CEO will attempt to deal with matter by speaking to the individuals involved and making them aware of how their actions are perceived and the impact it has on the individual. It will be made clear that the offending behaviour must cease and that continued behaviour of this nature could result in disciplinary action.

Any allegation made against an employee, volunteer, learner child or young person, service user or visitor will be investigated thoroughly. The individual concerned will be told that such behaviour will not be tolerated, and that steps will have to be taken to ensure that it does not happen again.

The Operations Manager and CEO are responsible for ensuring that all incidents are handled both professionally and sensitively. With regards to employees, if the allegation of discrimination is found, and resolution is not achievable at this stage the matter may then be referred to the Disciplinary Procedure and may result in formal action.

Serious and persistent discrimination will be regarded as gross misconduct and may result in dismissal. All incidents will be recorded and kept confidential, with initials being used in the place of names in the Incident Record book. In cases where the CEO is involved in an allegation, the Management Committee will handle the incident.

Complaints of discrimination or harassment will be resolved at the earliest possible stage. However, in the event that the behaviour continues or the matter is not resolved, this should be dealt with under the grievance procedure following a written complaint provided by the alleged victim.

A full investigation will take place during which the alleged victim will have the opportunity to explain their concerns and the alleged perpetrator will be interviewed to respond to the allegations. The matter will be dealt with in strictest confidence however details of the complaint will be presented to the alleged perpetrator.

Once the investigation has been completed the alleged victim will be informed in writing of the outcome and CBN's decision as soon as possible. If you wish to appeal against the CBN's decision, you must appeal in writing to the Management Committee within five working days of CBN's decision. On receipt of an appeal, the Management Committee will arrange an appeal meeting. Following the meeting, the Management Committee will inform you in writing of CBN's final decision on your appeal.

Training

In training, CBN trainers must ensure all learners are given information (both written and verbal) and training on equality and diversity as part of their induction. This information will outline CBN's training policies and procedures to be complied with in relation to equality and diversity and will detail learners' expected code of behaviour during training.

Any learner who demonstrates discriminatory/harassing behaviour or acts will immediately be warned that behaviour will not be tolerated and depending on the seriousness of the case may be excluded from CBNs training.

In training all reasonable adjustments will be made to CBNs training provision to ensure that CBNs training is available to all learners regardless of race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership disability or age.

Activities with children and young people & community support activities

All reasonable adjustments are made to CBNs centre and outreach play, forest school and learning environments/provision to ensure that CBNs play, forest school and community support provision is available to all children, young people and service users and regardless of race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sex, sexual orientation, disability or age.

Play and forest school leaders are responsible for ensuring they agree a code of behaviour with children and young people at the start of the play and forest school session. This will include treating all employees, volunteers and other children and young people with respect and with equal value and concern.

Any child/young person who demonstrates discriminatory/harassing behaviour will immediately warned that behaviour is not acceptable. Incidents will be reported to their parent/carer or senior staff in their setting and a course of action agreed upon to resolve the situation. However, if a solution cannot be found, then CBN may have to inform the child or young person – and their parent/carer – that they are no longer able to attend CBN play/forest school sessions.

Regarding community support services, CBN staff should promote an environment and atmosphere of mutual respect and equal value and concern. This will be done through demonstrating a positive role model, ensuring the environment and all activities are fully inclusive and ensuring consideration is given to needs of all the group.

Any service user who demonstrates discriminatory/harassing behaviour will immediately warned that behaviour is not acceptable. Incidents must be reported to the CEO or Operations Manager without delay. If this behaviour persists then CBN may have to inform the service user that they are no longer able to access CBNs services.

In all cases, continued harassment or discrimination from any individual will result in exclusion from CBN's services, where all other efforts have failed to provide a satisfactorily resolution.

Monitoring equality

CBN will regularly monitor the individuals who apply to CBN, are interviewed and recruited and the individuals accessing our range of services in order to assess whether equality is being achieved. This will also involve considering any possible indirect discriminatory effects of its working practices. If changes are required, the CBN will implement them.

Review

This policy will be reviewed automatically in the light of any relevant changes in legislation or 1 year, whichever is the sooner.

Date of Revision: Nov 2020
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