



Douglas Valley Community (DVC)

Equality Statement

Douglas Valley Community is committed to encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination in both its role as an employer and as a provider of services. We aim to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential. We are committed wherever practicable to achieving and maintaining a workforce – both in a staff and volunteer capacity – that broadly reflects the local communities in which we operate.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and in the provision of services and not to discriminate on the grounds of: Age Disability Ethnic or National Origin Gender Reassignment Marriage & Civil Partnerships Pregnancy & Maternity Race Religion/Belief Sex Sexual Orientation. DVC opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All employees, trustees and volunteers, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, volunteering or any other benefit will be on the basis of skills and ability.

Principles

Our commitment to Equality and Diversity is:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our employees, trustees and volunteers are recognised and valued.
- To create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- To ensure training, development and progression opportunities are available to all.
- To promote equality in the workplace, which it believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- To regularly review all employment and volunteering practices and procedures to ensure that no job applicants, staff, trustees or volunteers are treated less favourably than others.
- To regularly review services to ensure they are accessible and appropriate to all groups within society.
- To treat breaches of the equality policy seriously and to take disciplinary action when required.

- To provide information and training to all employees, trustees and volunteers so that they are fully aware of the issues relating to Equality and Diversity and their responsibilities relating to it.
- To develop Equality Action plan, to ensure our Equality and Diversity policy is fully implemented.
- To ensure the policy is fully supported by the Management Committee.
- To monitor and review the policy annually.

The Centre and its representatives will act positively in using the Equality and Diversity Policy as a means of making public its commitment to provide equal opportunities to all present and future employees, trustees and volunteers. We will encourage all employees and volunteers to apply for suitable opportunities and to seek training for promotion or in particular skills.

Training in Equality and Diversity is provided as part of the Induction Programme. Any form of discrimination by an employee, trustee or volunteer is treated very seriously and where appropriate will be dealt with using the Disciplinary Procedure. DVC aims to ensure that the Management Committee reflects the diversity of the member organisations and the population of Wigan Borough. Positive Discrimination Positive discrimination is illegal and the recruitment of 'quotas' of particular groups is also illegal. Discrimination in selection to achieve or secure a balance of persons of different racial groups is also not allowed under the Race Relations Act 1976. There is an exception, however, which may be appropriate for certain posts in Manley Street Community Centre, i.e. when a genuine occupational qualification (GOQ) is necessary or desirable for a particular group or sex. Both the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 allow these exceptions.

Annual Leave and Religious Holidays

DVC will not ask about an employee's religion outside of an anonymous Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form, and will not discriminate against anyone wishing to celebrate their festivals. Employees are required to use part of their annual holiday entitlement to cover time off for these and must follow the normal holiday booking procedure.

Cultural and religious needs

Where employees, trustees or volunteers have particular cultural and religious needs, DVC will consider whether it is reasonably practicable to meet these needs while maintaining the efficiency of the organisation.

People with disabilities

We will make genuine efforts to recruit and facilitate for people with disabilities and take reasonable steps to make the Centres and individual jobs accessible to people with disabilities. The Centres will regularly review its facilities for disabled users, employees, trustees and volunteers and will try to overcome any problems faced wherever practicable. The Centres will ensure that people have maximum access to opportunities and to meetings and events, regardless of any disability.

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

We will take seriously any complaints of discrimination and will not victimise people who make such complaints. Staff will be made aware as part of the induction process of their responsibilities in relation to equality & diversity and that discriminatory behaviour will be fully investigated and dealt with using the Disciplinary Procedure.

Bullying and Harassment

DVC upholds the right of all employees and volunteers to be treated with respect and dignity and to work in an atmosphere free of bullying and harassment. All employees and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that their own behaviour is sensitive to others and for ensuring that they do not condone or support any bullying or harassing behaviour from others. Manley Street Community Centre holds a Standards of Performance and Expected Behaviours policy which we expect all employees and volunteers to adhere to whilst representing the Centre. All complaints of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously and should be raised using the Grievance Procedure.

All complaints will be investigated and where appropriate, the Disciplinary Procedures will be followed. Monitoring the workforce Employees, trustees and volunteers will be asked to anonymously complete a monitoring form on appointment. The monitoring forms will be reviewed on an annual basis and statistics presented to the Management Committee for discussion.

Service Provision

The Centres will endeavour to ensure that its services to, and for the voluntary sector, are sensitive and appropriate to respond to the needs of all groups, whenever practicable, i.e. taking account of the needs of minority groups. We will take care to avoid unintentionally discriminatory passages appearing in published, printed or spoken material. The Centre will continue to take a leading role in combating any form of discrimination. We will work with others to ensure that diversity in the population of Ince and the surrounding locale is recognised and celebrated.

Responsibility Ultimately

It is the Management Committee and Centre Manager's responsibility to ensure the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy. Appropriate funds will be sought to implement approved aspects of the Policy which require special and additional resources. All employees, trustees and volunteers have the individual responsibility to:

- Follow procedures introduced to ensure equal opportunity and non-discrimination;
- To draw the attention of management to suspected or alleged discriminatory practices;
- To refrain from harassing or intimidating other employees, trustees or volunteers, clients or visitors of DVC on any of the grounds cited in the policy statement

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