

Oakenhoof

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Policy Statement of Intent

Oakenhoof believes that all people have a right to employment and services which are free from discrimination on the grounds of age, class, gender, nationality, religion, disability, HIV status, marital status, race or sexuality, and will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or abuse of people who are service users, members, members of the governing body, staff or volunteers.

Oakenhoof aims to ensure that equality and diversity principles underpin all areas of the organisation's work and service provision.

Oakenhoof also notes that not all forms of unreasonable and unfair discrimination are the subject of legislation, so it aims to take positive steps to redress discrimination, to improve equality of opportunity and to combat any unreasonable or unfair treatment which places people at a disadvantage for any reasons.

2. The Committee

The Committee has ultimate responsibility for the equality and diversity policy.

In particular they will ensure that:-

- All volunteers, employees and members of the Oakenhoof receive equality & diversity information and training
- There are arrangements in place for regular review and monitoring of this policy
- The Committee seeks broad and representative membership on its governing body

3. Employment Practices

Oakenhoof aims to promote equality and diversity as an employer and to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of the policy.

In particular we will ensure that

- Selection, recruitment, training, promotion and employment practices generally will be subject to regular review to ensure that they comply with the equality and diversity policy.
- Terms and conditions of employment, and our associated policies and procedures allow for a reasonable work life balance.

- our obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate people with disabilities are fulfilled, and that we enable people with disabilities to do their job or volunteer without unnecessary difficulty
- A monthly supervision, annual staff appraisal system, and training and development programmes are utilised to enhance potential within staff and volunteer teams

Oakenhoof regards discrimination, harassment, abuse, victimisation or bullying of staff, clients or of others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as gross misconduct. Condoning such behaviour could also be treated as a disciplinary offence. As well as disciplining the perpetrator(s), we will give appropriate support to people who complain of harassment of themselves or others.

Oakenhoof accepts our obligation not to discriminate against applicants and employees on the basis of their religion. We also respect the beliefs of all staff. We will try to accommodate employee's religious beliefs by:-

- Allowing time, and, if possible, a place for prayers during the working day and at the workplace.
- Considering employees' dietary requirements in catering for staff and when providing facilities for staff to eat and store food.
- Allowing staff of particular faiths to take their holidays for religious festivals and other religious observance.
- Aim to arrange job interviews or other important work meetings at times when they do not clash with important religious festivals.
- Not imposing a dress code with which people of a particular religion cannot comply.

4. Service Delivery

Oakenhoof aims to ensure that its services are accessible to all sections of the community.

5. Monitoring & Evaluation

The Oakenhoof Committee will regularly evaluate its services and the effectiveness of its equality and diversity policy, by a variety of means. In particular, it will conduct regular equal opportunities monitoring, data will be collected from group members, job applicants, volunteers and members of the Committee about their ethnic origin, disability, marital status, age or other personal information. This will only be done for a specific defined purpose such as collecting statistical data for funders, for research, or for our own monitoring to evaluate this policy's impact.