

Equality and Diversity Policy

General Statement

Catholic Care believes that everyone has the right to fair and equal treatment, which means that everyone should have the same chance to do what they can.

Catholic Care is committed to equality, diversity, community cohesion and inclusiveness.

Catholic Care strives to be an equal opportunities employer and to be non-discriminatory and inclusive in all its practices and services.

Catholic Care is an equal opportunities employer and will not discriminate on any ground, particularly age, gender, gender re-assignment, race, religion, sexuality, disability or cultural or ethnic background.

Catholic Care values difference and believes that this brings a breadth of different life experiences into our services.

Catholic Care recognises that people who use our services come from diverse backgrounds and this policy aims to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment because of race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, cultural background, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, disability (both mental and physical), domestic circumstances, illness, age, marital status, employment status, membership of trades unions or political beliefs.

Catholic Care is aware of its statutory responsibilities and is committed to dealing with all areas of discrimination through its policies and procedures.

Equality

Equality means protecting the rights of every employee and client to be treated fairly. It protects people from unfair treatment because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin, gender, disability, and other groupings. Equality helps employers, employees and clients by:

- creating an attitude of respect and dignity for all
- fair treatment enables employees to reach their full potential
- reducing workplace stress, emotional and physical pain

Diversity

Diversity means recognising and valuing the differences in people, whether that relates to gender, race, disability, age or many other individual characteristics not currently covered by legislation. Diversity happens naturally, with each person being different from others on a social, work, and organisational basis:

Catholic Care will seek to continually improve its policies and procedures and take action to put right any inequalities to ensure that no one is discriminated against.

We will apply this policy in carrying out our own statutory and corporate responsibilities. We will also seek to apply this to partners, consultants, etc. with whom we do business.

Promotion of Equality and Diversity to Service Users

Catholic Care acts to support all those in need of its services, especially marginalised and vulnerable children, families and vulnerable adults.

Catholic Care acts as an advocate for those unable to represent themselves.

Catholic Care will work with all service users to identify and address any cultural or religious needs. This will be done both prior to moving in and subsequently by a key worker for residential services, and both prior to the delivery of the service and subsequently for non residential services.

Catholic Care will actively help all service users to access all relevant services and resources and will provide on-going support to all service users to help them understand bureaucratic systems, paperwork, legal matters and eligibility criteria. These issues and an action plan will be identified and set out in an individual "placement plan" and actioned by the relevant workers.

Catholic Care is committed to providing services to its clients in accordance with this Equality and Diversity Policy and its own Key Objectives.

We recognise that some of the people we work with may need extra help to get the same chances. In terms of training and gaining qualifications, this may mean making additional provisions and allowances for individuals so that they can achieve the same as others. No one should be excluded or penalised from learning because of any need, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, age or ethnic group. We believe this is evidence of how we promote a culture that respects and values diversity.

Catholic Care will ask all service users to fill in an equality and diversity monitoring form on moving in. This information will be monitored and reviewed and any gaps or weaknesses identified and acted upon.

Catholic Care will not allow any racism to occur. Clients who exhibit racist behaviour will be challenged and helped to understand what they are doing. Any child subject to racist discrimination or abuse will be supported through the situation until a resolution is available.

Promotion of Equality and Diversity to Workers

Workers will be treated fairly at all times and Catholic Care will not discriminate against them in any way.

Workers are required to be anti-oppressive and inclusive in all their practices and work both to clients and other workers.

Catholic Care will regard all behaviour that discriminates others as serious and as such would regard this as gross misconduct. This would be subject to disciplinary procedures

Harassment

Harassment is a deliberate act, verbal or physical, including attack on property as well as on the person, suffered by an individual or group because of their race, colour, nationality, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, health or mental health status or age which interferes with the peace and comfort of an individual, to the detriment of that individual. Catholic Care will not tolerate any harassment or bullying and would deal with this issue as appropriate or if the issue was external, would report it to the relevant organisation to deal with as appropriate.

Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

Catholic Care's intention in respect of recruitment, selection and promotion is to appoint the most able candidate for each job regardless of that person's age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

In order to ensure that this intention is realised, the requirements of each job are identified and all candidates assessed against the same criteria at each stage of the selection process to ensure that fairness and consistency are achieved throughout. Similarly, all candidates for promotion possessing appropriate skills, knowledge and experience are given the same degree of consideration. Employee appraisals are concerned only with the assessment of actual performance in the job. Assumptions about individuals in relation to their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Training

Educational and vocational courses leading to relevant qualifications are available to employees regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity and members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

Training in matters relating, directly or indirectly, to equal opportunities is regarded as a vital component in the training programmes for managers and supervisors; both as a means to maintaining the level of awareness of the policy and as a means of ensuring that the policy is operating as Catholic Care intends

Conditions of Employment and Provision of Benefits and Services

All conditions of employment, employee benefits and services apply irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Accommodation and facilities are provided, as far as it is practicable to do so, having proper regard for the needs of the disabled.

Complaints

Catholic Care has a complaints procedure that is clearly accessible and will ensure that no person is treated unfairly through the result of or handling of a complaint.

To achieve this we will:

- Make the complaints system as accessible and user friendly as possible.
- Have a robust complaints procedure in place
- Monitor complaints and their outcome

In order to achieve this we will:

- Monitor the provision of services, levels of satisfaction and complaints to ensure that specific groups are not disadvantaged
- Provide regular training and guidance to all staff on equality and diversity issues
- Improve awareness of our services particularly to under-represented groups
- Investigate all reported acts of discrimination and harassment and take action as appropriate
- Seek continuous improvement in our services in consultation with client based partners

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