



Lakeland House
Abbey Road
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LA14 1XL
January 2025

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

Foreword

The Drop Zone Youth Projects is an equal opportunities employer. The aim of our policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment than others. Selection criteria and appraisal procedures will be regularly reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. All employees will be given equal opportunities and, where relevant, training to progress within the organisation.

The Drop Zone Youth Projects will endeavour to ensure that its service provision offers equal access and treatment to young people. All prejudice and discrimination will be challenged appropriately. Equal opportunities is a core value of The Drop Zone Youth Projects and our training programme seeks to inform leaders, provide a firm foundation for the social development of young people and prepare them for the responsibility of adulthood in a fair, just and equal society.

This policy demonstrates The Drop Zone Youth Projects commitment to the spirit of equal opportunities and to the eradication of prejudice and discrimination whenever and wherever it occurs.

Policy Statement

The policy statement adopted by The Drop Zone Projects describes how The Drop Zone Youth Projects is committed to making equal opportunities a reality in recruitment, employment, and service provision. These steps are taken because The Drop Zone Youth Projects recognises that prejudice and discrimination operate in society to the disadvantage of many people. The Drop Zone Youth Projects purpose is to challenge personal behaviours that perpetrate discrimination and to promote positive attitudes among staff, volunteers and young people to eradicate prejudiced views and opinions.

- The Drop Zone Youth Projects is committed to equal opportunities in employment and strives to employ the best person in each job. All job applicants and employees shall receive equal treatment regardless of gender, marital status, age, disability, socio economic background, health, sexuality, religious or political belief, colour, race and ethnic or national origin.

Services

The Drop Zone Youth Projects strives to eradicate prejudice and discrimination by promoting equality of opportunity in all areas of its work and structures.

It will encourage positive attitudes and behaviour towards groups and individuals regardless of gender, marital status, age, disability, socio economic background, health, sexuality, religious or political belief, colour, race and ethnic or national origin.



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INFORMATION

Approaches

This policy is underpinned by three fundamental approaches adopted by The Drop Zone Youth Projects to achieve equality of opportunity :

Equal Opportunity as Equal Treatment

Equal opportunity is achieved when everyone is treated fairly and when no-one is treated either less or more favourably than anyone else.

Equal Opportunity as Equal Access

Equal opportunity is achieved when all potentially discriminatory obstacles are removed so that every section of the membership has equal access.

Equal Opportunity as Equal Share

Equal opportunity is achieved when all the benefits and opportunities of the organisation are proportionally shared by all sections of the communities it serves either through direct provision, or the network of constituent organisations.

Definitions and Explanations

The following definitions and explanations are intended as a guide.

Race and Sex Discrimination

Direct Discrimination.

Direct discrimination occurs when a person of one gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin is treated less favourably than others in similar circumstances. For example, in selection procedures it may be discriminatory to ask a woman applicant questions about her family commitments when similar questions would not be asked of male candidates.

Indirect Discrimination. Indirect discrimination occurs where an employer applies a requirement or condition which is such that the proportion of one gender or race who can comply is considerably smaller than the proportion of another gender or race when it cannot be justified and it is to the persons detriment.

Disability

Definition of Disability. A disabled person is defined as having an impairment, which is either mental or physical, which has an adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The adverse effect is substantial and the long-term.

Direct Disability Discrimination. Direct disability discrimination occurs where an employer discriminates against a disabled person for a reason, which relates to the disability, or treats him/her less favourably than it treats others to whom that disability does not apply, and the employer cannot show that such treatment is justified.



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Duty to Make Adjustments. An employer has a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent any arrangements, or any physical features of the workplace, from placing a disabled applicant at a substantial disadvantage compared to those employees who are not disabled. Failure to comply with this duty amounts to discrimination unless it can be justified.

Positive Discrimination. Positive discrimination is unlawful except where there is a genuine occupational qualification. Quotas are unlawful. Targets can be lawful, provided they are aspirations and not requirements and appointments are made on merit.

Genuine Occupational Qualifications (GOQ). If an employer can establish that being of a particular race or sex is a genuine occupational qualification for a job then it is permissible to require that applicants are of that race or sex. Guidance must be sought from the Association Secretary before a GOQ is applied or advertised.

Positive Action. An employer can offer training to employees, or encourage applications from members of a particular group of potential employees, if (within the past twelve months) there have been no members of that group doing a particular job, or only a small proportion of that group employed at that workplace or within the local recruitment area. Advertising can in such circumstances be targeted at a particular group, but selection for interviews and appointment cannot be restricted to the target group and must be made on merit.

Monitoring. It is appropriate to monitor the outcome of appointments against targets. The monitoring process should be completely separate from the shortlisting and interviewing process and comply with data protection legislation.

Implementation and monitoring

Staff/Volunteer Workers

All members of staff/volunteer workers have a personal responsibility and must play their part in meeting the objectives of this policy. Senior Officers have particular responsibilities in regard to selection and employment issues. They are responsible for ensuring that all their staff/volunteer workers are aware of the principles of equality of opportunity and understand their personal obligations to avoid and eradicate discrimination of any kind. Senior Officers must avoid any form of discrimination in recruitment, selection and appraisal procedures and any other personnel decisions they make. They are to ensure they are fully conversant with the content of Part 5a of this policy. They must satisfy themselves that no racial, sexual or other discrimination occurs in the workplace.

Practice

All members of staff responsible for implementing The Drop Zone Youth Projects programmes are to pay particular regard to ensuring equality of treatment, access and share during the planning and conduct of events. They are to work within the framework of Part 5b of this policy. Where prejudice or discrimination is identified at events they are to take appropriate action immediately and report back an appointed Senior Officer.

Monitoring

Overall responsibility for Equal Opportunities is vested in the Executive Committee. They will authorise an appointed Senior Officer to implement the policy. They will be responsible for the coordination, promulgation and monitoring of equal opportunities policy and the provision of information and advice to management, training and advice to individual members of staff. A nominated Officer will maintain

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the recruitment monitoring forms and equal opportunities records and will prepare an annual report for the Executive Committee.

Complaints

Complaints from staff or service users related to equal opportunities issues are to be reported to The Drop Zone Youth Projects as in sub-para b. above using the Equal Opportunities Incident Report/Complaint Report at Appendix A. Complaints may arrive from the following sources:

User to staff

Staff to user

Staff to staff

User to user

Equal Opportunities, Legislation and European Union Directives

It is important that all members of staff, volunteer workers and the Executive Committee are aware of the main provisions of equal opportunities legislation which are summarised below. No employee or volunteer has a choice whether or not to comply with the legislation; it is unlawful not to do so. However, The Drop Zone Youth Projects takes a positive approach and wishes to embrace the spirit as well as the letter of the law. The Drop Zone Youth Projects intends to create a climate in which equal opportunities are a reality, both in its attitudes and behaviour towards employment practices and in its services to Young People.

The Drop Zone Youth Projects Equal Opportunities Policy is based on the Equal Pay Act 1970; the Sex Discrimination Act 1975; the Race Relations Act 1976; the Disability Discrimination Act 1995; the Employment Relations Act 1999 and the Human Rights Act 1998. A brief explanation of the aims of the foregoing Acts are as follows:

The Equal Pay Act 1970:

This Act, which came into force in 1975, ensures that pay rates are the same for identical or similar jobs. It has subsequently been amended to cover 'work of equal value'.

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975:

This Act, as amended by the Sex Discrimination Act 1986, makes it illegal for people to be discriminated against on the grounds of sex and marriage.

The Race Relations Act 1976:

The Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), or ethnic or national origin.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995:

This Act introduced measures to prevent discrimination against disabled people in employment, the provision of goods and services and in buying and renting land and property. The Act defines a disabled



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person as a person with 'a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The Employment Relations Act 1999:

This Act covers three main areas a) provisions for improved individual rights b) new procedures for collective representation at work and c) policies that enhance family life.

The Human Rights Act 1998:

This Act incorporates the European Convention of Human Rights into UK law. Article 8 of the Act guarantees the right to respect for private and family life and Article 14 of the Act prohibits discrimination on any reasonable ground unless this can be justified objectively

Putting Policy into Practice

Employment Practice

The Drop Zone Youth Projects recognises and implements best employment practice having regard to the Acts as noted under Part 4 of this Policy. In addition The Drop Zone Youth Projects will review this Policy on a regular basis to ensure that both applicable UK law and European Union Directives are implemented in accordance with best employment practice.

Services to Young People

General Object

The Drop Zone Youth Projects is committed to the eradication of prejudice and discrimination. It seeks to achieve this by promoting equality of opportunity in all areas of its work and projects. The Drop Zone youth Projects believes youth work should:

- Offer an interesting and varied programme that informs and educates
- Provide opportunities which both challenge and stimulate
- Be non-oppressive and work towards a more equal society
- Develop young people by recognising their strengths and building on their weaknesses from an empowering standpoint
- Promote participation by valuing young people and enabling them to be part of the decision making process
- Encourage young people to recognise that their rights carry responsibilities
- Assist young people to play an active role in their communities.

Promoting positive Attitudes and Behaviour

Equal opportunities is a core value of The Drop Zone Youth Projects, which seeks to promote positive attitudes and behaviour throughout its youth work curriculum. It should therefore:

- Encourage young people to exercise their personal freedom whilst respecting the rights of others to do the same

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- Raise awareness of the issues current and the historic inequalities in society to ensure young people can be part of the anti-discrimination process from an informed perspective.
- Promote a greater understanding and respect for the diverse cultures and religions that are part of our society.

Gender

Objective

The Drop Zone Youth Projects seeks to provide young women and young men with the same level of opportunities in order that they are treated as equals and can also gain confidence to achieve their full potential on an equal basis.

Implementation Method

- Creating separate and mixed provision where young women and young men can meet and enjoy full use of the facilities and provision.
- Making gender awareness and anti-sexist practice an integral part of all training programmes which will also include skills training on developing single gender and mixed practice.
- Ensuring all staff members engage in training specifically aimed at understanding gender issues and combating sexism within The Drop Zone Youth Projects.
- Ensuring that gender and anti-sexism strategies are a central and continual feature of the national strategy.
- Ensuring that both sexes are equally represented in decision making and service provision.
- Taking positive action to ensure that women are equally represented amongst the staff team.
- Promoting the use of appropriate literature and publicity reflecting women's issues and providing positive images and role models of women.

Disability

Objective

The Drop Zone Youth Projects aims to be accessible and appropriate to the needs of young people with disabilities and to promote awareness of disability issues.

Implementation Methods

- Ensuring that people with disabilities are proportionally represented within the decision making structures.
- Providing equality awareness training as a feature of the training programme and daily practice.

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- Developing programmes that are planned and offered which enable all young people to participate.
- Providing posters and displays reflecting positive images of disability.
- Ensuring The Drop Zone Youth Projects is pro-active in attracting young people with disabilities into clubs and programmes.
- Consulting young disabled people on their needs.
- Conducting disability audits as required by the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and reviewing procedures where necessary.

Colour, Race and Ethnic or National Origin

Objective

The Drop Zone Youth Projects aims to ensure that the full range of the services it provides is equally accessible to all young people regardless of colour, race and ethnic or national origin.

Implementation Methods

- Ensuring publicity and literature provide positive images of all ethnic and nationality groups reflecting their history and culture.
- Promoting and ensuring commitment to anti-racist practice whilst raising cultural diversity issues across our services and membership
- Encouraging all ethnic and nationality groups of young people to play an active part in the decision making process. Taking positive action to encourage all nationality groups to apply for staff posts and volunteering opportunities.
- Consulting members and volunteers from black and minority ethnic groups on their needs in order to provide appropriate programmes and services.
- Working to eradicate/challenge discrimination and harassment on the grounds of colour, race or ethnic origin.

Age

Objective

The Drop Zone Youth Projects aims to provide interesting and attractive programmes to all young people between the ages of 11 and 21 and to provide them equal access to all its programmes.

Implementation Methods

- Young people are encouraged and supported in playing a full and equal part in the decision making and planning processes.

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- Young people within the appropriate age range have equal access to the facilities and programmes.
- Developing a wide ranging programme of activities, events and training that responds to the needs and wishes of young people.
- Recognising that individuals over the age of 25 also have a role to play in the development of young people and encouraging them to adopt leadership roles that guide and influence future policy and programmes.
- Providing training, development and learning opportunities in consultation with young people and those over 25.

Definition:

The Drop Zone Youth Projects defines a young person as being aged 8 – 25 years

Religious or Political Belief

Objective

The Drop Zone Youth Projects aims to enable young people to develop and grow in the knowledge and practice of their chosen faith, religion and political belief.

Implementation Methods

- Safeguarding the rights of young people to practise their faith and hold political beliefs without suffering from discrimination or harassment.
- Raising awareness of and respecting the holidays and festivals of all religions.
- Within a youth work setting, encourage support for organisations campaigning for legislation to protect all religious groups against discrimination.
- Ensuring that all religions are equally and positively represented in posters and displays on a non-political basis.

Legislation

Religious groups have no protection by law in mainland Britain. “The Race Relations Act does not give protection against religious discrimination”. (Commission of Racial Equality 2nd Review of the race Relations Act). There is legislation in Northern Ireland under the Public Order Act 1986 which makes “incitement to religious hatred” an offence.

Health

Objective

The Drop Zone Youth Projects aims to ensure that all young people have equality of access to its programmes and services without fear of discrimination or victimisation on health grounds.

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Implementation Methods

Providing information and advice on health issues affecting young people.

Promoting programmes and projects that address health and good youth work practice.

To provide gender specific services on health matters, including young people's sexual health and relationships.

To challenge the myths and prejudices surrounding HIV/AIDS status.

To ensure training and development programmes addressing health related subjects are delivered using an equalities approach and one that reflects this policy.

To maintain a holistic approach which embraces the development of young people's physical and mental health and well-being.

Sexuality

Objective

The Drop Zone Youth Projects aims to ensure that the promotion and development of its programmes are non-discriminatory in terms of the sexuality of participants.

Implementation Methods

- Ensuring that programmes and associated publicity and literature are not sexually biased.
- Promoting good practice with staff and volunteers so that their attitude and behaviour towards young people is equal and accepting regardless of sexuality.
- To ensure that young people who question their sexuality are supported with sympathy and without prejudice and given appropriate help where necessary.
- To challenge discriminatory actions or prejudice by others at events and activities where they are on the grounds of sexuality.
- To welcome participation and membership from young people's groups and clubs regardless of their sexuality

APPENDIX A

Equal Opportunities Incident Report/Complaint

Reporting Procedure

This Report is to be completed under the circumstances described in Part Three of The Drop Zone Youth Projects Equal Opportunities Policy as follows:

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Sub para b – Practice Issues. The Report will be completed by the member of staff responsible for the event and handed to their line manager within 3 working days of the incident. The content should be factual and not contain views or opinions. All Incident/Complaint Reports should be with the appointed Senior Officer within 5 working days of the incident/complaint.

Sub para d – Complaints. The Report should be completed by the complainant and forwarded through line management channels as above. Where a complaint originates from a user the senior member of staff present should agree a date by which the Report should be sent direct to the appointed Senior Officer. In this instance a verbal report should be made to the respective line manager who will then liaise with the appointed Senior Officer.

Feedback and Recording

The responsibility for feedback rests with the appointed Senior Officer. It is important that feedback is given to the victim/complainant to keep them aware of action being taken/outcomes. The appointed Senior Officer will record all equal opportunities incidents and complaints which will be included in the Annual Report to the Trustees.

Outline Details of Incident/Report

Date

Location

Reported to

Date of Report

Date Reported to Line Manager

(if applicable)

Date Reported to the appointed Senior Officer

Type of Incident/Complaint

ISSUE	YES	ISSUE	YES
Gender			
		Health	
Age		Sexuality	

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Colour, Race and Ethnic or National Original		Religious or Political Belief	
Disability		Other: Describe	

Brief Description of Incident/Complaint

Immediate Action Taken

Details of Action taken by the appointed Senior Officer

Details of Feedback to Complainant/Victim

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Name/Role	Signed	Date

This policy will be reviewed annually and agreed by the Board of Trustees.

Signed.....

Name.....

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Role.....

Date.....