

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Approval/Ratified by:	Karen Holden Jo Booth Owner Directors
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Audience:	All Employees

Policy Statement

Lighthouse Collaborative Care believes in promoting equality, valuing diversity, and working inclusively. This is the world we want for our children/ young people, and it is at the heart of everything we do. We work within

the spirit and the practice of the Equality Act 2010 by promoting a culture of respect and dignity, and pro-actively tackling and eliminating all forms of discrimination.

We are committed against all forms of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. We believe that fostering an inclusive environment not only enhances the well-being of our residents but also strengthens our team by embracing the unique perspectives each individual brings.

By providing ongoing training and support, we empower our adults to recognise and address any form of discrimination, promoting a culture of understanding and acceptance throughout our home.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 brings together several areas of discrimination which are known as 'protected characteristics'. It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- Age.
- Gender reassignment.
- Being married or in a civil partnership.
- Being pregnant or on maternity leave.
- Disability.
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

How You Can Be Discriminated Against

You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people, including current and former employees, job applicants, children and young people or any other professional or visitor at the home. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace and on work related events including social events.

Discrimination can come in one of the following forms:

- **Direct discrimination** - treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others.
- **Indirect discrimination** - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.
- **Harassment** - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.

- **Victimisation** - treating someone unfairly because they have complained about discrimination or harassment.
- **Disability discrimination** – this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

Equality and Diversity for Children and Young People

Lighthouse Collaborative Care encourages children and young people to develop respect for themselves and others. We strive to recognise and build upon their strengths as individuals, in ways that meet their needs and help them to achieve their full potential.

Every effort is made to ensure that The Old Parsonage is welcoming to all children and young people and others significant in their care and well-being.

The organisation commits to:

- Creating an environment that promotes dignity and respect for children/ young people.
- Encouraging children/ young people to treat each other with dignity and respect.
- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our children/ young people are recognised and valued.
- Not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment.
- Creating regular educational opportunities for children/ young people to learn about equality and diversity, and their rights under the Equality Act 2010.
- Encouraging any child/ young person who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns. Children/ young people will also know how to access an independent advocate who can help them raise any concerns they may have.
- Offering new opportunities and activities to children/ young people which are not restricted by traditional gender norms.
- Identifying local community resources that contribute to meeting the needs of children/ young people. These are highlighted and promoted and where they do not meet required needs, alternatives are sought and suitably identified regardless of geographical location, for example, hairdressers who specialise in braiding or cutting African Caribbean hair.
- Offering additional support to adults working within the home and or children/ young people who are finding difficulty in understanding diverse or complex situations.

Children/ young people are cared for by adults who have been suitably trained in all aspects of equality and diversity including legislation and their responsibilities. Adults are expected to examine ways in which diversity can be valued and activities adapted to meet the individual child/ young person's needs including food preparation and menu choices. Adults are also expected to offer appropriate support to aid inclusion and ensure that the children and young people can fully participate in The Old Parsonage's activities.

Adults are expected to challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way. The Registered Manager is also expected to monitor the range of children and young people placed within the home in terms of ethnicity, gender, and disability. This is to ensure the service provision is reaching all and not creating barriers to certain groups.

Instances of discrimination perpetrated by a child/ young person towards another child/ young person will be managed per the Lighthouse Collaborative Cares Prevention of Bullying Policy. Safeguarding procedures will be initiated in line with the home's Safeguarding Policy if it is felt that a child/ young person is at risk of harm as a result of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

Instances of discrimination or oppressive practice in any form perpetrated by an adult will not be tolerated and will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's Complaints Procedure and or Disciplinary Procedure.

Equality in Employment

Lighthouse Collaborative Care is committed to encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our children/ young people, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation commits to:

- Provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time, or full-time.
- Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics.
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes pay and benefits, terms, and conditions of employment, dealing with complaints and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities.
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all adults are recognised and valued.
 - This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the Equalities Policy during their induction. Responsibilities include adults conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination within the home.
 - All adults should understand they, as well as Lighthouse Collaborative Care, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against young people, their fellow employees, and any others in the course of the home's work activities.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination.
 - Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's Complaints Procedure and or Disciplinary Procedure. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal.
 - Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- Make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all adults, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully used to maximise the efficiency of The Old Parsonage's Statement of Purpose.
- Decisions concerning adults being based on merit (apart from any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2010).
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this Equalities Policy.
 - Monitoring will also include assessing how the Equalities Policy is working in practice and considering and taking action to address any issues.
- Make reasonable adjustments to enable all employees with disabilities to function effectively and to their full potential

Use of the organisation's Complaints Procedure and/or Disciplinary Procedure does not affect an employee's right to claim an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Who is responsible for this policy?

The Directors and Responsible Individual has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy but has delegated day to day responsibility for overseeing its implementation to the Registered Manager.

Breaches of this policy

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination and victimisation may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe you have suffered harassment, bullying or discrimination, or witnessed it happening to someone else in the workplace you can raise the matter with your line manager or with the senior leadership team.

Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

There must be no victimisation or retaliation against employees who report any form of discrimination.

We encourage the reporting of all types of discrimination, as this assists us in ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion principles are adhered to in the workplace. However making a false allegation in bad faith, or that you know to be untrue, will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Contact Information

Employees should talk to Lighthouse Collaborative Care first to try and resolve the problem informally. If things cannot be sorted out informally, employees can talk to Acas, Citizens Advice, or a trade union representative.

Acas

Helpline: 0300 123 1100

Relay UK: 18001 0300 123 1100 (textphone)



Website: www.acas.org.uk

Citizens Advice

Helpline: 0800 144 8848

Relay UK: 10800 144 8884 (textphone)

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk