



Equal Opportunities POLICY

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Aspire Ryde recognises that we live in a society where discrimination still operates to the disadvantage of many groups in society.

Aspire Ryde believe that everyone should have equal rights to recognition of their human dignity, and to have equal opportunities to be educated, to work, receive services and to participate fully in society.

Aspire Ryde is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities within the charity, and affiliated organisations, through the way we manage the organisation and provide services to the community. In order to express this commitment, we develop, promote and maintain policies that will be conducive to the principles of fairness and equality.

The objective of this policy is that no person should suffer or experience less favourable treatment, discrimination or lack of opportunities on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or philosophical beliefs, health status, HIV status, age, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, political beliefs or trade union membership, class, responsibility for dependents, physical attributes, ex-offender status as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, lack of formal qualifications where such qualifications are not formally required, or any other grounds which cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of this policy or our vision or values.

This policy will influence and affect every aspect of activities carried out at Aspire Ryde i.e. volunteering, employment, facilities' hire, and other functions linked to the building and charity, as determined by the management committee and in line with our vision and values.

In the provision of services and the employment of staff, Aspire Ryde is committed to promoting equal opportunities for everyone. Throughout its activities, we will treat all people equally whether they are:

- Seeking or using our services.
- Applying for a job or already employed by us.
- Volunteer workers.

CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

All staff and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and considerate manner at all times. We will not tolerate behaviour such as:

- making threats
- physical violence
- shouting
- swearing at others
- persistent rudeness
- isolating, ignoring or refusing to work with certain people
- telling offensive jokes or name calling
- displaying offensive material such as pornography or sexist / racist cartoons, or the distribution of such material via email / text message or any other format.

- any other forms of harassment or victimisation.

The items on the above list of unacceptable behaviours are considered to be disciplinary offences within the charity and can lead to disciplinary action being taken. We do, however, encourage staff to resolve misunderstandings and problems informally wherever possible, depending on the circumstances. However, whether dealt with informally or formally, it is important for staff who may have caused offence to understand that it is no defence to say that they did not intend to do so, or to blame individuals for being over sensitive. It is the impact of the behaviour, rather than the intent, that counts, and that should shape the solution found both to the immediate problem and to preventing further similar problems in the future. Education and training regarding these matters will be paramount in these cases

Complaints of discrimination

We will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any forbidden grounds made by volunteers, employees, trustees, clients or other third parties and will take action where appropriate. All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the organisation's grievance, complaints or disciplinary procedure, as appropriate and the complainant will be informed of the outcome in line with these procedures.

We will also monitor the number and outcomes of complaints of discrimination made by staff, volunteers, clients and other third parties.

See Appendix 1 for our recording sheet.

Legal Obligations

Equal Opportunities and Discrimination (Equality Act 2010)

The new Equality Act came into force in October 2010 and replaces all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales – namely the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, The Civil Partnership Act 2004, the Employment Equality Regulations 2003 (religions and belief and sexual orientation).

The Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics are:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief sex and sexual orientation.

In valuing diversity Aspire Ryde is committed to go beyond the legal minimum regarding equality.

The Equality Act 2010 harmonises and strengthens and replaces most previous equality legislation. The following legislation is still relevant:

- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Work and Families Act 2006.
- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended).

