

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Purpose

Age UK Milton Keynes recognises that many people experience discrimination or lack of opportunity. Reasons include: age, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sex and sexual orientation, together with responsibility for dependants, appearance, geographical area, social class, income level, limited education and comprehension or criminal record. The Policy is drafted in accordance with relevant equalities related legislation including the Equality Act 2010. Age UK Milton Keynes will challenge discrimination and lack of opportunity in its own policy and practice and will help other organisations and individuals, when appropriate, to do the same.

Aims

- Age UK Milton Keynes aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences and sees these differences as an asset to its work as they improve its ability to meet its aims and objectives and the people it serves.
- Age UK Milton Keynes expects its workforce and Trustees to support this Equality and Diversity policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

What is discrimination?

Age UK Milton Keynes believes that discrimination can take one or more of the forms set out below:

- **Direct discrimination** – treating one person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances or segregating them from others solely because they have, for example, a disability or illness. Refusing to employ someone who has the required skills because they are deaf or because they are pregnant would constitute such discrimination.
- **Indirect discrimination** – this occurs where there is a requirement or condition which applies equally to everyone but which, in practice, has an adverse impact on a particular group and cannot be justified. For example an unnecessary physical requirement can discriminate against women or disabled people or setting of language tests where language skills or fluency are not really needed for a job.
- **Abuse and/or harassment** – Discrimination also covers actions which amount to abuse and/or harassment of people or groups of people because for example they are a member of a national, racial or ethnic minority group, a woman, a lesbian, a gay man or have a disability or illness.
- **Victimisation** – this occurs when a person is treated less favourably or is discriminated against because she/he has pursued or intends to pursue their rights in respect of alleged discrimination.
- **Institutional racism** – the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen in the processes or attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination, to unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people.
- **Racist incident** – any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. If the victim doesn't want to complain, another person may do so.

Discrimination in any of the forms stated above is unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

Workforce Development

Decisions about learning and development opportunities will be made in accordance with the needs of the individual and the workforce will have access to opportunities to encourage and support their personal development.

Service Provision

All Age UK Milton Keynes services are covered by this policy and Age UK Milton Keynes promotes equality and diversity in its work with other agencies or individuals. Age UK Milton Keynes services are reviewed regularly and changed where needed. All trainers, facilitators and consultants contracted to work for Age UK Milton Keynes are required to support Age UK Milton Keynes's Equality and Diversity policy.

Recruitment and Selection

Age UK Milton Keynes believes that no person or group should be treated less favourably in employment or volunteering.

Workforce appointments are monitored to ensure no discrimination occurs at the point of selection.

The Recruitment Policy has been prepared in accordance with this process.

Miscellaneous

Premises

Age UK Milton Keynes makes every effort to ensure that premises used in relation to its work are accessible and inviting for all members of the community.

Purchasing

Age UK Milton Keynes reserves the right not to purchase goods and services from agencies or organisations whose activities are contrary to the principles outlined in this policy.

Promotion of this policy

Copies of this policy are freely available to members of the workforce and any other interested parties. It is referred to in other relevant policies and procedures of Age UK Milton Keynes.

Travel

Age UK Milton Keynes recognises that not everyone has access to personal transport or is able to use it and formulates its services and activities with this in mind.

Implementation and monitoring

Monitoring of the Equality and Diversity policy and its implementation is the responsibility of the senior management team of Age UK Milton Keynes.

Age UK Milton Keynes reviews the policy annually. The Induction process for the workforce includes a briefing on the Equality and Diversity policy. A copy of the Equality and Diversity policy is given to the each member of the workforce in their employment folder and to anyone else on request.

Training is provided for the workforce on cultural awareness, disability awareness and other subjects that will develop a full understanding of equality and diversity.

Accessible Information Standard

We aim to adopt a consistent approach across the organisation to identifying, recording, sharing and meeting the information and communication support needs of clients, carers and other parties with a disability, impairment or sensory loss.

AGE UK MILTON KEYNES Policies and Procedures

Other policies and procedures support Age UK Milton Keynes's commitment to equality and diversity. These include flexible working, parental leave, annual leave, recruitment, discipline, grievance, bullying and statement of terms and conditions.