



Equal Opportunities (Staff)

CHARITY POLICY & PROCEDURE

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Equal Opportunities

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Equal Opportunities

Aims

Talbot House Children's Charity ("the Charity") is an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It also seeks to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

The terms equality, inclusion, diversity and equity are at the heart of this policy. "Equality" means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination. "Inclusion" means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution. "Diversity" means the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforce. "Equity" means recognising barriers and that some groups are more advantaged than others and putting measures in place to eliminate these barriers ensures equal opportunities for all. We will actively support diversity, equity and inclusion and ensure that our workforce is valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage all staff to reach their potential.

We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. This policy covers all employees, contractors, volunteers, and agency workers and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development and promotion. These areas are monitored, and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.

All Line Managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example, and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives regarding equal opportunities. Line Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and, where relevant, equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice.

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary procedure. Serious cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal without notice.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Charity, as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with Line Managers, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of everyone to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality and equity throughout the Charity.

The Charity expects all employees to work within the Charity's rules and procedures. All employees have a responsibility to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct, values and cooperate in the application of this procedure.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

Equal Opportunities

1. Our Commitment as an Employer

The Charity is committed to:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued.
- Ensuring we are all working in an environment that promotes dignity and respect to all, no form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Providing training, development and progression opportunities to all staff.
- Understanding equality and inclusion in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- Reviewing all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness and inclusion for all.
- Taking steps to ensure equity amongst our workforce such as ensuring that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse range of potential candidates and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in our Charity, taking positive action to recruit disabled people and ensuring there are no unlawful barriers to accessing our employment opportunities, training, progression opportunities, benefits and facilities.
- Diversity in our workforce will be regularly monitored to ensure equal opportunities throughout the Charity. Where appropriate, measures may be taken to identify and remove unnecessary obstacles and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

2. Equal Opportunity Policy Statements

Age - we will:

- Ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that people are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability - we will:

- Provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities. If we feel that a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will discuss this with the individual and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people.
- If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.
- We will keep the physical features of our premises under review to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

Race - we will:

- Challenge racism wherever it occurs.
- Respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents.
- Actively promote race equality and inclusion in the Company.
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone.
- Offer equal access for everyone to representation, employment, training and pay.

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Gender - we will:

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about gender.
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone.
- Offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay.
- Provide support to prevent discrimination against people who have, who are, or who are going to undergo gender reassignment.

Sexual Orientation - we will:

- Ensure that we take account of the needs of everyone, including the LGBTQ+ communities.
- Promote positive images of the LGBTQ+ communities.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the LGBTQ+ communities.
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone.
- Offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay.

Religion or Belief - we will:

- Ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible.
- Respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or Maternity - we will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity during pregnancy or maternity leave.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about pregnancy or maternity.
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged during pregnancy or maternity leave and that we take account of the needs of our employees during pregnancy or maternity leave.

Marriage or Civil Partnership - we will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity regardless of marriage or civil partnership status.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees.
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged as a result of their marriage or civil partnership status.

Part-time and fixed-term work – we will:

- Ensure part-time and fixed-term staff are treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a *pro rata* basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

Equal pay – we will:

- Ensure that all employees have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.

3. Discrimination

The Charity and its employees must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, volunteers, contractors, clients, customers, suppliers and / or visitors etc. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts, and on work-related trips or events including Charity organised social events, or informal arranged social events).

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3.1 The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

Direct discrimination:

- Treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic.

Indirect discrimination:

- A provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified.

Harassment:

- This includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in the Charity's **Anti-harassment & Bullying and Sexual Harassment Policies**.

Victimisation:

- Retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint 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.

4. Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting will be done by more than one person. Where shortlisting for recruitment at least one panel member will be training in safer recruitment and selection. Please refer to the Charity's **Safer Recruitment Policy** for full details.

5. Breaches of this policy

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with the Charity's **Disciplinary Policy**. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

- If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our **Grievance, Anti-harassment and Bullying, or Sexual Harassment Policies**. Complaints will be treated in confidence (to the extent that it can be whilst still being properly looked into) and investigated as appropriate.
- You will not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our **Disciplinary Policy**.

6. Review

This policy is non-contractual and is subject to review in line with changes to legislation. This policy may be subject to review prior to the date shown if deemed necessary. The HR Department will be responsible for reviewing this policy.

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I have read, understood and acknowledge this Policy and will endeavour to follow the guidance outlined within.

Print name: _____

Job Title: _____

Department: _____

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Please complete full details above, once complete please return to the HR Department within 5 working days.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

HR Department

Talbot House Children's Charity