

Policy – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Version 5

Version Control				
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Introduction

This policy sets out **Cheshire Young Carers'** commitment to ensuring equal opportunity, equal treatment for all young carers, their families, Cheshire Young Carers volunteers, Cheshire Young Carers staff, and Trustees, in terms of access to services and support, access to volunteering and also employment; and to provide guidance on anti-discriminatory practice.

The policy also states that the organisation promotes diversity and provides flexible proactive methods to engage various groups of young carers. This policy supports Cheshire Young Carers commitment to, and delivery of,:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Skills – ensuring staff are skilled for ways of working relating to EDI to maximise understanding and inclusion
- Employee Experience – valuing diversity and celebrating difference with an inclusive culture to create the most accessible service for all staff and communities we support
- Utilise Expertise – develop the organisation based upon views and experience of underrepresented groups to further deliver inclusive services and leadership role modelling

Policy Statement

The Equality Act 2010 Office identifies nine strands of diversity to categorise or group together common human differences. The law currently makes discrimination in relation to these nine 'protected characteristics' (age, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, disability and sexual orientation) unlawful.

Those who wish to support, receive support from, develop or become involved in the work of Cheshire Young Carers should not be discouraged to do so on any of the above grounds. We do not tolerate any discrimination relating to issues of equality, inclusiveness and diversity in any aspect of the organisation.

Cheshire Young Carers believes that all **young carers should be recognised explicitly as existing within each of these strands** and deserving particular attention in the planning and delivery of services.

Ensuring that young carers are not directly or indirectly discriminated against while promoting and enabling their participation in society and local communities requires careful planning and well thought out action. The organisation therefore has flexible and proactive methods to ensure all young carers can access the services provided by the organisation.

Everyone involved in our organisation has a duty to ensure this statement is upheld in all that we do.

Responsibilities

Cheshire Young Carers values the young carers and their families, volunteers, staff, funders, commissioners, and Trustees and expects them to be treated in a respectful manner. Accordingly, all have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The CEO is responsible for providing advice and guidance on equality and diversity issues, and to ensure the Policy document is kept up to date.

Anti-discriminatory Practice

Cheshire Young Carers believes that in order to improve outcomes for young carers its volunteers, staff and trustees must be wholeheartedly committed to anti-discriminatory practice. This relates to all kinds of discrimination, as set out below:

- Direct discrimination - where someone is treated less favourably than another because they have a protected characteristic
- Indirect discrimination – when a requirement or a condition is applied which has a detrimental effect on a particular group or individual. This applies even if there was not a deliberate intention to discriminate.
- Associative discrimination – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who has a protected characteristic.
- Perceptive discrimination - direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic even if they do not possess that characteristic.
- Harassment – unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which violates a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. This applies even if the conduct is not directed at the individual or if they do not have the protected characteristic.
- Third party harassment – potential liability for the harassment of staff by others such as clients or customers.
- Victimisation – when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010 or it is thought that they have done so.

Employment Practices

Cheshire Young Carers aims to promote equality and diversity as an employer and to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable in the context of the policy. Selection, recruitment, training, promotion and employment practices will be subject to regular review to ensure that they comply with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy. All training opportunities will be published widely to all appropriate employees and not in such a way so as to exclude particular groups. Cheshire Young Carers regards discrimination, abuse, harassment, victimisation or bullying of staff, customers or others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as gross misconduct.

Cheshire Young Carers fully supports the principle of equality, diversity and inclusion. We aim to encourage, value and manage diversity and we recognise that talent and potential are distributed across the population. Not only are there moral and social reasons for promoting equality of opportunity, it is in the best interest of this organisation to recruit and develop the best people for our jobs from as wide and diverse a pool of talent as possible.



Cheshire Young Carers as a Service Provider

Cheshire Young Carers ensure that the ideas and voices of the young carers are directly involved in shaping how services are designed and how in practise they will be delivered. Cheshire Young Carers improve outcomes for young carers through understanding, and this can only be achieved through proactively engaging with young carers.

Creating great services starts with understanding the perceived or real barriers to accessing support and engagement that certain groups of young carers may face.

All services offered to young carers will be proved in accordance with this policy.

As well as the protected characteristic there are also other key groups of young carers relevant in this policy e.g.

- Young Carers from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities (BAME) Carers from BAME communities have broadly the same needs as other carers but can experience additional barriers when trying to access support for the person they care for or for themselves.
- Young Carers from lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and related (LGBTQ+) communities must be acknowledged as valuable members of their local communities,
- For young carers caring for someone with a mental health condition there can be additional difficulties arising as a result of the caring role.
- Carers of people who misuse substances experience many of the prejudices and difficulties described for carers of those with mental health problems and, in some cases, also face involvement with the criminal justice system.
- Young carers caring for someone with a physical disability can also experience prejudices
- Young carers caring for someone with a learning difficulty can also experience prejudice

Cheshire Young Carers will develop services and methods to ensure these groups are actively supported and engaged.

Data Collection

Cheshire Young Carers complies with the requirement of the GDPR Policy. Any data, either qualitative and or quantitative, required in order to monitor the requirements or the impact of the Equality Act 2010, will be collected where it is reasonable, proportionate and practical to do so.

This policy will be reviewed on an on-going basis and amended in line with new developments in equality and diversity best practice.

Cheshire Young Carers recognises that the promotion of equal opportunities requires more than passive opposition to discrimination; we are therefore committed to taking positive action towards equality of opportunity for young carers or any individual or group we interact with. We will undertake regular monitoring and review the effectiveness of this policy with this in mind.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Implementation:

- i) **Cheshire Young Carers** is committed to promotion of equal opportunities in all aspects of our work including management, employment practices with both paid workers and volunteers, access to services and service provision.

Cheshire Young Carers' Mission Statement is:

To provide holistic support and respite across Cheshire to carers aged 6 to 18 who live with and provide daily care support to a parent, sibling and/or grandparent affected by disability or illness, including mental health and substance misuse issues, impacting on his/her personal and educational development, health and wellbeing and future life chances.

- ii) The Board shall ensure that it acts in such a way that no individual or group referred to in this policy is discriminated against, in particular:
- by making arrangements to accommodate the needs of the Board and volunteers including travel;
 - by providing information in a way that is accessible, for example, large print, community languages etc.;
 - by meeting in premises with facilities which are physically accessible to those participating;
 - by making training in discrimination awareness and equal opportunities available to all members of the Board, paid workers and volunteers.
- iii) The recruitment of paid workers and volunteers shall be undertaken in accordance with this policy, in particular:
- by ensuring that posts are advertised in such a way as to encourage applications from groups experiencing discrimination;
 - by preparing job descriptions which clearly set out what the worker is to do, and person specifications which recognise that relevant experience can be as valuable as qualifications or previous paid employment;
 - by ensuring that in all selection procedures only factors relevant to the requirements of the post are taken into account, and that the spirit of the policy statement is adhered to;
 - a copy of this policy is to be sent to prospective applicants for all posts.

The employment of paid workers and volunteers shall be undertaken in accordance with this policy, in particular:

- by providing training relevant to the needs of staff and designed to enable them to carry out their jobs;
- by ensuring that any staff member who, in the course of their work, displays attitudes contrary to this policy to any person whether by word, behaviour or other manner shall be liable to disciplinary action;
- by recognising and responding to the individual needs of staff, especially those who are carers or who have disabilities, and ensuring that, within available resources, the necessary support is provided to enable them to work effectively.



Members Needs

In every aspect of the planning, management, access, provision and monitoring of services, the Board and staff shall seek to promote equality of opportunity in accordance with this policy, in particular:

- by seeking to identify and respond to the needs of those groups experiencing discrimination, altering priorities and methods of service delivery where necessary;
- by seeking the views of stakeholders through an annual feedback Questionnaire;
- by liaison and consultation with relevant groups and by regular analysis of the user profiles, to monitor the extent to which services are being taken up by groups experiencing discrimination.

Young Carers Needs

Cheshire Young Carers will ensure all young carers will be given the right to an assessment

It is intended that the policy and procedure for Young Carer's Assessment and care planning be non-discriminatory and for it to promote diversity and equality of opportunity. It is the responsibility of all practitioners when following the Policy and Procedure to ensure that they take into account the diverse nature of the population in order to meet fully the assessed needs of both parents and young carers.

When conducting assessments and planning or reviewing care, venues should be accessible to all regardless of disability. The communication needs of those attending should be addressed in terms of interpreters (language and sign) and portable induction loop/amplification systems. Written materials should be provided in appropriate formats according to language, linguistic ability, or visual acuity (large print versions should be on A4 paper), or on audio- cassette.

Prior to conducting face-to-face interviews where English is not spoken, arrangements should be made for the presence of an interpreter, including BSL. In impromptu situations the Language Line or similar facility should be accessed. Mini-com / talk type telephone systems should be available when contacting persons with hearing impairment, or use cell phone texting.

Assessments, action plans and re must address the assessed needs of young carers in terms of: communication, disability, physical and mental health, ethnicity, cultural, religious and spiritual, gender, and sexuality. Whenever possible, documentation recording assessments, care plans and reviews etc. should be provided where required in easy read, or an appropriate language for Non-English speakers by the use of translation services, although the style may need changing. Large print versions may be provided by the use of a photocopier zoom facility.

Easily Accessible Support

Cheshire Young Carers will assess each young carer about their particular transport arrangements and will try to ensure they are able to access Cheshire Young Carers support.

Anti-Bullying

Cheshire Young Carers will promote this policy and the anti-bullying policy throughout all the services it provides for young carers.



Training

Cheshire Young Carers will train all staff and volunteers in anti-discriminatory practise and the importance of equal opportunities and diversity

The CEO will ensure that all new employees, volunteers, and trustees will receive induction on the policy.

Review

The Board shall regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy in achieving the stated aims. This process shall be undertaken annually, shall include the review of each component of the policy, and shall aim to seek the views of organisations representing the interests of those groups referred to in this policy.

Complaints and Sanctions

Cheshire Young Carers will treat seriously any complaints of unlawful discrimination on any of the stated grounds made by employees, volunteers, trustees, clients or other third parties and will take action where appropriate.

All complaints made by external parties will be investigated in accordance with **Cheshire Young Carers** Complaints Procedure and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

In the event of an investigation concerning a complaint against an employee **Cheshire Young Carers** grievance policy and procedures will be followed and any action necessary dealt with under **Cheshire Young Carer's** disciplinary procedure.

Complaints will be monitored annually, and any outcomes/action recorded.

Glossary

Protected Characteristics

The protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010 are sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity.

Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have 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.

Gender reassignment

A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The person does not have to be under medical supervision.

Race

Race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. A racial group can be made up of two or more different racial groups (e.g. Black Britons).

Religion or belief

Under the Equality Act 2010, religion includes any religion. It also includes lack of religion, in other words employees or jobseekers are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.

Sexual orientation

Includes bisexual, gay, heterosexual, and lesbian people.

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic, they have or are thought to have (see perceptive discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see associative discrimination below).

Associative discrimination

This is direct discrimination against someone because they are linked or associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic and which cannot be justified in relation to the job.

Harassment

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

Third Party Harassment

Harassment of employees by people (third parties) who are not employees of your company, such as clients. Cheshire Young Carers has a duty to prevent harassment and may be liable if aware that harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions and does not take reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination or harassment or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

Positive Action

Some people with protected characteristics are disadvantaged or under-represented in some areas of life, or have needs linked to their characteristic. They may need extra help or encouragement if they are to have the same chances as everyone else. The new positive action provisions held within the Equality Act 2010 enable service providers to take proportionate steps to help people overcome their disadvantages or to meet their needs.