

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Our Aim

1.1 The Green House is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all, and to ensuring that no individual is discriminated against in the planning and delivery of any of our activities.

1.2 We therefore aim to ensure that the values of equality, diversity, and respect for all are embedded into everything that we do.

2. About our policy

2.1 This policy is intended to demonstrate The Green House' commitment to eliminating discrimination and encouraging and valuing diversity among staff, clients and trustees.

2.2 We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to meeting them in full. We believe that a culture that embraces equality and values diversity will help us to ensure that everyone feels involved and included in our plans, services and activities.

2.3 We aim to create an environment which respects and welcomes everyone, and in which no form of bullying, harassment, disrespectful or discriminatory behavior is tolerated by anyone towards anyone. This particularly applies in relation to the Protected Characteristics named in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, income, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (see Appendix A for explanations).

3. Our responsibilities

3.1 The Green House understands that for equality to be achieved this policy needs to be made accessible and embraced by our staff and trustees.

3.2 All staff and trustees have a responsibility to ensure that their own language and conduct are consistent with the spirit as well as the contents of this policy.

3.3 Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with The Green House Director and our Board of Trustees.

4. Our commitments

4.1 The Green House will seek to create an environment in which diversity and the contributions of all staff, clients and trustees are recognised and valued in all that we do. In this way we hope to provide an example of good equality practice.

4.2 To ensure that we are meeting the aims and spirit of this policy we will-

- Discuss and review how well we are implementing this policy, and agree how we can meaningfully build on this.
- Assess any significant new or revised policies and procedures for their impact on equality.
- Embed equality and diversity into our business planning.

5. Employment practices

5.1 We will ensure our employment practices are consistent with the aims of this policy.

5.2 All terms and conditions of employment and related benefits will be non-discriminatory, except in cases where there is a legal requirement that the employee is of a specified gender or where health and safety requirements apply.

5.3 Our recruitment procedures will ensure the fair recruitment of staff and trustees. All vacancies will be publicly advertised and applicants will be assessed according to their skills, experience and suitability to fulfil the role.

5.4 Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation against employees or clients are considered disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under The Green House Disciplinary Procedure.

5.5 Any staff member who considers that they have been unlawfully discriminated against may use the organisation's Grievance Procedure to make a complaint. The Green House will take all complaints seriously and will follow the due procedure to seek to resolve any grievances raised.

6. Working with contractors and suppliers

6.1 It is important to us that suppliers, contractors and any other individual or organisation working on behalf of The Green House are aware of and agree to comply with our equality and diversity policy while that work is underway.

7. Service provision

7.1 The Green House is committed to ensuring equality of access to all our services and delivering the same service standards to meet the needs of all our clients.

7.2 The Green House believes that all survivors of sexual abuse have a right to access support following their abusive experiences. We acknowledge that very occasionally some survivors of rape and sexual abuse may also have had thoughts or experiences of sexually harmful behaviour and whilst it would not necessarily prevent the person having a service, additional risk assessments will need to be carried out to determine if our service is the best fit for that person. The safety of all our clients at The Green House is of utmost importance to us and if we believe someone to be at risk of harm then our safeguarding procedures will be followed.

7.3 We will use accessible venues for our services, events and meetings.

7.4 We will use accessible language (plain English) in our publicity materials and offer multiple means of communication with clients e.g. via a phone call, text, letters.

7.5 We will collate anonymised equalities data for our clients, ensuring their confidentiality is protected. We will review this data annually to inform our business planning and ensure we take action to address areas of underrepresentation.

7.6 Any client who considers that they have been unlawfully discriminated against may use the organisation's Complaints Procedure to make a complaint. The Green House will take all complaints seriously and will follow the due procedure to seek to resolve any grievances raised.

8. Review and Action

8.1 We recognise that it is important for us to regularly review this policy to ensure that it reflects up to date equality legislation and best practice.

8.2 A review of our Equality and Diversity Policy will be carried out every 3 years (at minimum) and any necessary actions taken.

Date approved: July 2017

Date of review: July 2020