

## Equal & Diversity Policy

**Time 4 Children** is committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of its work, activities and practices. The charity aims to establish a culture free from discrimination, which is based upon the values of dignity, courtesy and respect.

We believe that it is important to value all employees, volunteers, trustees and service users as individuals respecting different personalities and strengths in order to gain diversity reflective of the community in which we operate.

### **This policy applies to individuals who are...**

**Employed** - Individuals employed by Time 4 Children on whatever basis; permanent, fixed term and/or temporary contracts.

**Volunteers and Trustees** – individuals who donate their time/services free of charge to Time 4 Children.

All those working on behalf of Time 4 Children either as an employee, volunteer or trustee have a personal responsibility to the implementation of this policy ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity, courtesy and respect and not to discriminate against any individual or group. Furthermore, if you witness conduct which goes against the Equality and Diversity Policy it is your responsibility to report this to the Manager or the Board of Trustees at the earliest opportunity so that the matter can be investigated and appropriate actions taken.

**Service Users** – those individuals utilising Time 4 Children services whether they are end users or facilitators for users of Time 4 Children services (Schools, Local Authorities or parents/guardians of children).

Any service user who feels they have been treated less favourably due to a protected characteristic or not been treated with dignity, courtesy and respect should address their concerns to the Manager or Board of Trustees at the earliest opportunity so that the matter can be investigated and appropriate actions taken.

### **Protected characteristics**

The key protected characteristics governing discrimination law are set out in the Equality Act 2010 and include those identified in the list set out below.

It is unlawful to discriminate against people in a work environment because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

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Equal opportunities refers to the elimination of unlawful and unfair direct and indirect discrimination of particular groups and promoting equal access, treatment and outcomes that take into account specific needs of individuals.

Diversity encompasses visible and non-visible difference that includes, but is not limited to, difference protected by anti-discrimination legislation. Appreciating diversity is about valuing differences and recognising that everyone through their unique mixture of skills and experience has their own valuable contribution to make.

Discrimination can take many forms, whether deliberate, unintentional or perceived to be in the individual's interests. The law focuses on the impact of the action rather than the intention of the perpetrator.

### **Meeting your needs**

Time 4 Children recognise that some individuals may have specific needs which could be, but not limited to, disability, cultural and or religious in nature. Individuals should make Time 4 Children aware of specific needs at the earliest opportunity so that where possible these can be accommodated and supported.

### **Inappropriate Behaviour**

Time 4 Children will NOT tolerate verbal or physical behaviour, which is offensive or victimises any practitioner or staff member. If a child is physically or verbally abusive towards a practitioner, or poses a safety risk to his or herself, support for the child can be withdrawn. If a parent/carer of a child is physically or verbally aggressive, support for the child can be withdrawn.

Time 4 Children cannot give parents or carers personal details relating to volunteers, in order to safeguard volunteers. Specifically: 1. Phone or email contact details in order to prevent harassment of a volunteer; 2. Surname of any volunteer in order to prevent volunteers being tracked via social media.

### **Breaches of this policy**

Time 4 Children take any concerns raised under the Equality and Diversity policy seriously and commit to investigate each situation within a 14-day period of the concern being raised. At the end of 14 days the outcome of the investigation will be relayed to the individual who raised the concern.

Any employee, volunteer or trustee found to be in breach of the Equality and Diversity following an investigation may receive a first written warning, final written warning or have their services terminated with immediate effect dependent on the seriousness of the breach.