



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

NCB strives to be a leading organisation for the promotion of equality and diversity and for challenging inequality across all sections of the communities within which it works.

Therefore, NCB is fully committed to the active promotion of equality and diversity in all of its employment practices, in the work that it undertakes, and in the provision of all its services. NCB treats all employees, service users and the children and young people with whom we engage fairly, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity status, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (the 'protected characteristics' as laid out in the Equality Act 2010).

Subsequently NCB aspires to:

- Create an organisational ethos which is supportive, fair and free from discrimination
- Ensure NCB's employment practices provide equality of opportunity for staff and potential staff from all sections of the community
- Develop a profile which ensures NCB is seen as an agency which works to address issues of equality and diversity and collaborates effectively with diverse agencies
- Inform the debate on issues affecting children and young people from diverse backgrounds from an evidence-based perspective

Application of this policy is the responsibility of every member of NCB's Board of management and every member of staff.

EQUALITY POLICY

Forms of Discrimination

NCB's Equality Policy prohibits unfair treatment in relation to the following types of discrimination:

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 associate 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 a condition, rule, policy or even a practice applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if it can be shown that reasonable action has been taken as a means of achieving a legitimate aim. This means being fair and reasonable, including showing that 'less discriminatory' alternatives have been considered.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as "unwanted conduct 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".

NCB is committed to providing a working environment that is free from all forms of harassment and bullying. This commitment is reflected in NCB's Harassment and Bullying Policy (see Policy No. 4.6)

Recruitment

NCB will take steps to ensure that individuals continue to be selected on merit.

This means that job descriptions and person specifications will reflect the requirements of roles, any advertising of vacancies will be compatible with this Equality Policy and that questions on any application forms are relevant and non-discriminatory.

Anyone involved in recruitment or selection will take an unbiased approach regardless of the applicant's individual characteristics. Interview questions will be asked that only relate to the job and avoid those which are discriminatory, or which might be perceived as such.

We will ensure that the recruitment process is not a barrier to candidate selection and will offer reasonable adjustments and additional support to attend interviews and carry out selection tests where needed.

Further information about the recruitment process can be found in the Selection Policy (1.2).

Employment

NCB respects the dignity of all employees and values the contribution they make in the workplace. We will not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics in the allocation of duties between staff employed in any grade, or grades with comparable job descriptions. All employees will be considered solely on their merits for career development and promotion.

Terms and conditions of employment and benefits will be regularly reviewed to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against any group.

Where we are made aware of the needs of a disabled person, we will act to make reasonable adjustments to best support that individual to carry out their duties.

Additionally, NCB expects staff to treat each other fairly and without bias. All employees should work towards encouraging, supporting and developing each other's abilities. Work should be carried out with respect and ensuring

the dignity of others. No-one should abuse, intimidate or harass any other employee of NCB. No-one should victimise another employee of NCB, nor induce nor attempt to induce others to practice unlawful discrimination.

Training and development

NCB's training and development policy and procedure is regularly reviewed to ensure it is fair, meets the legal framework and reflects good practice. The provision of training is a key element for meeting the needs of the organisation, for staff development and for supporting its commitment and positive action to equality and diversity training.

All employees will be provided with appropriate training in order to meet their duties regardless of individual characteristics and all employees will receive equality and diversity training.

Service provision

All directorates in NCB will aim to ensure that actions to meet the needs of the target equality groups and socially excluded groups, and actions to promote equality and challenge discrimination are included in the annual business plans and the Equality & Diversity Group's action plan.

NCB aims to ensure that equality and diversity issues are central to all employees work, including the development of projects, policies, strategies or working with agencies. We seek to ensure that in planning, delivering and monitoring strategies and policies, equality and diversity issues are considered at the outset of work and that we will consult with staff and those affected by the work.

Goods, services and facilities

NCB will ensure that the purchase of goods, services and facilities is undertaken in line with our equality and diversity commitments. Wherever possible, we will aim to ensure that we use agencies or companies who share our values on equality and diversity. We will establish procedures to ensure that businesses from diverse communities have an equal opportunity of competing for NCB contracts.

Monitoring

It is the responsibility of all Directors to ensure that NCB's equality aims are kept under review and are operated throughout NCB.

The Equality & Diversity Group will monitor the implementation of this policy. Particular regard will be given to applications for employment, promotion, selection, for training and development opportunities and if certain staff groups are concentrated in certain jobs, sections or departments.

An annual report will be presented by HR to the Board of Trustees , relevant regular reports will be made available to the Equality & Diversity Group and staff will be given the opportunity to comment on practice via the staff survey and the annual performance and development review.

Reporting breaches of this policy

Any employee who believes they have been the victim of a breach of this policy, or who has witnessed a breach of this policy affecting another employee, should report the matter immediately either to their line manager or to the HR Manager. Alternatively, the employee who wishes to make a complaint may use the organisation's formal grievance procedure.

Review of the policy

The organisation will review this policy on a regular basis in order to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and otherwise treated on the basis of their relevant abilities and merits and that we are meeting our aspirations as set out in the first page of this policy.