



Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

Shepshed Dolphin Swimming Group, hereinafter referred to as the Group, aims to be an equal opportunity group. In so doing, we recognise the need for encouraging diversity and wholeheartedly support a policy of equal opportunities in all areas of our work and responsibilities.

This policy provides guidance to enable all who work with or for the Group to comply with anti-discrimination legislation and best practice.

The Group's aims and objectives will be achieved through action planning, effective monitoring and a willingness to tackle problems where they arise. The Group is committed to reviewing this policy from time to time. Through our training, publications, interactions with members, and other activities, we will ensure that those we work with know our statements of policy.

The Group will regularly review the implementation of its Equality and Diversity Policy and strategy. Where evidence of ineffectiveness is found, immediate remedial action will be taken. The Trustees urge staff, volunteers, members, and their parents or carers to be aware of the less obvious forms of discrimination that result from general assumptions and preconceptions about the capabilities, interests, and characteristics of individuals.

Definitions

Equal Opportunities:

ensure that policies, procedures and practices within the Group do not discriminate against its workers, volunteers and members. It is about treating people fairly and equally.

Diversity:

ensures that all people are valued as individuals and can maximise their potential and contribution to the Group and the community. It recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and a different approach, making the way we work and learn more fun, creative, and innovative.

Direct discrimination:

occurs when an individual is dealt with less favourably than other people on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, disability, sex, actual or perceived religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender.

For the purpose of this policy, the definition includes ethnicity, nationality, marital status or caring responsibility, age, mental health, political beliefs, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions and trade union affiliation.

Indirect discrimination:

occurs when a provision, criterion, or practice puts people of a particular group at a disadvantage and cannot be objectively justified; for example, a rule about clothing that disproportionately disadvantages a racial group cannot be justified.

Victimisation:

The Trustees will not tolerate any victimisation, particularly where this involves discrimination.

**Harassment:**

The Trustees will not tolerate any harassment, particularly on the grounds of race, ethnicity or national origin, disability, sex, actual or perceived religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender.

Policy Statements**Diversity**

The Group will actively encourage diversity to maximise achievement, creativity and good practice, and to benefit individuals and communities. The Group encourages all people it works with and for to contribute to an environment where people feel comfortable expressing how they feel and what they need, knowing they will be treated with respect and that their contributions will be valued. The way we work, train and learn within the Group reflects both our Mission and Objectives and the spirit and intentions of legislation that outlaws discrimination and promotes equality and diversity. The Group will make reasonable adjustments to working practices, activities, equipment, and premises where it can.

Equal Opportunities

The Group is an equal opportunities group. No job applicant, employee, volunteer, trustee, member or service user should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, gender, ethnicity or national origin; sex; marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status or unrelated criminal convictions. Nor will such persons be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. This principle applies to all aspects of the Group's activities as a disabled swimming group, including recruitment, promotion, transfers, training, benefits, facilities, and procedures.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Equality and Diversity Policy are:

- To encourage and promote diversity in all of our activities.
- To ensure equal access to roles and opportunities
- To ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality.
- To promote equal opportunities in other areas not currently covered by legislation.
- To create environments free from harassment and discrimination.
- To maximise the use of resources in the best interests of staff, volunteers and service users.
- To confront and challenge discrimination where and whenever it arises, whether between colleagues or in any other area relating to the Group's work.



- To make a willingness to accept and implement this policy a necessary qualification for any position in the Group
- To ensure that the Group's premises and trips are accessible to all.
- To ensure that objective criteria and personal merit determine membership and advancement within the Group.

Policy Implementation: Expectations

The Group will seek to promote equality and diversity within the following framework of responsibilities.

Responsibility for implementing and developing the policy rests with the Trustees. The overall co-ordinating responsibility for equal opportunities and management of diversity is delegated to the Group Coordinator.

However, the Group believes that all who work with or for the organisation have an individual responsibility: to accept the policy and ensure a personal involvement in its application; to co-operate actively to ensure that the environment we desire is a reality. Therefore, the Group requires individuals:

- To implement policies to ensure equal opportunity, diversity and non-discrimination.
- Not to harass, abuse or intimidate any other individual or participant on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, gender, ethnicity or national origin; sex; marital or civil partnership status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities.
- To inform the trustees if they suspect discrimination is taking place.

The Group requires its Chair and Coordinator:

- To ensure that proper records of Group decisions are maintained.
- To ensure that grievances are dealt with fairly and consistently.
- To ensure that individuals within their area are aware of their legal responsibilities and the organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- To promote the benefits of diversity in all areas of the Group's activities.

Policy Implementation: Recruitment and Promotion

Clear and accurate information on vacant posts should be available through advertisements, job descriptions, person specifications, and interviews. Vacancies should be advertised sufficiently widely to reach the widest possible range of candidates, either internal and/or external.



All recruitment material should not imply any preferred group, unless a genuine occupational qualification exists limiting a post to a particular group.

Applicants will be informed, through all recruitment material, of the Group's commitment to Equal Opportunities and Diversity.

Person specifications may include 'essential' and 'desirable' requirements that are necessary and justifiable. Care and advice, where necessary, is needed to ensure these are not discriminatory.

Staff and volunteers should be encouraged to discuss their development and training needs.

Policy Implementation: Interviews and Selection

In line with the intentions of this policy, candidates will be selected based on an objective assessment of their match with the requirements described in the job description and person specification; this will not take into account the candidate's gender, name, race, religion or belief, possible disability, or age.

Policy Implementation: Training

In line with the intentions of this policy, the Group will not discriminate in the provision of training courses/opportunities wherever possible.

Appropriate training will be provided to enable trustees, staff, volunteers and committee members to perform their roles effectively. A briefing on this policy will form part of the Induction Procedure for trustees, staff, volunteers, and committee members.

Implementation

The Group recognises the need for a continuing commitment to genuine equal opportunities and diversity within the organisation. The effectiveness of the policy's aims and objectives can only be judged by how the policy operates in practice.

Grievances

Any staff member, volunteer, member or member's parent/guardian/carer who feels they may have, or perceive that others may have been a victim of discrimination or unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this policy should raise the concern in a written submission to the Group Chair.

- This matter will be investigated at the Chair's discretion and direction. We aim to respond in full within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint.
- If the matter is about or involves the Group Chair, the Vice-Chair will manage the response as above.



Disciplinary Procedure

- Any individual associated with the Group in any official capacity who is found to be in breach of this policy will be counselled on their actions and may, where necessary, be removed from the Group.

Chairperson _____

Signed _____

Date _____

