

Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

Littlehampton Child Contact Centre (LCCC) states its intention to work for the furtherance of equal treatment in volunteering, service provision, committee structure and membership.

Definitions:

- **Equal Opportunities** ensures that policies, procedures and practice within LCCC do not discriminate against the people within it. It is about treating people fairly and equally, regardless of who they are, their background or their lifestyle.
- **Diversity** ensures that all people are valued as individuals and are able to maximise their potential and contribution to LCCC and to the community. It recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and a different approach, which can make the way we work and learn more fun, more creative, more efficient and more innovative.
- **Direct Discrimination** occurs when an individual is dealt with less favourably on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, gender, gender identity, gender reassignment status, ethnic or national origin, nationality or sex, marital/civil partnership status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; educational background, employment status; unrelated criminal convictions or social economic background.
- **Indirect Discrimination** occurs when a requirement or condition, which although it applies equally to persons of all groups, is such that only a considerably smaller proportion of a particular group can comply with it. Examples: a rule about clothing that disproportionately disadvantages a racial group cannot be justified.
- **Victimisation** occurs when an individual is treated less favourably because that person has asserted rights under the Sex Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Act or the Disability Discrimination Act or acted as a whistleblower on such activity. People must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals.
- **Harassment** means repeated, unreciprocated and unwelcome comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact which is found objectionable and offensive and which might threaten a volunteer or service user or create an intimidating or uncomfortable environment. Harassment can be sexual, racial, directed against people with disabilities or indeed related to any characteristic exhibited by the individual.

- **Positive Action** refers to measures taken to assist volunteers who have been under-represented in specific areas, to reach a level of “workplace” knowledge and competencies that is comparable with 'representative' employees. These measures would normally take the form of additional training. 'Positive discrimination' at the point of selection is not permissible.

Littlehampton Child Contact Centre urges volunteers to be aware of the less obvious types of discrimination which result from general assumptions and pre-conceptions about the capabilities, interests and characteristics of individuals.

Aims and Objectives:

We are committed to promoting an environment based on dignity, trust and respect and one that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

1. We value and respect all individuals using the Child Contact Centre, both families and volunteers.
2. We will aim to ensure that our service provision is appropriate, relevant and accessible to all and where possible we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure inclusion.
3. We will strive to ensure that no volunteer, management committee member or any of the families experiences unlawful discrimination.
4. Volunteering opportunities are open to all, within the context of our local community.
5. Volunteers will exercise thoughtfulness and care to avoid stereotyping of individuals and groups.
6. Any racist or other offensive remarks or behaviour will not be tolerated and will always be challenged
7. If you feel you have been discriminated against, please let the Centre Co-ordinator know – they will pro-actively look into, and attempt to resolve, any concern raised. Should this not be possible then the Centre's complaints procedure should be used.
8. We will ensure that all Child Contact Centre users and referrers are aware of this policy.
9. This policy will be annually reviewed and updated.

*Reviewed and approved: August 2026
Due for review on or before: August 2027*