

Equality and Diversity Policy

Version:	12
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Date approved by Nathan Singleton, CEO	2 nd July 2020
Next review date:	July 2021

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1. Introduction

LifeLine Projects is committed to creating an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual difference are recognised and valued.

In line with our values, we want the best for one another and go out of our way to show compassion, be kind and support one another. We believe this behaviour should permeate all aspects of LifeLine Projects. Every member of staff, participants on ESF funded activity and all other beneficiaries should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

This Equality and Diversity policy details the arrangements LifeLine Projects has in place to promote equality in line with the Equality Act 2010 and related Public Sector Equality Duty. This includes our duties in respect of early years, families and education and mentoring services for young people, LifeLine staff and suppliers.

2. The Legal Framework

The Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010 and brought together many previous equality related legislation into one act. It identifies nine protected characteristics i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Protected characteristics are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful and the Act prohibits all employers, service providers and providers of education from discriminating against, harassing or victimising individuals with protected characteristics. In schools, discrimination on grounds of age and marriage and civil partnership do not apply to students.

To meet the needs of disabled people, the Act states that reasonable adjustments will need to be made for disabled people, and that it is not unlawful discrimination to make adaptations for disabled people because of their disability.

As an employer and service provider LifeLine Projects has due regard to the three aims of the general duty that are to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3. Promotion of equality and diversity

LifeLine promotes equality and diversity in the following areas:

- Admissions
- Curriculum
- Achievement
- Staff Recruitment and Professional Development
- Countering and
- Partnerships with Parents/Guardians.

LifeLine is committed to monitoring progress towards any key equality objectives, including monitoring the representation and performance of different groups e.g. sex, race, disability and age, and will use data analysis to inform future planning.

4. How we deal with bullying and harassment

LifeLine takes seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by employees, participants on our programmes, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of work activities and in the delivery of services.

We are committed to challenging discrimination, prejudice, harassment and bullying and will take action. We will deal with these matters as misconduct under the organisation's complaints, grievance and/or disciplinary procedures.

5. Subcontractors

LifeLine will ensure that any sub-contractors used to deliver ESF funded activity will promote equality in line with legal requirements.

LifeLine has a robust due diligence process in place to ensure potential subcontractors are selected against a set criteria. As part of this process we make checks to ensure sub-contractor equal opportunity policies are compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and the requirements of the Equality Cross-Cutting Theme for ESF.

6. Concerns and Complaints

LifeLine Projects seeks to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination and/or harassment. Beneficiaries can report concerns or make a complaint as follows:

- Students who believe they have been discriminated against, or have been subject to discriminatory conduct, should talk to their teacher, or the Project Leader in the first instance.
- If any parent or other stakeholder believes they, or their child has been discriminated against, or been subjected to discriminatory conduct they should raise their concern with the Project Leader or other relevant manager.

A copy of our Complaints policies are available on the following websites:

All other services: www.lifelineprojects.co.uk

7. Responsibilities

Everyone at LifeLine Projects has a responsibility for promoting equalities.

7.1 Senior Management Team

The Senior Management team is responsible for:

- Providing leadership and vision in respect of equality and diversity
- Ensuring compliance with equality obligations
- Ensuring the Equality and Diversity policy is maintained and updated
- Ensuring policies and procedures are monitored in light of this policy and wider equality obligations
- Dealing with serious breaches of this policy.

7.2 Managers

Managers have responsibility for:

- Ensuring effective implementation of this policy and its procedures
- Ensuring staff act as role models for inclusive behaviour and practice
- Ensuring staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support
- Actively challenging and taking appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice by staff, students, parents, visitors or other beneficiaries
- Taking appropriate action in response to any discrimination, victimisation, harassment or prejudice-related incidents
- Ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with this policy.

7.3 Staff

All staff have responsibility for:

- Positively providing a role model for inclusive behaviour
- Actively challenging any forms of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying
- Promoting an inclusive curriculum, identifying and challenging bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in LifeLine Projects' culture

- Committing to broadening their knowledge, confidence and inclusive behaviour by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

8. Implementation and monitoring

8.1 Implementation

Once approved, this policy will be made available to staff on SharePoint and the previous versions of the policy and associated documents removed. LifeLine maintains an electronic archive of all policy documents.

8.2 Process for monitoring implementation and effectiveness

The effectiveness of the equality and diversity policy will be monitored as follows:

Standard	Monitoring process
Number of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or prejudice-related issues recorded	Incidents and actions reported as issues on scorecards
Partners/subcontractors have compliant equality policies in place	Equality policies checked as part of due diligence process
Participation and achievement data analysed	Performance data analysed and reported on scorecards.

9. References

- Cross-Cutting Themes Guidance for European Social Fund (Sustainable Development and Equality), August 2018 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/832417/ESF_Cross_Cutting_Themes_guidance.pdf
- The Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf
- The Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2000/1551/contents/made>
- The Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/2034/part/1/made>
- The Employment Rights Act 1996 (Application of Sections 75G and 75H to Adoptions from Overseas) Regulations 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3091/made>
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/34/contents>
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/40/contents>
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/1/contents>
- Equal Treatment Framework Directive (2000/78/EC) <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV:c10823>
- Race Directive (2000/43/EC) <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV:l33114>
- Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services (2004/113/EC) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/rights/goods-services/index_en.htm
- Directive on equality between men and women in matters of employment and occupation (2006/54) <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV:c10940>
- Ofsted's Education inspection framework, May 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework>
- Early Years Inspection Handbook for Ofsted Registered Provision, May 2019, Updated September 2019 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/828465/Early_years_inspection_handbook.pdf

10. Related documents

- Complaints policy
- Disciplinary policy
- Professional Conduct
- Recruitment Procedures
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Whistleblowing policy

11. Definitions

The following are a list and description of the meaning of key terms used in relation to equality and diversity.

Term	Description of Term
Bullying	Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
Direct discrimination	A person with a protected characteristic receives worse treatment than someone who does not have that characteristic.
Discrimination by association	This is discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
Discrimination by perception	This is discrimination against an individual because others think (incorrectly) that they possess a protected characteristic.
Disability	Is defined by the Equality Act as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Long-term means has lasted, or is expected to last, for 12 months. Included in this definition are physical and sensory impairments, severe facial disfigurement, progressive conditions such as cancer and people who have had an impairment in the past but since recovered.
Diversity	Is used to describe the process of valuing difference in individuals' attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic background, sexuality, skills, knowledge and life experiences. Diversity recognises and celebrates difference as something which is positive and beneficial to us all.
Equality Act 2010	The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.
Equality	Is about making sure that people are treated fairly and given fair chances. Achieving equality of outcomes means meeting different needs in different ways.
Indirect discrimination	This occurs when there is a policy or a practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic compared with people who do not have that characteristic.
Harassment	Harassment has a specific legal definition in the Act - it is "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person". This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends also to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic.
Prejudice	Literally means "pre-judgment", forming a view about a person in advance. For example, racial prejudice is having a negative opinion or attitude about an individual or group based solely upon their race or skin colour.
Racism	Racism is where someone treats another person differently, for example, because their skin colour is not the same as theirs, they speak a different language or have different religious beliefs.
Victimisation	Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than someone else because they have complained about discrimination, or are suspected of doing so or have supported someone else who has.
Whistleblowing	A procedure by which an employee can formally raise serious concerns "in the public interest" about any inappropriate conduct/activities within the organisation, directly with the Chief Executive (or trustees if applicable).

12. Version Control

Version	Date	Author(s)	Status	Comment
6	04/04/2011		Approved	Update (New Layout)
7	01/04/2012		Approved	Annual review: Title Change
8	05/2013		Approved	Annual Review: Changes made to the text and some definitions within the policy (pages 3-7)

9	05/01/2016	Julia Ward	Pending approval	Review and transfer to new policy format.
10	08/02/2017	Julia Ward	Approved	Annual review and update
11	13/06/2018	Julia Ward	Approved	Logo change
12	30/06/2020	Julia Ward	Approved	Review and update

