

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

At Parenting Special Children we are committed to ensuring that the families we support, staff, volunteers and trustees feel welcome and safe and accepted.

We will review our website and materials to ensure they represent diverse groups. We will make sure that we have the relevant up to date training as a team and continue to put EDI at the heart of Parenting Special Children

All staff, trustees and volunteers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and to therefore treat colleagues and service users with dignity at all times and not to discriminate against, harass trustees, other employees, volunteers or service users, whether senior or junior to themselves.

Parenting Special Children is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all families who have children and young people with additional needs.

PSC believes that the organisation's activities should be open to all families who have children and young people with additional needs. We also aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with our organisation, have an equal chance to do so.

PSC is committed to creating a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and will not tolerate any discriminatory practice or behaviour.

We believe that an equal opportunities approach must be embedded in the culture of the organisation. It is what we do and how we do it – our practice – that defines where we stand in relation to equal opportunities. It is not position statements or written documents that do this, although they have their place.

We do not believe that organisations can ever claim to have got everything right with their approach to equal opportunities. There are always new perspectives on discrimination to be explored, new forms of oppression to be challenged and new ways of challenging them. To meet these challenges, we aim to develop a learning organisation. In such an organisation, all people feel free to raise issues of equality; training and learning from each other are highly valued, monitoring and evaluation are prized tools and freedom to admit mistakes and celebrate successes are of central importance.

Discrimination

Unfair discrimination in our society takes many forms. It may be direct and based on overt prejudice. It may be indirect and based on lack of awareness and understanding. It may be

ingrained in the operational culture of organisations, in the sense that the McPherson Report defined institutional racism.

PSC is fundamentally opposed to all these types of discrimination and seeks to ensure that in all its activities it does not take place against individuals or groups for any of the following reasons:

- gender*
- age*
- social and economic class
- employment status
- HIV status
- physical or mental disability*
- political belief
- religion or belief*
- gender reassignment*
- race*, colour, nationality or national origin
- marital, civil partnership or parental status*
- sexual orientation*
- unrelated criminal conviction
- position as a carer
- status as a refugee/asylum seeker
- pregnancy and maternity*

*PSC recognises the additional legal status of the protected characteristics contained within the Equality Act 2010 – marked with an *.*

PSC also recognises and seeks to ensure that employees, volunteers and service users are not discriminated against or suffer harassment because of an association with another individual who has a protected characteristic or because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic.

Political beliefs which, in themselves, promote prejudice and discrimination (e.g. neo Nazism) are not tolerated by PSC. The relevance of unspent criminal convictions is determined at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

PSC's commitment to oppose discrimination and promote equality of access to services places an obligation on all staff, volunteers and trustees. It is the aim of PSC to create a welcoming and safe working environment for staff, volunteers, from diverse communities and to acknowledge the benefits of diversity.

PSC will take positive action to challenge disadvantage and discrimination and to promote diversity and full access to opportunity in all areas of its work and structures. By 'positive action' we mean measures undertaken with the purpose of achieving full access to opportunity for people and groups that face the consequences of past or present discrimination or disadvantage.

Accessibility

We will make our organisation genuinely accessible to parent/carers from all sections of the community within the area that we serve – predominantly Berkshire – who have children and young people with additional needs. We will do this by ensuring that our website, materials for training are accessible and through regular EDI training keep up to date with national best practice.

When selecting venues for events or training PSC will consider the following and make reasonable adjustments:

- how people enter
- how they find their way around
- signage
- how information is provided
- how tables and counters are laid out and designed
- accessible toilet facilities.

Employment and volunteering

The trustees will seek to promote opportunities to join the organisation – as staff, volunteers or trustees – widely so as to encourage a composition of the Charity which reflects the local community.

PSC aims to ensure an effective but fair recruitment process which follows equal opportunities principles. PSC undertakes to review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Applicants for employment and voluntary work by PSC will have access to a copy of this policy.

PSC will not tolerate its staff, volunteers or partners to be subjected to harassment by another staff member or any third party whether they are service users or other partners and will monitor policy and staff feedback to minimise the risk and take action should an incident occur.

Any member of staff or volunteer who feels they have been subjected to harassment should raise the matter through the grievance process in accordance with the PSC Grievance Procedure.

Employees will not be subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he or she made a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010 or because he or she is suspected of doing so, or being about to do so.

PSC considers harassment by a member of staff to be a disciplinary offence in accordance with the PSC disciplinary policy.

In the case of harassment by a volunteer the matter would be dealt with by offering supervision and training to the volunteer or, where appropriate, ceasing the relationship between PSC and the volunteer, in accordance with the PSC Volunteer Policy.

Parent/Carers

The organisation recognises that many different types of parent/carers successfully love and care for children. As such PSC will take each parent/carer's needs into account, on all occasions, and endeavour to ensure equal access to the full range of PSC services.

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the parent/carers who access support from our organisation and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come.

Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks

These are unacceptable within the organisation.

The response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices. Unlawful discrimination by an employee of PSC is a disciplinary matter in accordance with the PSC Disciplinary Policy. In the case of discrimination by a volunteer the matter would be dealt with by offering supervision and training to the volunteer or, where appropriate, ceasing the relationship between PSC and the volunteer, in accordance with the PSC Volunteer Policy. If you view or overhear this behaviour please report in accordance with the Whistle Blowing policy ([link to WB policy](#)). Trustees are expected to abide by the Trustees Code of Conduct ([link](#))

Language

Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset. They will be valued and their languages recognised and respected within the organisation. Where possible, we will involve parents in translating information and activities or work alongside partner organisations who can offer translation.

Parenting support courses and events

The time, place and conduct of meetings will be publicised in advance to ensure that as many families as possible have an equal opportunity to be able to access courses and events. We will provide courses and events in a variety of locations and times in order that as many families as possible are able to access them. Where possible we will offer our families the opportunity to engage with PSC through virtual or online services being mindful of economic diversity and affordable services.

Complaints

The Trustees and CEO take complaints of harassment and discrimination very seriously. If parent carers are, at all, dissatisfied with the provision they should contact the CEO or the Chair of Trustees. We will do our utmost to resolve the issue and will be monitoring and evaluating the success of the organisation on a regular basis to ensure that all its users are satisfied. Please see complaints and feedback policy [complaints-and-feedback-policy-and-procedure-march-2022.pdf \(parentingspecialchildren.co.uk\)](https://parentingspecialchildren.co.uk/complaints-and-feedback-policy-and-procedure-march-2022.pdf)

Associated PSC documents and policies

This policy has been developed from the previous PSC Equal Opportunities policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following PSC policies and procedures:

Grievance Policy and Procedure
Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Recruitment and Selection Policy
Volunteer Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Complaints and Feedback Policy
Trustees Code of Conduct

Resources used to draw up this policy

This policy was drawn up with reference to:

The Equality Act 2010
The RVA Equal Opportunities Policy
Equality Act: Guidance for Charities, (The Charity Commission, 2013)

Legislation

[The Equality Act 2010 \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/legislation/the-equality-act-2010-amendment-regulations-2023)

Monitoring and review of policy

This policy will be reviewed by the PSC board of trustees every two years, or sooner in the event of any relevant change in legislation. The trustees will monitor Equal Opportunities to review practice and policy.

The CEO and trustees will take responsibility to ensure that all staff and volunteers have access to and understand the importance of this policy and apply it to their working practice as will the CEO and trustees

This policy was adopted by the trustees in July 2016, reviewed in March 2019, November 2021 and March 2024.

Next Review date: March 2026

ENDS