

BANGLADESH YOUTH LEAGUE (BYL)



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Last reviewed: March 2023

Next review: March 2024

1 Statement

At BYL we strive for an environment where everyone feels part of one organisation and all policies & procedures, values and behaviours are underpinned by an inclusive and diverse culture; where employees & volunteers are proud and happy working for BYL and service users enjoy using and accessing the facilities available to them.

We believe that the elimination of prejudicial barriers and the creation of an inclusive and diverse culture will result in an efficient and effective centre which the local community are proud to use and which is run by a positive and motivated workforce.

2 Introduction

BYL as the registered charity and CYCD, as the delivery arm of BYL, are committed to the principles of equality, diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity for all and promotes an inclusive and diverse culture. By this we mean that we make full use of the talents and skills available in all groups and communities in the local community and, as a result, we all contribute to the success of our organisation.

It is our policy that no part of a person's working life – recruitment, training, development, promotion, conditions of service or any other area of employment – should be influenced by considerations of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, age, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origin, physical or mental capabilities, social background, organisational role or any condition other than that person's suitability. No employee or volunteer will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable.

This Policy underpins a shared value that positively influences the way we treat individuals whether they be colleagues, service users or stake holders. The shared value is that BYL values, recognises and reflects the diversity of our workforce, our service users and our society.

Active steps will be taken to ensure that this Policy is implemented and reviewed annually by the CYCD Director reporting to the Board of Trustees.

3 Ownership

The CYCD Director has ownership for the communication and review of this Policy and for diversity issues relevant to BYL. Everyone at BYL has responsibility for the part that they play in ensuring that the principles set out in this policy are followed at all times. This Policy covers diversity in relation to BYL including both employees, volunteers, service users and stake holders

4 **Legislative Background**

Under Equality legislation (The Equality Act 2010) it is unlawful to:

- Discriminate against anyone and treat him/her less favourably than others on the grounds of the protected characteristics of:
 - age (unless this can be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim),
 - disability,
 - gender reassignment,
 - marriage and civil partnership,
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - race,
 - religion and belief (including lack of belief),
 - sex
 - sexual orientation.

These are known as the Protected Characteristics.

- Discriminate indirectly against anyone by applying a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people with a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation).
- Subject someone to harassment for reasons relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. This includes behaviour that an individual finds offensive on these grounds even if the behaviour is not directed at the individual. It also includes failure of an employer to take reasonable steps to protect an employee from persistent (3 occasions or more) third party harassment.
- Victimise someone because s/he has made, or intends to make, a complaint or allegation or has given or intends to give evidence in relation to a complaint of discrimination in line with the Equality Act.

Protected Characteristics

As part of the Equalities Act 2010 certain characteristics are deemed to be protected.

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks

after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

A man or a woman.

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

5 Our commitment

We have the opportunity to reduce some of those disadvantages and the discrimination which people face by making our practices and services responsive to community and individual needs, ensuring our practices and services are ones based on equality, diversity and inclusion.

In providing services, employment, governance and procurement, we will actively promote equality, diversity and inclusiveness for all of our service users, staff, volunteers and contractors and challenge discrimination and exclusion.

We will make sure that our services, workforce and governing body reflect the diversity of our local communities in Luton and that all of those with whom we work are aware of our commitment to equality and diversity.

We will:

- Seek to eliminate barriers to service delivery and employment and ensure that our clients and staff feel that they are fairly treated
- Develop and deliver plans of action to help people achieve their full potential in integrated and cohesive communities, promoting good relations within communities

Promoting equality, diversity and inclusiveness is essential to our core business. It is, therefore, the responsibility of all of our Trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors working on our behalf to adhere to and implement this policy.

6 Our definitions of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

What is Equality?

Equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given fair chances. Equality is not about treating everyone in the same way, but it recognises that their needs are met in different ways.

What is Diversity?

Diversity is about valuing individual difference. So 'diversity' is much more than just a new word for equality. A diversity approach aims to recognise, value and manage difference to enable all employees and volunteers to contribute and realise their full potential. Diversity challenges us to recognise and value all sorts of differences in order to make our environment a better place for everyone to work.

Why are equality and diversity important?

Diversity is also about recognising that our clients come from different backgrounds. If we welcome diversity as colleagues, value each other and treat each other fairly, we will work better together. In doing so we will provide a better service to the people of Luton.

It will help our clients to approach us and use our services if we have a diverse workforce that feels comfortable with and understands their different needs. So diversity will also contribute to improving the services we provide.

What is social inclusion?

Positive action taken to include all sectors of society in planning and other decision-making by reducing inequalities between the least advantaged groups and communities and the rest of society by closing the opportunity gap and ensuring that support reaches those who need it most.

Direct Discrimination,

as defined in law, 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 or sexual orientation.

However in terms of this policy the definition is taken to be wider and includes, for example, colour, nationality, marital status or caring responsibility, age, mental health, political, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities.

Indirect Discrimination

occurs when a provision, criterion or practice puts people of a particular group at a disadvantage and is not justified in relation to the job or services, for example a rule about clothing that disproportionately disadvantages a racial group cannot be justified.

Victimisation

means that if a person has made or is making an accusation of discrimination in good faith, it is unlawful to discriminate against them for having done so, or because they intend to do so or it is suspected that they intend to do so. People must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals.

Harassment

means unwanted conduct based on race, sex or age etc. which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. 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 employees, volunteers, clients or learners 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 could take the form of additional training or providing the job application form in other languages to encourage applicants from these communities. 'Positive discrimination' at the point of selection for work is not permissible.

7 Our commitment through governance

The Board of Trustees will visibly demonstrate its leadership in promoting an organisational culture which values equality and diversity by:

- Receiving Management Reports at Trustees meetings which will include Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report
- Monitoring performance in the delivery of this policy as part of each service area strategy review and an annual review of Equality and Diversity
- Regular review of key policies and strategies, including equality impact assessments, to ensure that they do not directly or indirectly discriminate against groups of people
- We will seek to reflect the diversity of our communities in the composition of the Board
- All Board members will receive regular training on equality, diversity and inclusion issues

8 Our commitment as a service provider

Knowing our communities

In order for us to develop services and facilities that are accessible, relevant and of use, now and in the future, to the individuals within the communities in which we work, we will gather information from our clients, staff and partners on:

- The composition of local populations and research on local housing need.
- The composition of our clients, Board and staff.
- Individual needs
- We will use equality and diversity data in each service area to measure take-up of services and satisfaction.
- We will ask questions regarding age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, carer status, employment status and religion, offering the option not to answer the question
- We will raise awareness about why we ask all of these questions and what we do with the information.
- Raising awareness of our services within our communities

Key objectives of our marketing strategy will be to:

- raise awareness of our services in local communities, particularly those where we have identified an under-representation in take-up of our services
- project positive images of diversity
- raise awareness of our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion
- actively work to establish close relationships with people from disadvantaged and minority groups to help us identify their needs and ensure that they benefit from our work

9 Our commitment to meeting individual needs

We are committed to providing excellent customer care to all of our clients.

In designing our services and training our staff, we will be mindful of recognising individual needs and, whilst also considering value for money, ensure that we are adaptable in meeting those needs and removing barriers which may exclude people.

We will endeavour to offer choices to clients in the services we offer and the way we deliver them.

This will include providing clear information in ways that are accessible and meet a diverse range of needs.

10 Influencing our services

We will actively consult people within local communities about what services they need and how accessible and relevant our services are.

In the way we consult and involve clients, we will strive to give every customer an equal opportunity to express their views and influence decision-making.

This will include taking active steps to encourage engagement from under-represented groups by offering a wide range of opportunities and practical support to people to enable them to participate.

Working with partners to maximise resources available to our communities we will actively seek out opportunities to work with local authorities, other community based organisations, that deal with 'disadvantaged' groups, where, by doing so, we can:

- Obtain feedback and good practice to improve our approach
- Offer additional services to meet specific needs
- Influence local strategies to address unmet needs in our communities
- Gain access to funding or resources which will benefit our communities

11 Tackling discrimination and harassment

We will challenge and address discriminatory behaviour or acts of harassment by or towards clients, staff, Trustees or contractors.

If such behaviour is encountered, we will take appropriate action which may include disciplinary action or dismissal for staff, removal from our approved contractor list for contractors and suppliers, exclusion from our services for clients

We will display in prominent positions our policy statements

12 Contractors

To achieve and retain a place on our approved contractor's list, we will require contractors to declare a commitment to upholding the principles of equality and abiding by our Equality and Diversity policy.

13 Our Commitment as an employer

Working environment

We aim to provide a working environment which is friendly, supportive, where each person is able to give their best, and where discrimination or harassment does not occur and is known to be unacceptable.

As such, we will endeavour to identify and meet different work-related needs such as providing physical adaptations or equipment and reviewing working arrangements for people with disabilities; having 'family-friendly' policies and being sensitive to cultural and religious needs of our staff.

We will regularly raise awareness of this policy with our staff to ensure all staff treat each other with dignity and respect.

We will ensure that staff feel safe to report incidents of discrimination or harassment to us, without fearing prejudice, and confident that we will act appropriately, in accordance with strong policies and procedures.

Recruitment

The principles of equality, diversity and equal opportunities are important to us to make sure that we attract and recruit the best candidates to our posts; by this we mean people who have the skills and understanding to achieve our vision, operate in accordance with our values, deliver high quality services in accordance with our quality marks, demonstrate high levels of competence in the role they are appointed to and serve everyone in our community.

We require all staff involved in recruitment to be trained in applying equality and diversity principles in the recruitment process.

In fulfilling our aims to promote equality, tackle discrimination, and understand and meet the needs our diverse communities, it is important that our workforce reflects the composition of our communities.

To help us achieve this, we will:

- Monitor the composition of our workforce at all levels, identify underrepresentation and set targets as appropriate
- Monitor our recruitment process from application to employment to identify barriers
- Actively promote Bengali Women's Project as widely as possible to raise awareness amongst under-represented groups including advertising vacancies in a diverse range of media
- Encourage and actively promote and provide participation in training and work-experience schemes
- Offer career development opportunities to all staff

Training and Awareness

Staff are the key to the successful delivery of our approach to maintaining high levels of quality services, customer care and equality and diversity.

We believe that only a well trained and informed staff team can deliver the excellent levels of service we require.

Equality, diversity & inclusion and customer care training will start at induction with regular opportunities each year (in-house and via external providers) for refreshers and more in-depth training.

The aim of the training will be to:

- Promote positive attitudes to customer care and equality and diversity
- Reinforce personal responsibility for implementing this policy
- Ensure we keep in line with new and evolving legislation and good practice
- Continuously improve our service to clients

Staff will be expected to participate in equality, diversity & inclusion training.

We will encourage all staff to fulfil their potential by giving fair access to training and development opportunities. To promote this, we will train managers to conduct personal and career development reviews effectively and ensure budgets reflect this commitment to training and development of staff.

We will seek to ensure that, regardless of work location or pattern, we provide equal access to information and consultation for all staff.

We will carry out equality impact assessments of our HR policies to ensure that they are fair and not discriminatory and review this annually.

15 Responsibilities for implementation

All staff have responsibility to implement this policy, as itemised on each job description.

We will ensure that staff understand that they can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, Bangladesh Youth League, for any acts of unlawful discrimination or harassment.

16 Areas of specific responsibility:

Board members and Management Team.

- Leadership in ensuring our culture embraces equality and diversity and that this policy underpins all aspects of our work
- Ensuring this policy is implemented and monitored and undertaking any corrective action
- Supporting objectives with resources
- Addressing inappropriate behaviour

Staff Teams at CYCD

- Monitor and analyse equality & diversity performance
- Implementation of this policy in service areas including development of action plans ensuring action plans are reported to Managers
- Acting on performance information
- Promoting the importance of E & D to teams and reinforcing adherence to this policy
- Take personal responsibility for, and a positive approach to, understanding this policy and putting it into practice, seeking training as appropriate
- Set an exemplary standard for others
- Promote equality and diversity with clients and ensure that actions do not wittingly or unwittingly lead to unfair or discriminatory treatment of others
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Support colleagues who may be experiencing discriminatory behaviour by encouraging them to report it informally or formally
- Bring any concerns regarding discrimination in the workplace or service delivery to the attention of their manager

17 Communicating this policy

The CYCD is responsible for communicating this Policy to all new members of staff, volunteers, service users and contractors.

All new staff, applicants for Trustees, existing Trustees and existing staff and volunteers will receive a copy of this policy

The Policy will be available on the Server for all staff to access

Policy statements will be displayed prominently throughout the Centre including waiting area

The Policy will be provided to contractors

13 Procedure for Reporting Complaints

If you feel that you are being subjected to bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination on any of the grounds discussed in this document you should discuss

this, in confidence, with your line manager in the first instance to try to resolve this informally in line with BYL's Grievance Procedure. If the complaint relates to the conduct of your line manager, you may discuss the matter another senior manager or the CYCD Director. Alternatively you can contact the Chair of BYL Executive Committee if the complaint relates to the CYCD Director.

Confidentiality will be observed throughout and the need for any disclosure of the details of the case will be discussed and agreed.

If the situation cannot be resolved informally then you have the right to pursue your complaint formally through BYL's Grievance Procedure. Once a grievance has been raised, a full and immediate investigation will be undertaken to establish the facts and decide upon an appropriate course of action.

Where there is evidence that discrimination has occurred, prompt and corrective action will be taken, including disciplinary action leading to dismissal where appropriate.

13 Breach of this Policy

Any employee found to be discriminating, or supporting others to discriminate, may be guilty of misconduct and subject to BYL's Disciplinary Procedure.

Any volunteer or consultant found to be discriminating, or supporting others to discriminate may be guilty of misconduct and subject to the termination of their contract to provide services to BYL.

14 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required by changes in legislation or regulation. It will also be considered at the annual review of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to ensure that it captures good practice.