



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Last reviewed: 6th February, 2025

1. Purpose

At Women's Voice , we are committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in all aspects of our work. We believe that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect, and we strive to create an inclusive environment where all individuals feel valued and empowered to contribute. This policy outlines our commitment to ensuring fairness, eliminating discrimination, and fostering a culture of inclusion for our staff, volunteers, service users, trustees, and partners.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals associated with Women's Voice in all its areas of operation, including:

- Volunteers
- Trustees
- Members of the public
- Contractors and suppliers
- Partner organisations

3. Definitions

Equality: Ensuring everyone has equal access to opportunities and is treated fairly, regardless of their background or protected characteristics.

Diversity: Recognising, valuing, and celebrating the differences that make individuals unique.

Inclusion: Creating an environment where everyone feels welcome, respected, and able to fully participate.

The Equality Act 2010 defines nine protected characteristics:

- age
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- gender reassignment
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 defines discrimination in the following ways:

- **Direct discrimination** is where someone's treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** means putting in place a rule, policy, or way of doing things that has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic than someone without one (and this can't be objectively justified).
- **Harassment** is where someone receives unwanted behaviour, including of a sexual nature, related to a protected characteristic that violates their dignity or creates a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. This counts as harassment regardless of whether the person responsible intended harm.
- **Associative discrimination** is where someone experiences discrimination because of their association with someone who has a protected characteristic (for example, the parent of a disabled child).
- **Perceptive discrimination** is where someone experiences discrimination because they're perceived to have a protected characteristic.

4. Our Commitments

We are committed to:

1. **Promoting Equality:** Ensuring no one is discriminated against, harassed, or victimised because of their protected characteristics, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
2. **Celebrating Diversity:** Valuing the unique perspectives and experiences that individuals bring to our charity.
3. **Fostering Inclusion:** Actively removing barriers to participation and ensuring our services, policies, and practices are accessible to all.
4. **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly reviewing and updating our policies, practices, and training to ensure they reflect best practice in EDI.

5. **Zero Tolerance:** Addressing any incidents of discrimination, harassment, or exclusion promptly and effectively.

6. Complaints and Concerns

If anyone feels they have been treated unfairly or excluded, they are encouraged to raise their concerns through our [Grievance/Complaints Procedure]. All complaints will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and handled confidentially.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective.