



Equalities and Diversity Policy

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1. Purpose of the policy

Ignite Life recognises that it is essential to provide equal opportunities to all persons without discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

While everyone has a role to play in diversity and inclusion, trustees are legally responsible for the charity and ensuring the charity provides a safe environment that protects staff, volunteers, young people, and anyone who comes in contact.

This policy sets out the organisation's position on Equality and Diversity as a service provider in all aspects of our work, employment, including recruitment and promotion, and provides guidance and encouragement to employees at all levels to act fairly and prevent discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristic.



The Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality related legislation, standardising the protection available for all groups previously identified. The key characteristics of groups protected are as follows:

Gender
Race
Marital status including civil partnership
Pregnancy and maternity
Disability
Age
Sex
Sexual orientation
Religion or belief
Gender reassignment

2. Definitions

Discrimination can be direct, indirect, by association or perceived. All forms of discrimination must be avoided.

Direct discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have.

Perception discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they are thought to have.

Discrimination by association occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another person because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Harassment can be either directly by an employee or group of employees of the organisation or through a third party such as another related party e.g. Another learner.

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so.

Indirect discrimination can occur when there is a condition, rule or policy or even a practice in the company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. It may be justifiable if it can be shown it was fair and reasonable to the running of the organisation.

3. Overall guidelines

Ignite Life is wholeheartedly committed to the principle of equality, diversity and inclusion, both in the capacity of an employer and as a provider of services.



Ignite Life aims to be an equal opportunity employer and service provider, and this policy covers all aspects of our employment and service delivery.

Ignite Life will ensure that all relevant legislation is followed within all areas of its work in particular the Equality Act 2010.

To ensure this policy is operated (and for no other purpose) the company maintains records of employees', applicants and clients' racial origins, gender and disability where applicants chose to share this with us for the specific purpose. Ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of such records provide the basis for appropriate action to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and promote equal opportunity. This information is monitored using an Ignite Life Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form (See appendix).

It is the policy of Ignite Life to ensure that no job applicant, employee, volunteer and client of Ignite Life receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristics, or disadvantages by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable. The organisation is committed not only to its legal obligations but also to the positive promotion of equality of opportunities in all aspects.

Ignite Life recognises that adhering to the Equality and Diversity Policy, combined with relevant employment policies and practices, maximises the effective use of individuals in both the organisations and employees' best interests. Ignite Life recognises the great benefits in having a workforce with different backgrounds, solely employed on ability.

The application of recruitment, training and promotion policies applies to all individuals and will be on the basis of job requirements and the individuals' ability and merits.

Ignite Life aims to ensure that high quality, accessible services and support is available to all groups and individuals. Services offered by Ignite Life will be available to all. They will be widely advertised and will be free from unfair discrimination. We will strive to identify and remove all barriers to participation in any of our activities.

4. Communication

This policy will be shared and communicated with all who work for or volunteer with the charity.

Communication of this policy and any amendments or additions to it will be made by various means but primarily via:

- Induction procedures for staff and volunteers
- Information sharing for all working within the charity via email and phone messages

5. Recruitment and promotion of staff and volunteers

Advertisements for posts will give sufficiently clear and accurate information to enable potential applicants to assess their own suitability for the post. Information about vacant posts will be



provided in such a manner that does not restrict its audience in terms of any protected characteristic.

Recruitment literature will not imply a preference for one group of applicants unless there is a genuine occupational qualification which limits the post to this particular group.

All vacancies will be circulated internally.

All descriptions and specifications for posts will include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job.

All selection will be thorough, conducted against defined criteria and will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job. Where it is necessary to ask questions relating to personal circumstances, these will be related purely to job requirements and asked of all candidates. All applicants will be sent an Equality and Diversity monitoring form to allow-where the applicant wishes- monitoring to ensure discrimination is not taking place.

6. Staff duties

Ignite Life will not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristics in the allocation of duties between employees employed at any level with comparable job descriptions.

Ignite Life will put in place any reasonable measures and adjustments within the workplace for those employees who became disabled during employment or for disabled appointees.

All employees will be considered solely on their merits for career development and promotion with equal opportunities for all.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of any employees who are subject to protected characteristics.

7. Children, young people, and adult service users

Ignite Life will work with CYPs regardless of protected characteristics, as long as an appropriate service can be provided within the skills and expertise of our staff.

All instances of bullying, discrimination or harassment will be followed up and acted upon. Any actions by staff which are deemed contrary to this policy will be managed through our Behaviours Policy.

Where a commissioning organisation has its own approach to breaches of equal opportunities; or where specific work on diversity or identity is required, Ignite Life will work with them to ensure our delivery matches their needs.



8. The role of mentors, counsellors, and volunteers in promoting equality and diversity

Mentoring enables adults working for Ignite Life to monitor and address a range of misconceptions around prejudice and discrimination.

Where these issues are noted by providers, specific action planning can be done to work on tolerance, equality of opportunity and the rule of law.

In general mentoring work any views which do not promote equality of opportunity can be discussed effectively and openly.

Counsellors will support young people and families regardless of personal characteristics or background, as long as they can provide the best service to meet each individual's needs.

Volunteers will be supporting families accessing the Ignite Life food bank and will not discriminate or ask probing questions about family's backgrounds. Volunteers will support families regardless of personal characteristics and backgrounds. Questions such as 'what other support are you receiving' can be asked solely to further support them, for instance being able to signpost for additional support if they are not receiving it. Other questions such as 'do you have any dietary requirements or religious requirements' will only be asked to ensure we are providing appropriate food which does not go against religion or beliefs.

Views or behaviours which are of concern in relation to this policy must be recorded on written session plans and brought to the attention of managers who will decide upon suitable action. This will be carried out with reference to the Behaviour policy and Code of conduct

9. Training of staff

Employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of any protected characteristics or group to which they belong.

All employees will be encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their Line Manager or HR Manager.

10. Harassment and bullying

Harassment because of any protected characteristics is unlawful and will not be tolerated by Ignite Life.



This policy prohibits unlawful harassment by any employee, client (CYP) or worker of Ignite Life. Ignite Life will also not tolerate unlawful harassment from any client. Appropriate action will be taken if any harassment should occur.

Examples of prohibited harassment are;

Verbal or written conduct containing derogatory jokes or comments (both online and in writing),
Use of slurs,
Sexual advances,
Visual conduct such as derogatory or sexual oriented posters, photographs, cartoons, drawings or gestures,
Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, or any interference because of gender, race or any other protected basis,
Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment or to avoid some other loss and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favours.
Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

11. Reporting complaints or concerns

Staff or clients of Ignite Life who believe they have been harassed or discriminated against, should make an immediate report to their Line manager or if not appropriate to the Chief Executive or Chair of Trustees followed by a written complaint as soon as possible after the incident. This will be subject to an internal investigation.

Details of complaint should include:

Details of incident:
Time and location of incident:
The names of any individuals involved:
The names of any witnesses:



It is the duty of the Interim Operations Manager (Emilia Thomas) to ensure that all aspects of this policy are kept under review and are operated throughout the organisation.

*Appendix

Ignite Life equality and diversity monitoring form

Ignite Life wants to meet the aims and commitments set out in its equality policy. This includes not discriminating under the Equality Act 2010, and building an accurate picture of the make-up of the workforce in encouraging equality and diversity.

The organisation needs your help and co-operation to enable it to do this but filling in this form is voluntary. All information will be kept anonymous.

Please sign here to give consent on using the following information to continue to monitor equality and diversity:

Gender: Male ☒ Female ☐ Intersex ☐ Non-binary ☐ Prefer not to say ☐ If you prefer to use your own term, please specify here

Gender identity: Male ☐ Female ☐ Intersex ☐ Non-binary ☐ Transgender ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Age 5-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-35 ☐ 36-50 ☐ 50+ ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

What is your ethnicity?



Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is about the group to which you perceive you belong. Please tick the appropriate box

White

English ☐ Welsh ☐ Scottish ☐ Northern Irish ☐ Irish ☐
British ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Any other white background, please write in:

Mixed/multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean ☐ White and Black African ☐ White and Asian ☐ Prefer not to say ☐ Any other mixed background, please write in:

Asian/Asian British

Indian ☐ Pakistani ☐ Bangladeshi ☐ Chinese ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Any other Asian background, please write in:

Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British

African ☐ Caribbean ☐ British ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please write in:

Arab ☐ Any other ethnic group, please write:



Do you consider yourself to have a disability, impairment, learning difference or long-term condition?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Please write what best describes your disability, impairment, learning difficulties, or long-term condition:

.....

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.....

.....

The information in this form is for monitoring purposes only and will be kept anonymous and confidential.

What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual ☐ Gay Man ☐ Gay Woman/Lesbian ☐ Bisexual ☐

Prefer not to say ☐ If you prefer to use your own term, please specify here:

.....

What is your religion or belief?

No religion or belief ☐ Buddhist ☐ Christian ☐ Hindu ☐ Jewish ☐

Muslim ☐ Sikh ☐ Catholic ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

other religion or belief, please write in:

Do you have caring responsibilities? If yes, please tick all that apply

Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

What is your geographical location?

Please write the beginning of your post code:

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If



Last review of policy: October 2019
Last review of policy: October 2020
Last review of policy: October 2021
Last review of policy: October 2022
Last review of policy: October 2023
Last review of policy: October 2024
Last review of policy: October 2025
Next review: October 2026