



The Garage

Equality & Inclusion Policy

Next review date: January 2018

Introduction & Legal framework

The Garage is an inclusive organisation which focusses on the well-being and progress of every user and recognises that all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a strong framework support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also reinforces our core values of tackling issues of disadvantage and promoting inclusive practice across our activities.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998. We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, our approach to equality & inclusion is guided by the following key principles:

Principle 1: All users are of equal value.

We see all users of our venue, services and activities as of equal value. Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their age, ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation and marital status.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, age, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith, sexual orientation and



marital status. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other. We want all members of our community to feel a sense of belonging within The Garage and its wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice for our staff

We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continual professional development.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist and promoting inclusive practice and integration where possible.

Principle 6: We work to raise standards for all, but especially for the most vulnerable.

We believe that improving the quality of provision for the most vulnerable groups raises standards across the whole organisation

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of all users regardless of disability, age, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith, sexual orientation and marital status.

Purpose

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that publicly funded organisations cannot discriminate against people or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, marriage, civil partnership or pregnancy or maternity.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** or “general duty”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

This policy describes how The Garage is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how The Garage is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Policy in practice

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to the way we provide activities for our users and the way we provide access for users to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled staff and those accessing formal education activities – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled staff and users and stop disabled people being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- We extend this duty to non-education activities and will actively work with individuals to remove barriers wherever possible.
- The Executive Director (Head of Centre) ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the organisation.
- We actively promote inclusion, equality and diversity through our provision and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our registration and admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against people by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity.

- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff and users, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The Garage is opposed to all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around age
- prejudices around race, religion or belief,
- prejudices around gender, sexual orientation and marital status

There is guidance in the **Equal Opportunities** and **Anti-bullying & Harassment** policies as held in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to Trustees about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and take action to reduce incidents.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify individuals who have a disability through our activity booking system.
- We are proactive in managing activity delivery to ensure appropriate levels of staff support are available to meet the needs of every activity group.
- We collect and analyse data relating to our participation activity that includes gender, age, special educational need and/or disability.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any individuals' achievement or that seeks to define their potential, such as "less able"
- We provide support to individuals at risk of disengaging.

Positive Action

- We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support.

Implementation

Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the organisation complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

The Executive Director (Head of Centre) is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

The Learning & Inclusion Director (Examinations Officer) and Creative Director have day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy.

All staff and freelancers are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos
- deal with and report any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver activities that reflect the guiding principles as listed in this policy
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and Trustees and, as appropriate, is accessible to all users.

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other organizational policies are dealt with, as determined by the Executive Director and Board of Trustees.

Approved by the Executive Director (Head of Centre):

Signed: A. Taylor

Date: 27.01.2017
