



## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

In order to promote diversity and equality for all, The Springfield Project's Equality and Diversity Policy is underpinned by our 'No Outsiders' approach. At the Springfield Project, there are no outsiders – EVERYONE is welcome, subject to our Safeguarding standards.

The Springfield Project is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity is provided for all stakeholders in line with the Equality Act 2010. We aim to demonstrate the equality of opportunity through all aspects of our work by removing barriers to participation, learning, belonging, pastoral and inclusion support systems, our links with the wider community and the recruitment of staff. The Project will not tolerate discriminatory or prejudiced language or behaviour, nor any form of harassment or victimisation either by or towards staff, volunteers, contractors or users of the Project. We will appoint an Equality Champion to lead on this issue and ensure compliance of this policy. We believe that Springfield as a community is stronger and richer because of our diversity.

The Project is based on the Christian ethos of valuing and respecting all people regardless of their ethnic background or their faith or belief. The Project is committed to taking positive steps to redress the effects of unlawful and harmful discrimination and to ensuring that our own procedures are transparent.

The Project is an equal opportunity employer, for more information on employment matters please see the Staff Handbook.

We seek to demonstrate our commitment to the equality of opportunity by:

- Ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and with respect
- Making sure that our Centre is safe, secure, welcoming and easily accessible for everyone
- Recognising that people have different needs, and understanding that treating people equally does not always involve treating them all exactly the same.
- Recognising that some children, and some adults, need extra support to help them make progress, be successful, take part in activities and develop a sense of belonging
- Aiming to ensure that people from different groups are consulted and involved in our decisions, for example through involving service users (both children and adults) in consultation groups.
- Recognising the variety of home languages spoken by our community including British Sign Language and providing interpreters where necessary and practicable
- Aiming to make sure that no-one experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination because of:
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Race
  - Gender
  - Gender re-assignment
  - Religion and belief
  - Sexual orientation
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Being pregnant or having recently had a baby

At the Springfield Project we will ensure that at every level and in every area of our work, everyone will be treated equally, reflecting the Equality Act 2010 which legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone. These are:

- Direct discrimination – where someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic
- Associative discrimination – this is direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic
- Discrimination by perception – this is direct discrimination against someone because others think that they possess a particular protected characteristic. They do not necessarily have to possess the characteristic, just be perceived to.
- Indirect discrimination – this can occur when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a particular protected characteristic
- Harassment – this is behaviour that is deemed offensive by the recipient. Employees can now complain of the behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.
- Victimisation – this occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under this legislation.

**SPRINGFIELD PROJECT “NO OUTSIDERS” STATEMENT**

The Springfield Project promotes a “No Outsiders” approach. Children, young people and adults are actively encouraged to discuss and explore issues of difference and diversity in order that we learn from another, promote acceptance and understanding and create open dialogue. The “No Outsiders” approach aims to bring children and parents on board from the start so that children learn to be happy and excited about living in a community full of difference and diversity, whether that difference is through the above listed protected characteristic or something else that establishes our unique character.

In order to promote our “No Outsiders” approach we will display posters which promote this message in our centre, we will ensure that staff and volunteers are trained, and the resources we use in our services reflect the population.

SPRINGFIELD PROJECT’S EQUALITY CHAMPION FOR THE PERIOD OF THIS POLICY IS FELICITY MCLEISTER – CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

**WHAT TO DO IF YOU FEEL THAT THIS POLICY HAS NOT BEEN UPHELD**

If you feel that you have been treated in a way that is inconsistent with this policy, please make your concerns known to our management team by using our Complaints Policy.

Policy implementation and review	Responsible Officer: Felicity McLeister  This policy was approved by the Senior Leadership Team on 31st October 2018.
Policy review	This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier as required. This policy was reviewed by COO on 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2023. Changes: Equality Champion updated to Felicity McLeister  Policy review date: January 2026