

POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Solihull Life Opportunities

St Andrew's Centre
Pike Drive
Chelmsley Wood
Birmingham
B37 7US

Charity No. 1102297
England Company No.
5025939

Equal Opportunities

Category: Service User/Volunteer/Human Resources

Introduction

Policy Statement

Solihull Life Opportunities is committed to ensuring that its policies and practices afford equality and opportunity to all sections of the community. Solihull Life Opportunities works to ensure that, as an employer, as a recruiter of volunteers and as a provider of services to people with learning disabilities, no individual or particular group of people is treated less favourably than others. Discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation will not be permitted. (This list is not exhaustive) This includes, but is not restricted to, recruitment, training, conditions of service and pay.

Discrimination

SoLO uses the following definition of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination – treating someone less favourably because of a personal characteristic
- Indirect discrimination – applying practices that might favour one group over another
- Harassment – unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity and creates a hostile or degrading environment
- Victimisation – unfair treatment of an employee who has made a complaint about discrimination

Solihull Life Opportunities values diversity and aims to ensure that its services are accessible to all learning disabled people within Solihull, and that everyone can play an active role in the organisation's future direction, management structure and policies.

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Procedures

Solihull Life Opportunities is working to ensure that all people will have equal access to Solihull Life Opportunities services regardless of disability, social status, economic disadvantage or culture, to enable them to become volunteers, employees or members and have an active role in the organisation's future direction, management structure and policies.

Where appropriate, Solihull Life Opportunities will work with local community groups and funders in developing services based on local need, and recognises the particular importance of addressing the language and communication needs of people with special needs and those from a different cultural background and various methods will be deployed to ensure accessibility.

All employees and volunteers are expected to support and work within SoLO's Equal Opportunities and Anti-Bullying (Dignity at Work) policies. All take individual responsibility for the application of these policies within their work area.

Sexual, racial or any other harassment or bullying at work will not be tolerated. Solihull Life Opportunities condemns any form of harassment of individuals or groups.

Solihull Life Opportunities will regularly review its Equal Opportunities policies and practices and will maintain an action plan to further its commitment across all aspects of its work.

On Project

All Project Leaders will be mindful of the needs of individual members accessing their services and this will be reflected in various ways:

- Food and Drink offered will be in accordance with both dietary requirements and religious guidelines
- Activities planned will be sympathetic to specific needs of members
- Project planning will take into account significant religious festivals

All members will be dealt with in such a way that reflects the person centred approach taken by the organisation as a whole.

Data Collection

Solihull Life Opportunities will record the ethnicity of our members, parents, carers, staff and volunteers and use this intelligence to monitor uptake of our

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projects, and recruitment of staff and volunteers. Trends will be evaluated to ensure that the organisation is not actively discriminating against any particular group of people.

Solihull Life Opportunities will also record information relating to the level of disability of members. This information will be used to ensure that the schemes run by SoLO are meeting the needs of those most marginalised.

Inclusion

In line with the stated aims and objectives within the agreed constitution, places on projects are primarily for those children and adults who meet the criteria of 'learning disability' (a condition that is caused by damage to the brain or by genetic conditions, often from birth, which is incurable, resulting in impaired learning and intellectual capacity). We will also offer a limited number of places for children/adults with other disabilities including Emotional, Social and Behavioural.

On receiving a new referral for a service user, SoLO will complete a personal profile in order to assess which projects are appropriate, and respond to individual support needs. This will ensure an inclusive approach is adopted across SoLO services.

In line with the stated aims and objectives within the agreed constitution, admission on any agreed project is confined to those children and adults who meet the criteria of 'learning disability' (a condition that is caused by damage to the brain or by genetic conditions, often from birth, that is incurable, resulting in impaired learning and intellectual capacity). In special cases, eg Integrated Schemes which encourage mainstream young people and adults to work alongside their disabled peers, admission will be extended to include those without disabilities.

Disputes

Where possible any concerns will be resolved informally and without repercussion.

Staff members can raise issues through SoLO's internal Grievance policy. If this does not resolve the issue they may choose to take the matter to an Independent Employment tribunal.

Service users, parents and carers can raise issues through SoLO's complaints procedure

- Linked with policies: Recruitment, Trustee Recruitment and Induction