



STAR

Support & Training Against Racism for under 8's workers and parents
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Registered Charity No. 1023528

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

STAR is working towards equality of opportunity in its policies and procedures and will challenge any form of discrimination. We seek to promote and offer equal opportunities to all our workers and service users. We seek to provide a safe, secure and positive environment for all workers and service users through taking action against all forms of discrimination.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

STAR acknowledges that the U.K. is a society diverse in race, culture, creed and interest and that no person or group should suffer direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of race, culture, creed, ethnic or national origin, gender, religious or political belief, ability, health, class, income, marital status, age or sexual orientation.

STAR works to further equality of opportunity in employment of its staff and volunteers, its committee representation and its service provision. STAR is committed to taking positive action to effect this.

STAR accepts and welcomes the statutory requirements contained within the Race Relations Act 1974 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disabled Persons Act 1955, 1958 and 1986 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2004. In addition to meeting its legal requirements, STAR aims to extend and develop good practice in all areas of its policies and provision to the community with regard to persons and groups discriminated against and denied equality of opportunity.

STAR aims to ensure that its users, employees, volunteers and any person working on its behalf are respected, valued and accepted as individuals irrespective of their:

- ethnic origin, culture, race
- religious or political belief
- physical, mental or sensory ability
- gender
- age
- class
- income
- health
- marital or family status
- sexual orientation
- social disadvantage

STAR aims to ensure that its commitment to equality runs throughout its policies and procedures and into all aspects of its work on an every day level. Where inequalities are apparent STAR will take the directed course of action to rectify these.

STAR will take all reasonable steps to meet its responsibilities.

Responsibilities

Employees, voluntary workers and users should fully understand the principles and operation of STAR's Equal Opportunities Policy and all should take responsibility for its overall effectiveness.

Failure by employees or volunteers to abide by STAR's policies and procedures will be deemed a disciplinary matter (refer to Disciplinary Procedure).

The Management Committee is ultimately responsible for implementing policies and procedures. The Development Worker has day-to-day responsibility for ensuring these policies and procedures are adhered to.

The Management Committee appoints a STAR employee or volunteer to take responsibility for Equal Opportunities matters. The appointed person is:

SOPHIE HAMPTON (Management Committee member)

The appointed person with responsibility for Equal Opportunities must check the Incident Record Book every two months and report any incidents to the management committee at the bi-monthly meetings. (Refer to Equal Opportunities Procedure and Grievance Procedure). S/He will analyse the Ethnic Monitoring Forms for STAR's activities, and report the results at committee meetings, to inform future activities.

The Management Committee

Star aims to encourage participation on its Management Committee from people in the local community irrespective of their race, religion, culture, gender, class, disability, age or social disadvantage.

STAR aims to ensure:

- election to posts on the Management Committee do not discriminate
- information presented to key meetings is circulated in advance to all Management Committee members
- specific needs of any members or other persons attending meetings will be taken into account if notified in advance
- clarity in recording and informing others about decision making

Recruitment

The Management Committee is responsible for ensuring that throughout the recruitment process no unlawful act of discrimination takes place.

STAR seeks to appoint, develop and promote the very best people, judged solely on suitability for the job or position.

STAR actively encourages applications from people from minority ethnic groups by advertising posts in specialist periodicals as well as general ones and offering help to interpret advertisements and application forms.

Training and Personal Development

STAR seeks to promote the value of self worth in our workers and volunteers. STAR encourages and supports training, including Equal Opportunities training, for all its workers and volunteers within the constraints of its resources and finances.

STAR ensures that structures are in place for the supervision of employees (Development Worker, freelance Trainers and Outreach Workers) and volunteers (Management Committee and individuals).

Service Delivery

Accessibility

STAR considers accessibility when planning all its activities, including day, time, venue, information and childcare.

If notified in advance, STAR will cater for the specific needs of any person wishing to participate as far as resources and finances allow.

Publicity, Promotion and Awareness

STAR aims to reach specific target groups in B&NES (under 8's workers and parents) and to raise awareness of racial equality and anti-racism in the wider community.

Special requests for information in specific formats are accommodated as far as are reasonably possible. Documents are available electronically so that service users can alter the format to suit themselves, and staff or volunteers can talk through a document with service users.

Consultation with user groups

STAR has evaluation procedures in place to monitor user feedback on its activities; if appropriate, these include an ethnic monitoring form and an access needs form. STAR uses this information to find out if it is meeting users' needs, and inform future activities.

Reporting Incidents of Discrimination

All incidents, no matter how minor they may seem must be:

- Acknowledged
- Acted upon immediately and followed up
- Recorded and monitored

Definition

An incident of discrimination is defined as a person or persons experiencing less favourable treatment on the grounds of ethnic origin, culture, race, religious or political belief, physical, mental or sensory ability, gender, age, class, income, health, marital or family status, sexual orientation, social disadvantage.

Examples of incidents of discrimination include harassment; stereotyping; refusing to co-operate with other people because of their ethnic origin; gender, impairment;

sexuality etc; using derogatory language; and discriminatory organisational practice, policies and procedures.

Many incidents of discrimination are never reported. STAR seeks to create a safe and positive environment in which people feel that they can report incidents by:

- Encouraging staff and volunteers to do training to gain confidence to challenge incidents of discrimination and deal with them appropriately
- Ensuring, through the induction procedure, staff and volunteers know that complaints will be acknowledged and acted upon, and that they understand STAR's complaints procedure and who to complain to
- Ensuring that supervision is provided for staff and volunteers so that they can report any concerns they may have in strictest confidence.

If a STAR employee or volunteer becomes aware of any incident of discrimination by employees, volunteers or users they must follow the Equal Opportunities Procedure. They should record it in the Incident Book kept in the STAR office and promptly report it to the Development Worker or the person responsible for Equal Opportunities.

The Development Worker or the person responsible for Equal Opportunities must inform the management committee of any serious incidents of discrimination promptly.

Monitoring

To monitor the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy, the person responsible for Equal Opportunities:

- Checks the incident book every two months and reports their findings to the management committee at the bi-monthly meetings.
- Analyses the ethnic monitoring forms and access needs forms for STAR's activities, and reports the results to the management committee at the bi-monthly meetings to inform future activities.

The management committee considers the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy in the light of this information and makes appropriate changes if necessary.