

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy



Lead Director Michael Maddick, Director of People & Culture	Date Reviewed May 2022
Lead Author Georgia Pulman, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lead	Date Drafted May 2022
Critical Readers Dalton Leong, Chief Executive Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group Mike Maddick, Director of People & Culture Paul Fix, Head of People Development & Volunteering – Spark member Ellie Winter, PMO lead – Spark Member Gareth Blake – Senior HR Business Partner	Endorsed Date June 2022
Approval Body The Board of Trustees	Review Date September 2024
Published Date September 2024	Next Review Date September 2025

1 Purpose and Objectives

The Children's Trust recognises and is committed to practising and promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). Together they help build a positive culture where all team members, and children, young people and families feel valued and empowered to be their full selves. We know our differences make us stronger.

We believe in:

- Being open, and recognising that everyone is different, and can make and bring their own unique contributions, experience, knowledge, and skills to the organisation.
- Owning it - Acknowledging and meaningfully addressing bias or discrimination wherever it may occur.
- Caring deeply for each other as human beings and supporting each other to thrive.
- Practicing fairness, and treating all others with dignity and respect
- Practicing conscious acts of inclusion, through open and thoughtful communication and behaviours that foster collaboration and trust
- Recognizing the validity of each other's experiences, though they may be different from our own, while ensuring that we do not tolerate harmful or prejudiced behaviours or speech.

We are a committed equal opportunity employer, and we will not discriminate based on ability, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, political or religious beliefs, national origin, race or ethnicity, skin colour, health status, pregnancy, caring responsibility, or any other basis prohibited by law.

Our ambition is to become an equitable, diverse, and inclusive organisation, which is driven by our beneficiaries, many of whom live with significant disabilities, and some who call The Children's Trust their home. We believe their home, and our workplace should be a place where we celebrate and accept differences, and everyone can be their best and most authentic self. The organisation has committed to 'building excellence' during this strategic period (2020 -2025), and in 2022 we published our EDI strategy which outlines our commitment and actions over the next 3 years.

<https://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-04/EDI%20Strategy%202022.pdf>

The key objectives of this policy are:

- To outline the organisation's commitment and principles in relation to EDI.
- To highlight the current legislation in existence regarding EDI.
- To ensure that everyone at The Children's Trust is aware of their responsibilities associated with this legislation.

This policy is for *everyone*, and therefore we made sure to engage a wide group on its development, and actively welcome comments from staff on how we can improve it.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the statutory requirements of Employment Rights Act 1996, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679 EU)

2 Scope

We recognise EDI is a constantly evolving topic, and will therefore use an open and flexible approach to both defining, and regularly reviewing and updating the policy. The law and best practice changes quickly with EDI. Therefore, this policy should be reviewed annually to reflect these changes.

Based on what we know today, the following is in policy scope:

- The policy is applicable to all employees, children, young people and families, volunteers, agency staff, clients, and suppliers and contractors, whether permanent or temporary. The policy applies to all processes relating to employment and training and to any dealings with our retail customers.
- The Children's Trust will work within the law, and not discriminate based on any of the protected characteristics outlined within The Equality Act. The Children's Trust will not discriminate because of any other irrelevant factor, and will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness, and transparency.
- As an organisation we commit to challenging behaviour, actions or words that contravene this policy. Where appropriate, this challenge will be approached with a desire to educate and evolve through open and honest discourse. The Children's Trust will always treat any alleged breach of the policy seriously, and where necessary behaviours, actions and words that contravene the policy may be addressed through the organisation's Disciplinary Procedure.

3 Roles and responsibilities

All staff - are responsible for familiarising themselves and acting in accordance with this policy. Individuals should inform their manager if they know or suspect that discrimination or harassment is occurring.

Managers - will ensure that this policy is communicated to their staff and will provide advice and guidance regarding their conduct or signpost to other sources of available support. Managers are required to model leadership in this field by encouraging inclusion, discouraging prejudice, and modelling appropriate behaviour. They must also take prompt and appropriate action to deal with any breaches of the policy, or behaviour that could lead to a breach of the policy. Any identified breaches of the policy should be dealt with using the Disciplinary, Grievance or Dignity at Work policies.

The People team - will ensure that this policy is implemented and operated in a reasonable and fair manner, provide advice and guidance to individual members of staff and line managers, and oversee provision of any letters and documents required. The people team also have a responsibility to ensure that any grievance that is raised which applies to this policy is conducted sensitively, fairly, and thoroughly.

EDI lead – Had a responsibility to ensure this policy is kept up to date, and to provide guidance, advice and training to support teams and individuals to act in accordance with this policy.

4 Definitions

Unless otherwise stated, the words or expressions contained in this document shall have the following meaning:

Term	Definition
The Charity/ organisation/ TCT	Refers to The Children’s Trust
Board	The Children’s Trust Board of Trustees
Equity	Equity can be defined as ensuring systems, practices and processes are in place to give individuals what they need to be successful. Although both equality and equity promote fairness, equality achieves this through treating everyone the same regardless of need, while equity acknowledges the need to adapt systems and processes for different individuals in order for opportunities to be accessed equally.
Diversity	Diversity in this context refers to a workplace comprised of individuals of varying attributes, backgrounds and perspectives.
Inclusion	Inclusion in this context refers to an inclusive work environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and are welcome for who they are and what they uniquely bring to the organisation.
Age	This refers to a person belonging to a particular age or range of ages (e.g. under 18)
Disability	A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on that person’s ability to carry out normal day to day duties.
Discrimination	This means treating someone less favourably than someone else because of a protected characteristic (see section 4.1). For example an employer does not interview a job applicant because of the applicant’s ethnic background.
Gender Identity	Gender identity is a personal, internal perception of oneself, and so the gender category someone identifies with may not match the sex they were assigned at birth. This may include the identity non-binary.
Marriage or civil partnership	A person who is either married or has entered into a civil partnership
Neurodiversity	The range of differences in individual brain function and behavioural traits, regarded as part of normal variation in the human population. It usually includes people who have dyslexia, dyspraxia/developmental coordination disorder (DCD), dyscalculia, Autism and ADHD.
Pregnancy and maternity/paternity	Pregnancy is the condition of expecting a baby. Maternity/paternity refers to the period following birth and is linked to maternity/paternity leave in the context of employment.
Race or ethnicity	Referencing the race, colour, language, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins of an individual

Religion or belief	This includes religious and philosophical beliefs, including lack of belief (i.e. Atheism).
Sex	Assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions. Usually male or female.
Sexuality	The sexual orientation of an individual

5 Policy Statement

4.1 The Equality Act

The objective of the introduction of the Equality Act 2010 was to strengthen protection, advance equality and simplify the law. In accordance with this Act, no individual will be discriminated against or victimised. The Act includes the following protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender identity
4. Marriage or civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race or ethnicity
7. Religion or belief
8. Sex/gender
9. Sexuality

The Children's Trust operates in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 act. In the organisation this list extends to include spent criminal convictions provided there are no safeguarding implications, which would take precedence.

4.2 A commitment to equity

The Children's Trust is committed to embedding equity through justice, impartiality and fairness in our procedures and processes.

The organisation seeks to identify where practices and procedures are not equitable and take action to address this.

Section 158 of the Equality Act 2010 permits employers to take positive action in respect of people who have protected characteristics and experienced disadvantage, have different needs or have disproportionately low participation. The Act permits this positive action to take place in the form of proportionate measures to overcome a perceived disadvantage, meeting specific needs based on a protected characteristic, or by encouraging participation.

Section 13(3) of the Equality Act 2010 allows employers take positive action by lawfully limiting recruitment, training and promotion opportunities to disabled people, without this amounting to unlawful direct discrimination against a non-disabled person.

The Children's Trust therefore may implement such strategies when inequitable processes, practices or procedures are identified to provide more equitable opportunities throughout the organisation. An example of this applies to recruitment. We strive to ensure our job adverts reflect the organisation's promises and goals, including our commitment to equity and inclusivity at all levels. This has meant we have started to remove the requirement to have a degree for many of our roles when this is not explicitly needed, such as in healthcare roles. We are continuously reviewing our practises in this area to help encourage a diverse group of candidates is to apply.

4.3 A commitment to valuing and promoting diversity

Diversity involves recognising and valuing differences in its broadest sense. It includes creating a culture and practices that recognise, respect, value and embrace differences.

The Children's Trust believes that excellence is achieved through recognising the value of every individual and the varied perspectives they can offer. It aims to create an environment that respects the diversity of staff, volunteers, children and their families and enables them to achieve their full potential. This allows every individual to contribute fully, and to derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their time at The Children's Trust.

This means where possible we will ensure that the accessibility needs of all staff are met, which may involve a referral to occupational health or guidance from your GP. We are committed to providing reasonable adjustments, which may include flexible working, providing equipment or referral to the access to work scheme (adjustments are varied depending on role). We realise the needs of a person change, and every effort will be made to support them in their transition, and in performing their role to the best of their ability.

4.4 A commitment to providing an inclusive environment

The Children's Trust aims to establish an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and are welcomed for who they are and what they uniquely bring to the organisation. Therefore, The Children's Trust will not tolerate discrimination, particularly where the behaviour is intentional. We understand the emotional weight of raising issues of this nature, and concerns will be taken seriously, and handled confidentially and sympathetically. We encourage staff members who have experienced or observed discrimination to raise this with their line manager in the first instance if they feel comfortable to do so, and if not then with the HR Business Partnering team. Alternatively, this can also be discussed with the EDI Lead (Georgia Pulman), or the Director of People & Culture (Michael Maddick).

To this end, The Children's Trust acknowledges the following basic rights for all those within the scope of this policy:

- To be treated with respect and dignity
- To be treated fairly with regard to all procedures, assessments and choices
- For each individual to feel comfortable and confident in sharing their unique contributions, ideas and input to support the work of the organisation

These rights carry with them responsibilities and The Children's Trust requires those within the scope of the policy to recognise these rights and to act in accordance with them in all dealings with

fellow members of The Children’s Trust. In addition, The Children’s Trust will comply with all relevant legislation and good practice to meet these aims.

5 Stakeholder Consultation

Appendix 1 details the stakeholders who were consulted in the development of this policy.

6 Related Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures stated below support the effective application of this policy:

- Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment at Work Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Policy for Developing Policies
- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Handbook

7 External References and Guidance

The following external resources and guidance were consulted in drafting this policy:

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679 EU)
- Resource pages on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion provided by XPert HR
- ACEVO’s ‘Eight principles to address the diversity deficit in Charity Leadership’
www.acevo.org.uk/eight-principles-to-address-the-diversity-deficit-in-charity-leadership

8 Document Change Control

Version	Status	Description (of changes)	Reviewed by	Reviewed / Issued Date
0.1	Draft	No major changes. Included reference to OH and GP service regarding reasonable adjustments. Minor grammar and/or word changes throughout. Added in new sentence regarding being open to improving this document.	Ellie Winter Mike Maddick Gareth Blake	29/06/22
0.2	Draft	Formatting changes.	Dalton Leong	06/07/22
0.3	Draft	Inclusion of new wording under roles and responsibilities for the people team around grievances.	Angela Robertshaw	07/07/22
0.4	Draft	Added in new section for EDI lead in roles and responsibilities. Example added to recruitment section.	Paul Fix	10/07/22
1.0	Final	Approved	Board	Nov 2023
2.0	Final	Michael Maddick confirmed fit for purpose, rolled over for one year.	Board	Sept 2024

Appendix 1 – Stakeholder Engagement Checklist

Review and complete the following checklist to indicate which stakeholders were consulted in the development of this policy.

#	Question	Yes/ No	Stakeholder(s) to be consulted
1	Is there a statutory requirement to have in place this particular policy/ does the policy need to comply with detailed legislation?	Yes	Business Partnering Team
2	Is implementation of the policy (or any element of it) dependent on the use of new or existing information technology?	No	
3	Does implementation of the policy (or any element of it) place any demands on/ or affect the activities of the Estates and Facilities teams (e.g. does it impact the provision or maintenance of premises, equipment, vehicles or other TCT assets)?	No	
4	Does implementation of the policy or any element of it involve/ impact the processing of personal data?	No	
5	Does implementation of the policy require significant unbudgeted operational or capital expenditure?	No	
6	Does implementation of the policy (or any element of it) directly or indirectly impact on the delivery of services / activities in other areas of the organisation? E.g. a policy written by a clinical lead in CF&S might impact on the delivery of care for CYP attending the School.	No	
7	Is there a need to consider Health and Safety or potential environmental impacts in developing and implementing the policy?	No	
8	Have you consulted with a representative of those who will be directly impacted by the policy?	Yes	Spark Representatives
9	Please detail any other stakeholder groups consulted, if applicable.	N/A	

