

Policy Name	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Date approved	March 2023
Review date	March 2025

## Introduction

Sutton Vision is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our staff, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our staff to be truly representative of all sections of society and our service users, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing services and support - is also committed against unlawful discrimination towards service users and the wider public.

As a sight loss charity, Sutton Vision is committed to increasing awareness and understanding of the needs of people with sight loss and to developing and implementing services which meet their needs and improve lives. We want to set a positive example both within Sutton Vision and in the community regarding equality for all and supporting people with or at risk of sight loss.

## Definitions

**Equality** is about making sure we have good employment and operational practices and that everyone is treated fairly.

**Diversity** is wider than equality or preventing discrimination. It is about the way we value and work positively regarding our differences and how we use those differences creatively to stimulate fresh ideas, broaden perceptions and empower everyone to contribute to the success of the charity.

**Discrimination** is treating people unfairly because of their difference or a protected characteristic.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment and who use our services and support.

Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

- Age;
- Disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin);
- religion or belief;
- Sex;
- sexual orientation.

This policy sets out our approach to achieving equality and promoting diversity.

The policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, consultants and contractors who work with us.

## **Principles**

We work to maintain a positive working environment, foster good relationships and value the contribution that staff, volunteers, trustees and our service users make to the success of the charity.

We expect all staff, volunteers and trustees to work in line with this ethos, this policy, our code of conduct and set a positive example.

We challenge any form of discrimination linked to disability and sight loss, both within and external to Sutton Vision and expect staff to do the same.

We will take complaints and allegations of discriminatory behaviour seriously and investigate these in line with our grievance, disciplinary and complaints procedures.

## **Practices**

This policy applies to all aspects of our work including our governance, access to and provision of services, recruitment, employment, pay and benefits and partnerships. In particular:

- We work towards providing all information about our organisation in accessible formats;
- We support equality and diversity in our recruitment practices;
- We encourage the employment of blind and visually impaired people within our organisation;
- We make reasonable adjustments to our processes and our roles to support continued employment and involvement with our charity;
- We will apply fair principles regarding access to learning and development activities;
- Internal promotion and pay decisions are based on merit;
- We communicate this policy to all new staff and volunteers and ensure they attend training to further their understanding;
- We make sure that in the design and development of new services we adopt non-discriminatory practices and put steps in place to make sure our services are accessible;
- We support co-production and make sure there are opportunities for people with a visual impairment to participate in the development of services;

- We involve service users in the monitoring of services and listen to and act on their feedback, suggestions and complaints;
- We expect all contractors, consultants and partners to abide by the principles and practice of this policy and we make sure that we communicate our commitment to them;
- We will consider the impact of any changes to any of our policies and procedures on our members before decisions are made.

### **Responsibilities**

The General Operations Manager is responsible for developing an organisational culture in which the policy can operate effectively and reporting to the Board of Trustees on performance against the policy.

All staff, volunteers and trustees are responsible for working in line with the mission, values, code of conduct and this policy.

ENDS.