



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) POLICY



Changing childhoods.
Changing lives.

01 April 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out Barnardo's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

This is at the very heart of our new Strategy 2024-27, where we commit to:

Run excellent, *inclusive* services that improve the lives of children and young people.

To help achieve this, one of our new 'foundations' is to: Grow a culture where everyone can belong and thrive.

EDI is also integral to our values and **behaviours**, which are designed to help us create a culture that supports our colleagues, including our volunteers to perform at their best to deliver impact for all children, young people and families we support.

As part of this, we are committed to EDI in the workplace, where colleagues and volunteers are valued and respected for their contributions and lived experience. We want to create an inclusive environment in which difference is respected and celebrated and where everyone can contribute their best work and fulfil their full potential.

We value the rich diversity and multiple identities of our colleagues and volunteers and the contributions they make to the charity. We want our services and all our work to be delivered by a diverse range of people from all backgrounds and who reflect the make-up of the wider communities in which we work and help us be a charity where everyone can belong, grow and thrive.

Our commitment to anti-racism is reflected in our **Anti-Racism Commitments** and tackling discrimination of all kinds is vital to living our values and **behaviours** as outlined in our **People and Culture Strategy** and our **EDI Action Plan**. These commitments reflect and restate our intent to challenge racism where we see it and enhance our focus on being an anti-racist charity.



2. Policy

This policy sets out our aim to be a diverse, inclusive organisation and along with other policies demonstrates Barnardo's compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and equivalent equality legislation in Northern Ireland **ECNI – The Law, Equality Legislation, Equality Commission, NI** and Discrimination (Jersey) Law 2013.

Our aim is to embed EDI into everything we do, by ensuring our services are inclusive and accessible to all children, young people and families so we can fulfil our purpose of Changing Childhoods and Changing Lives, by working with children and young people to be safe, happy, healthy and hopeful, whatever their background or circumstances.

In promoting equality, we aim to eliminate discrimination or less favourable treatment, harassment, victimisation on the grounds of any protected characteristic and ensure treatment is fair and equitable in all areas of the charity.

This policy, alongside, our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Code of Conduct for colleagues and volunteers sets out our approach and reinforces the **behaviours** we expect and that form part of our policies, procedures and practices.

We will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or victimisation in any form, whether by a colleague, a volunteer, or a third party such as a supplier or a member of the public.

Colleagues should understand they, as well as Barnardo's, can be held liable for acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation that happen at work or outside of work, for example, at a training event, conference or through social media that is linked to work.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all colleagues including those who are directly employed by the charity, colleagues who work to an 'as and when' agreement, as well as agency workers, external contractors / consultants, secondees from partner organisations, our foster carers and our volunteers. It also applies to the children, young people and families that we support.

Whilst volunteers are not legally protected by the **Equality Act 2010**, Barnardo's is committed to ensuring that volunteers do not experience any discrimination in line with the principles of the Act.

Where Barnardo's services are provided by external contractors or third parties on the basis of a specification set by Barnardo's, these contractors or third parties are responsible for adhering to Barnardo's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. See our **Responsible Procurement Policy** for more information.

4. Definitions and Key Concepts

EQUALITY

means treating people fairly in a way that reflects their needs, providing equal opportunity to achieve outcomes, and eliminating discrimination.

DIVERSITY

is about valuing individuals for the different experiences and perspectives they have to offer.

INCLUSION

means everyone's differences are valued and contribute to an environment where people can be themselves and achieve their full potential and thrive. An inclusive culture is one where colleagues and volunteers come together to create a culture in which everyone feels that they belong and feel respected and safe in being themselves.

Protected characteristics under discrimination law (Equality Act 2010 and equivalent equality legislation in Northern Ireland and Jersey) are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment*
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief (in Northern Ireland, religion or belief includes political opinion/community background.
- sex
- sexual orientation

The law protects people from discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in the workplace and in wider society, including access to services, premises and education because of a protected characteristic.

*Colleagues who have applied for their gender to be legally recognised under the Gender Recognition Act, have additional legal protection; it is a criminal offence to reveal a person's trans history or identity without their express permission. See our guidance on supporting Trans colleagues for more information.

There is also other legislation to ensure the fair treatment of part-time workers, trade union representatives and whistle-blowers. In addition, Barnardo's will not discriminate on the grounds of any irrelevant criminal record, economic status or political values, those with lived care experience, responsibility for dependents or caring responsibilities.

4. Definitions and Key Concepts

Discrimination can take several forms and includes:

- **Direct discrimination** occurs where, a person is treated less favourably or put at a disadvantage to another person because they belong to one of the protected characteristic groups.
- **Discrimination by association** occurs when someone discriminates against an individual because they associate with another person who has a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by perception** occurs when someone discriminates against an individual because they think they have a particular protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** occurs when, a seemingly neutral policy, procedure or practice that applies to everyone but disadvantages a group of people who share a particular protected characteristic compared with people who do not share that protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination may be justified if it can be shown that the policy, procedure or practice is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- **Failure to make a reasonable adjustment.** This type of discrimination can occur where the employer fails to implement a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person as defined under discrimination law.
- **Detriment arising from a disability** occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability.

Harassment – is when offensive or unwanted behaviour is about or because of any of the above protected characteristics.

Victimisation – is being treated badly because they have complained about discrimination or are suspected of doing so or have supported someone else who has.

The **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)** is a tool that enables us to think about how different people may be affected by the decisions and changes we make. It helps us make EDI through everything we do and provides a practical way of considering what might be the potential equality outcomes – positive or negative, from a change to a policy, process, procedure or new policy, or in service design and decision making. For more information, please refer to **[Why we do EIA's.pdf](#)**

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Our Board of Trustees

as our governing body, has overall responsibility for the charity ensuring we comply with our legal responsibilities.

Our Chief Executive Officer

has overall responsibility for the implementation of the EDI policy, assisted by the Director of People and Culture.

Our Corporate Leadership Team/Group (CLT / CLG)

are responsible for supporting the implementation of this policy and the integration of EDI into their operational areas; providing leadership and accountability.

Corporate EDI Board (CEDIB)

the role of the CEDIB is to oversee the delivery and scrutinise progress on the delivery of the Corporate [EDI Action Plan](#) and to champion EDI with a focus on [Our Strategy 2024-2027](#).

EDI Team

the role of the EDI team is to work strategically and collaboratively with senior managers across the charity to effectively deliver and embed EDI.

People Team

are responsible for partnering leaders and teams ensuring EDI is integrated into Operational People Plans. The People Team also support line managers in investigating and dealing with any incidents or behaviours that may breach this policy and/or the EDI Code of Conduct in line with our colleague [Resolution Policy](#).

Volunteering Team

are responsible for ensuring that all volunteers are aware of Barnardo's commitment to EDI throughout the volunteer journey. They provide support to the volunteer manager to investigate and deal with any incidents or individual behaviours that may breach this policy and/or the EDI Code of Conduct, applying our Volunteer Problem Solving policy and procedure.

Line managers

should be knowledgeable about and committed to EDI, making it integral to everything they do, showing leadership, acting as a role-model and challenging poor behaviour.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Colleagues

are responsible for fulfilling the requirements of this policy and our EDI Code of Conduct. Colleagues are responsible for treating other colleagues with dignity and respect to help create an inclusive and safe environment where colleagues feel they belong.

Volunteers

have an active role in creating an inclusive and safe environment where people are valued and respected by following our EDI Policy and EDI Code of Conduct.

Agency workers, external contractors/consultants and secondees and third-party suppliers

Have a responsibility to comply with the Equality Act 2010 (and equivalent equality legislation in Northern Ireland and Jersey) and the terms of this policy (see our **Procurement** processes and **Supplier Code of Conduct (Procurement) March 2023**).

All temporary agency workers, external contractors/consultants and secondees are responsible for reading and agreeing to the terms of our **Welcome Pack** (which includes the EDI Code of Conduct) before they start work.

EDI at a Directorate and Local/Team level

Each directorate will have a people operations plan which integrates EDI and will be responsible for ensuring that EDI is incorporated into local / team plans. Each directorate will put in place mechanisms for delivering on EDI, prioritising actions and measuring impact.

EDI Networks

There are four EDI National networks (Race Equality, Disability, LGBT+ and Women's). For more information see **Equality, diversity and inclusion networks**.

6. Procedure

In the implementation of this policy, we will:

- require colleagues and volunteers to follow and apply our **Equality, diversity and inclusion: Code of Conduct (the Code)** which is a guide to the standards of behaviour we expect whilst working or volunteering for Barnardo's, including challenging any behaviour and speaking up against any behaviour that conflicts with the Code (see our **Resolution Policy**) or Volunteer procedure). Concerns about organisational wrongdoing or malpractice which are in the public interest should be submitted through Barnardo's Whistle-blowing helpline (see **Whistleblowing policy**).
- take breaches of this policy and the **Equality, diversity and inclusion: Code of Conduct** very seriously. For colleagues, potential breaches will be investigated under our colleague **Resolution Policy** and if a breach is found, we will deal with the matter as potential gross misconduct, which may result in employment or engagement with Barnardo's ending without notice. For volunteers, the matter will be investigated under the managing conduct procedure for volunteers. Breaching this policy could result in the volunteering agreement ending and being asked to leave their volunteer position.
- ensure that selection for employment (including promotion) or volunteering will be made on basis of merit and ability only, free from bias and discrimination.
- ensure our employment or volunteering policies and processes are not discriminatory and are not applied in an indirectly discriminatory way, including but not limited to:
 - Recruitment, selection and induction;
 - Terms and conditions of employment for colleagues/volunteering agreement for volunteers;
 - Working/volunteering environment;
 - Colleague resolution of issues and concerns including conduct concerns
 - Managing volunteer concerns and issues; including conduct concerns
- Colleague requests for flexible working;
- Time off for being a parent or carer;
- Reward and recognition for colleagues/recognising volunteers;
- Learning and development;
- Promotion and career progression for colleagues;
- Redundancy and re-deployment for colleagues.
- ensure that agency workers, external consultants/contractors and secondees receive our **Welcome Pack** before they start work which includes agreement to following our EDI Code of Conduct whilst being engaged by Barnardo's (visit **Contingent worker recruitment** for all resources). A breach of the Code may result in engagement ending.
- collect and monitor diversity data for colleagues and volunteers in line with our statutory duties and EDI objectives.
- evidence our impact of all our policies, processes and service delivery by carrying our Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) and taking action where there is a potential adverse impact.
- train our colleagues in EDI, including completing mandatory training as part of induction and refresher training every three years thereafter (See **Mandatory training for EDI**)
- train our volunteers in EDI, including completing mandatory EDI induction before they actively start volunteering with us.

7. Associated Legislation, Guidance, References and Documents

Code of Conduct:

- EDI Code of Conduct for colleagues and volunteers

Legislation:

- Equality legislation (see [Equality Act 2010](#), [The Equality Act 2010 \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023 – GOV.UK](#) and in Northern Ireland [ECNI – The Law, Equality Legislation, Equality Commission, NI](#) and Discrimination (Jersey) Law 2013.
- Gender Recognition Act (see [Gender Recognition Act 2004](#))

Guidance:

- Accessibility Passport
- Bullying and harassment toolkit for managers
- Equality Impact Assessment (including template)
- Guidance for supporting disabled colleagues
- Guidance for supporting trans colleagues

Our charity:

- Colleague Handbook
- EDI Action Plan
- EDI Networks
- EDI Training
- Our Anti racism Commitments
- Our Behaviours
- Our Basis and Values
- Our Strategy 2024-2027

Policies:

- Additional leave (paid and unpaid) Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Menopause Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Recruitment of ex-offenders Policy
- Resolution Policy
- Time off for dependents Policy
- Volunteering Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy



All available on Inside Barnardo's unless otherwise stated

8. Compliance and Oversight

In addition to the compliance and oversight arrangements set out under Roles and Responsibilities, the following applies:

- The Risk Owner will ensure that management information demonstrating adherence to and compliance with this Policy is produced and provided to relevant parties as required and on request complete a business self-assessment.
- The Audit and Assurance team will periodically and independently review adherence to and compliance with this Policy and associated procedures and processes across the charity in line with their approved Internal Audit, Inspection and Independent Safeguarding plan.
- As part of individual reviews, the Audit EDI evaluation tool will be used.

9. Document History

Version	Date	Author	Comments	Approval
1	Nov 2013	Policy & Advice Team		
2	March 2015	Policy & Advice Team		
3	June 2015	Policy & Advice Team	New format	Revised
4	2019	EDI Team		Revised
5	2023	EDI Team	Minor changes to wording	Revised
6	1 April 2024	EDI Team and People Strategy & Projects Team through the charity's policy co-production process	Existing policy updated and transferred to new policy template; no significant changes made	

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