



Tree of Hope

*Transforming the health of
sick and disabled children*

Registered Charity in England and Wales No: 1149254
Registered Charity in Scotland No: SCO42611

TREE OF HOPE EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

August 2021

1. AIM

1.1 Tree of Hope aims to encourage, value and manage diversity and recognises that talent and potential are distributed across the population. Not only are there moral and social reasons for promoting equality of opportunity, it is in the best interests of Tree of Hope to recruit and develop the best people for their jobs from as wide and diverse a pool of talent as possible. It is also at the heart of Tree of Hope's charitable objective to promote and deliver equality of access to our services for disabled and other vulnerable children and young people within the community.

2. POLICY

2.1 Tree of Hope recognises that many people in our society experience discrimination. Discrimination is acting unfairly against a group or individual through, for example, exclusion; verbal comment; denigration; harassment; victimisation; a failure to appreciate needs or the assumption of such needs without consultation.

Discrimination can be direct or indirect (where there is a condition, rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010, (see appendix 1) and cannot be justified).

2.2 All forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not. Employees and volunteers have a duty to co-operate with Tree of Hope to ensure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination. Employees should draw the attention of their line manager or the CEO to suspected discriminatory acts against staff, volunteers or those we support, or practices or cases of bullying or harassment.

Tree of Hope Patrons | Ross Wilson, Paralympian | Claire Cashmore, Paralympian | Jane Beedle, Finalist of GBBO | www.treeofhope.org.uk

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Company No 8184807 Charity No 1149254 & SCO42611

Registered Office is at 61/63 Camden Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2QE





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STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 3.1 Tree of Hope aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential.
- 3.2 We aim to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals or groups from realising their potential, accessing our services and contributing fully to our organisation's performance. We will maintain an organisational culture that positively values diversity.
- 3.3 We are committed, wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce that broadly reflects the local community in which we operate.
- 3.4 Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated fairly in all aspects of their employment, engagement or whilst volunteering at Tree of Hope.
- 3.5 Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society. Selection for employment or promotion, or any other benefit, will be on the basis of merit and ability only. Selection for training will be on the basis of job requirement only. We aim to provide equality and fairness for all job applicants or employees whether part-time, full-time, fixed term or temporary.
- 3.6 Tree of Hope aims to ensure that no job applicant or worker receives less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).
- 3.7 Intimidation, harassment and bullying will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action. Details of how harassment and bullying will be tackled are covered in Tree of Hope's staff handbook for employees.
- 3.8 We will actively foster collaborative relationships with organisations and individuals that share the same values and EDI principles as Tree of Hope.

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4 IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Each employee, volunteer, and Board of Trustees member is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. This policy will form part of the induction pack for new starters, volunteers and Trustees.
- 4.2 Breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action against employees, appropriate action against a member of the Board of Trustees, or withdrawal of volunteer agreements.
- 4.3 Employees who feel they have been discriminated against should raise the matter with their line manager or the CEO.
- 4.4 Initially the employee and manager should aim to resolve the matter informally. It may be that discriminatory action is unwitting and easily resolved once the problem is clear.
- 4.5 Appropriate training and guidance will be provided to develop equality and diversity.
- 4.6 We will monitor the make-up of our workforce and those we support in the areas of age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief and disability and review how our equality policy and any action plans are working in practice.
- 4.7 The policy will be widely promoted, and copies will be freely available and displayed in Tree of Hope premises.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The CEO is responsible for managing this policy and overseeing its implementation.
- 5.2 Managers are responsible for implementing the policy within their areas of work, and for overseeing adherence by staff and volunteers.

6. POLICY REVIEW

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary in line with any legislative changes.

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Appendix 1

Explanation of Protected Characteristics – advice and guidance from the Equality & Human Rights Commission

Age

A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).

See our advice and guidance on [age discrimination](#).

Disability

A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

See our [disability advice and guidance](#) section.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one sex to another.

See our advice and guidance on [gender reassignment discrimination](#).

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple.

Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

See our advice and guidance on [marriage and civil partnership discrimination](#).

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Find out more about our work on [pregnancy and maternity in the workplace](#).

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

See our advice and guidance on [race discrimination](#).

Religion and belief

Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

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See our guidance on [religion or belief at work](#).

Sex

A man or a woman.

See our [guidance on sex discrimination](#).

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

See our advice and guidance on [sexual orientation discrimination](#).

Equality Act

Find out more about the [Equality Act 2010](#), which provides the legal framework to tackle disadvantage and discrimination.

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