ST ANNE'S COMMUNITY SERVICES

POLICY

1.11 Equality & Inclusion Policy

Policy Category	**Category 1 – ELT & Trustees** **Category 2 – All staff**
Policy/Procedure Cross Ref	**N/A**
Summary of Policy Changes	**V9.0** – **February 2023** – Updated reference to ED&I officer as co-ordination of events will be through various teams. **V9.1** – **January 2024** – Updated template **V9.2** – Template update, removal of reference to EDI Officer, inclusion of SMT, update to Team names and systems
Policy Owner	**Director of People**
Approval	**ELT March 2026**
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Expiry Date	**February 2029**

1.0 Policy Summary

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Equality and Inclusion are woven throughout all that we do at St Anne's and are a core part of how we work together for our staff and the people we support every day.

St Anne's Community Services is not affiliated or partnered to any religious group or organisation and is not a faith-based organisation.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff, volunteers and clients are treated fairly. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 St Anne's will not discriminate against staff or clients on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics. These are; Age, Disability (including long-term health conditions and mental ill-health), Gender Reassignment (people who are trans), Marital Status (including civil partnerships and same sex marriage), Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex or Sexual Orientation.

In addition, St Anne's will not discriminate on the grounds of the following;

- Being a Romany Gypsy, Scottish, Irish or Roma Traveller
- Being a Carer
- Intersex and non-binary gender identities
- Health conditions
- Previous substance misuse
- Experience of working in the sex industry
- Trade Union activity
- Neurodiversity

For the full details of this policy, please read the entire document, not just the summary.

2.0 Scope

St Anne's commitment to equality and inclusion is guided by the following objectives;

- To create and sustain inclusive environments in which the diversity of our staff and the people we support is recognised and valued.

- To establish and maintain a zero-tolerance approach to intimidation, bullying and harassment of any kind, with clear reporting pathways and procedures to deal with such incidents.

- To adopt Equality Impact Assessments so that our practices and procedures are tested for fairness and adverse consequence for minority groups.

- To provide training, development and progression opportunities that encourage our staff to participate in and contribute to our success.

- To raise awareness of diversity across the organisation and promote inclusive practice whilst eliminating processes, attitudes and behaviours that amount to discrimination which arise from prejudice, misconceptions and stereotyping.

This policy applies to all St Anne's employees, volunteers, and members of board.

3.0 Main Policy Content

Board Responsibilities

St Anne's is committed to having a Board whose members are representative of the communities we serve and who contribute actively to our Equality and Inclusion agenda. The Board is responsible for ensuring that St Anne's commitment to Equality and Inclusion is evident across the organisation and that services are delivered in compliance with the law.

ELT and SMT Responsibilities

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and SMT (Senior Management Team) are responsible for ensuring that the Equality and Inclusion strategy is devised and maintained, with input from the relevant committee groups and networks.

Manager Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for ensuring that any problematic behaviour that could jeopardise or undermine inclusion in any way is investigated and prevented from recurring, in accordance with St Anne's Dignity at Work Policy. Managers must challenge any behaviours of concern using a zero-tolerance approach by identifying and challenging them promptly. If Managers see or hear unacceptable behaviour and do nothing about it, they are condoning the behaviour and allowing an exclusionary and discriminative culture to develop.

Managers must lead by example in support of Equality and Inclusion across the organisation and encourage their team to take matters of diversity and fairness seriously so that St Anne's can create and sustain inclusive environments that are compliant with the law. All Managers should be able to identify and describe the nine protected characteristics and understand their duties of care toward staff, clients and the wider community.

Managers are responsible for ensuring their staff complete Equality and Diversity training in accordance with the Workforce Development Policy, with adequate opportunity for discussion and reflection during supervision, team meetings and service/departmental activities.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to uphold a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and be able to identify and challenge any behaviour that contravenes this.

Staff should attempt to identify and challenge behaviour that is exclusionary or

discriminatory. If this is not possible, staff should record their concerns and discuss them with their Line Manager.
All staff are expected to have a good understanding of Equality and Inclusion and be able to demonstrate this in their work. Staff will be supported and encouraged to access resources which help them to develop their understanding of a range of topics that relate to Equality and Diversity in order to create and sustain an inclusive service environment for colleagues and clients.

People Partnering Team Responsibilities

The People Partnering Team is responsible for supporting the organisation's commitment to Equality & Inclusion by collaborating with managers and project leads when Equality Impact Assessments are required, ensuring proposed changes to services, policies or procedures are reviewed for fairness and alignment with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Their involvement helps embed inclusive practice across the organisation and ensures that decisions consider the diverse needs of staff and clients.

They will also provide guidance and advice to Managers on the appropriate steps to take when staff fall short of their responsibilities under the policy.

Inclusive Culture

St Anne's will strive to create and sustain an organisational culture that is confident with difference. This means that our staff and the people we support are recognised as individuals and valued for the unique contribution that they bring.

Staff and clients are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect and supported in a way that is culturally informed. It is important that people feel they can 'be themselves' in our services and in the workplace, without fear of discrimination, judgemental attitudes, exclusion or prejudice.

Raising Awareness and Fostering Inclusion

St Anne's will adopt a robust and proactive programme of internal campaign activities throughout the year that promote Equality and Diversity to ensure that our staff and the people we support remain committed to inclusion. This will be complemented by the Learning and Development offer to all staff, which includes mandatory Equality and Diversity training, with additional awareness raising activities being coordinated by collaboration across Teams.

Internal resources will raise awareness and encourage understanding of diversity and the specific experiences of underrepresented groups in society. This includes but is not limited to topics such as; disability and mental ill health, menopause, sexism, racism, Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans (LGBT) identities, health inequalities, HIV/AIDs, neurodiversity, ageism and religion and belief.

Every St Anne's service will have access to an Annual Diversity Calendar to promote campaigns for inclusion and dates of cultural and religious significance throughout the year within their department or Service.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Everybody is responsible for ensuring that unacceptable language, assumptions and behaviour are challenged, regardless of whether it is a staff member or a client who is behaving unacceptably. When this persists, it is the responsibility of a manager to ensure that action is taken in accordance with the Dignity at Work Policy. Definitions under Person Centered Values are outlined in Appendix A and Unacceptable Behaviour in Appendix B.

Staff have a duty to implement the principles of Positive Behaviour Support whilst working with clients who may need extra encouragement and guidance to understand what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is.

St Anne's takes any allegation of discrimination, prejudice or harassment extremely seriously and will ensure it is addressed promptly and appropriately

Equality Monitoring Data

St Anne's will collect and analyse equality monitoring data from existing and prospective staff (job applicants) to ensure that we are recruiting from the widest possible variety of backgrounds and that our workforce is reflective of the communities we serve.

St Anne's will collect and analyse equality monitoring data from clients to measure the inclusivity of the services that we provide.

Job applicants will not be discriminated against because of the Protected Characteristics that they have or are perceived to have at any stage during the recruitment process, in accordance with the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Monitoring Reports will be submitted to the Board throughout the financial year, using anonymised data.

Discrimination of staff by clients and or against clients will be recorded on Nourish.

Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments must be undertaken as part of the consultation process when changes are proposed to St Anne's services, policies or procedures that have the potential to affect clients and/or staff, in accordance with the Policy and Procedure Process.

The Manager/Project Team proposing the changes should liaise with the People Partnering Team to complete the Equality Impact Assessment as appropriate, giving due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Pensions and Other Staff Benefits

St Anne's will not discriminate in the provision of pensions or any other benefit, facility or service that it provides or administers, on the basis of the Protected Characteristics

or additional grounds as stated in this Policy.

4.0 Effects

The implementation of the Equality & Inclusion Policy is expected to have the following positive impacts across St Anne's Community Services:

- **A more inclusive organisational culture**, where all staff, volunteers and clients feel valued, respected, and able to be themselves without fear of discrimination or prejudice.
- **Increased confidence and competence among managers and staff** in identifying, challenging and addressing discriminatory or exclusionary behaviour, contributing to a zero-tolerance culture.
- **Greater fairness and consistency in decision-making**, supported through the use of Equality Impact Assessments that help prevent adverse consequences for marginalised or oppressed groups.
- **Improved staff engagement, wellbeing and retention**, as employees experience a workplace that actively promotes dignity, respect and equitable opportunities for development and progression.
- **Enhanced quality of services for clients**, supported by culturally informed practice and improved understanding of the diverse experiences and needs of the people we support.
- **More representative recruitment and progression outcomes**, driven by robust equality monitoring and data analysis that informs organisational priorities and helps ensure our workforce reflects the communities we serve.
- **Increased awareness and understanding of diversity**, strengthened through campaigns, training, learning resources and visibility of inclusion initiatives throughout the year.
- **Clearer accountability across governance and leadership**, ensuring the Board, ELT, SMT, Managers and staff each play an active role in embedding equality and inclusion across all services and activities.

5.0 Appendices

5.1 Appendix A: Person Centered

Values Individuality:

An individual should reasonably expect that their needs and wishes will be respected and
responded to willingly, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or
belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage & civil partnership or pregnancy & maternity.

Independence:

All individuals need to have opportunities to act and think without having to ask another

person.

Rights:

All individuals have a right to choose, a right to have a say in what they want and to be involved in their own lives. Individuals must be involved in their care and have the right to complain if unsatisfied.

Respect:
You should let individuals know that you are supporting them and that they are important, whatever their differences are. Always ask permission to help and do not just assume a person cannot do certain things.

Dignity:

Dignity focuses on the value of every person as an individual. It means respecting other's views, choices and decisions and working with care and compassion, not making assumptions about how people want to be treated.

Privacy:

Privacy is about the right of the individual to privacy. You need to respect and protect their right to confidentiality always. If supporting people with personal care carefully consider how to maintain their privacy.

Partnership:

Work in partnership with an individual, their families, carers, other care agencies and other professionals to ensure the right care is received and that the wishes of the individual are paramount.

Choice:

Those in your care should have the opportunity to choose from a wide range of options and be involved in service planning and development.

5.2 Appendix B: Definitions of Unacceptable Behaviour

Direct discrimination:

When someone is treated less favorably directly because of a protected characteristic they possess – this is **direct discrimination**; and/or a protected characteristic of someone they are associated with, such as a friend, family member or colleague – this is **direct discrimination by association**; and/or a protected characteristic they are thought to have, regardless of whether this perception by others is actually correct or not – this is **direct discrimination by perception.**

Indirect discrimination

Putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.

Harassment

'Unwanted conduct' linked to a protected characteristic, or of a sexual nature, that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.

Victimisation

Treating someone unfairly because they've complained or supported a complaint about discrimination or harassment.