



Dacorum Education
Support Centre

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy (EDI)

DESC values the mental health and wellbeing of every member of its community.

Our policies reflect the core values of respect and support for each other in every aspect of life. Our aim is that all in our community, through working together, to feel safe and secure in an environment, which enables and equips every individual to thrive and be respectful of each other's strengths and differences.

March 2023

Overview

Introduction

Diversity is a fact, Equality is a choice, Inclusion is an action, Belonging is an outcome

- In order to achieve equality for all, consideration will need to be given to equity (giving people what they need in order to access a task or location in the same way as others). Equality and equity may be inherently different but are also bound together. In order to create true equality of opportunity, equity is needed to ensure that everyone has the same chance of getting there.

Rationale

DESC is committed to offering equality of opportunity to all stakeholders. Everyone at DESC has the opportunity to:

- be respected and show respect to others
- take part in the life of the centre
- be the best they can be
- develop essential life skills

This policy aims to ensure that unlawful discrimination (direct or indirect) is avoided and that no-one should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (The Equality Act, 2010) or trade union or professional association membership (Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992).

In our Centre the following groups may be more likely to experience discrimination:

- people from different ethnic and racial backgrounds
- travellers, asylum seekers and refugees
- those from different faith or religious backgrounds and those of no faith
- those who are transgender, gender-questioning or gender-fluid
- those who are gay or bisexual – LGBTQ+
- people with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) of any kind
- Children Looked After (CLA), adopted children, or those who have previously been in the care system
- young carers

Aims

DESC aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not

DESC will oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Roles and Responsibilities

Management Committee

- Review the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Policy in line with the scheduled cycle
- Ensure accountability procedures are followed in relation to this policy
- Ensure that statutory duties in this area are met
- Be role models and highlight good practice
- Celebrate good practice around equality and diversity at DESC
- Ensure any incidents of discrimination are dealt with consistently

SLT

- Oversee the development and review of the EDI Policy and procedures
- Promote knowledge of the Equality Objectives and EDI Policy to staff, learners and stakeholders and report back to the Management Committee
- Ensure any incidents of discrimination are dealt with consistently
- Ensure that the Centre carries out its statutory duties effectively

EDI Lead

- Offer support and guidance in the application of the policy
- Support the Headteacher to promote the knowledge and understanding of the EDI Policy and Equality Objectives among staff, learners and stakeholders
- Identify any training needs and organise and/or deliver training as necessary
- Maintain knowledge in this area and keep up to date with developments and legislation

EDI Focus group

- Consult staff, learners and stakeholders in the development and review of the policy
- Cascade information to the staff group

- Be a point of contact for queries or suggestions in this policy area
- Signpost staff to relevant information or guidance

All staff

- Contribute to consultations and reviews
- Raise issues with the EDI Focus group or line managers which could enhance the policy and its development
- Maintain an awareness of DESC's current policy and procedures and ensure they are implemented
- Be consistent in responses to discriminatory incidents
- Behave with respect and fairness towards staff, learners and stakeholders

Training

Opportunities for training, development and progress are available to all staff. They will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation. Please also refer to CPDL Policy.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the EDI Policy. Responsibilities include staff appropriately representing the organisation and working to prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

Recruitment

To ensure a fair recruitment process and minimise the impact of unconscious bias, recruiters must be sure to compare application forms and candidates against the job specifications. All identifying data related to protected characteristics will be removed from applications. By taking steps to mitigate this unconscious bias, employers will be ensuring all candidates have equal opportunities.

Employment practices and procedures will be reviewed when necessary to ensure fairness and update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Curriculum

To foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not, DESC will:

- Promote tolerance, friendship and understanding of the protected characteristics through various aspects of our curriculum. This is most likely to occur in the following lessons: POD, Hub, Current Affairs, Nurture Time, English, History but also in other areas and during enrichment days/ weeks/ months
- Regularly update staff on curriculum developments related to equality and diversity

- Through visits from organisations involved in the local community – magistrates visits, police
- Challenge discriminatory attitudes with a zero-tolerance approach and education interventions

Disciplinary Considerations

DESC will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others during the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, learners, other stakeholders and the public.

Use of the organisation's disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Linked Policies

Disciplinary Policy
Complaints Policy
Whistleblowing

Legislation

- [Equality Act \(2010\)](#)
- [Trade Union and Labour Relations \(Consolidation\) Act 1992](#)
- [Protection from Harassment Act \(1997\)](#)