



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

TalkFIRST are committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to contribute.

To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all employees, trustees, volunteers, job applicants, customers and members of the public in every aspect of their employment in compliance with the Equality Act 2010. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, including but not limited to, discrimination due to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

All employees, trustees, volunteers, whether part-time, full-time, voluntary or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees, trustees, volunteers will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Our commitment:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contribution from all team members is recognised and valued.
- All employees, trustees, volunteers, job applicants, customers and members of the public will be treated fairly, openly and honestly, with dignity and respect.
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures on an annual basis to ensure fairness.
- Employment decisions on recruitment and promotion will be based solely on merit.
- We will ensure that everyone is given fair access to the facilities we have in work.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings including dismissal.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with employee representatives.

- The policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed annually.

Recruitment and Selection

We ensure we always recruit and select staff members in an open, fair and transparent manner. We commit to the following:

Job Advertisements

- These state that we welcome applications from all sections of the community.
- Our job descriptions are concise and straightforward and include: the title of the job, the aim of the job, the main tasks and who the employee will work with.

Shortlisting Candidates for Interview

- When assessing which candidates should get to the next stage of the recruitment process, we ensure that we always do so based on objective criteria.

Interview

- We are flexible about the date and time of an interview to make sure that a candidate's protected characteristic does not hinder them from attending.
- We make any arrangements necessary for interviewees with special requirements.
- We ensure that we do not ask the candidate any questions about their health, disability or personal circumstances and keep our questions focussed on their skill, experience and qualifications.

Selection of Candidate

- We select the new employees, trustees, volunteers purely based on merit and do not discriminate against any candidate.

Whilst TalkFIRST recognises that the overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy lies with the Management, all employees, trustees, volunteers, whatever their position within the Company, have some measure of responsibility for ensuring its effective implementation in their day to day activities and working relationships with colleagues.

Promotion, Training & Development

We ensure we always promote, train and develop staff members in an open, fair and transparent manner. We commit to the following:

Promotion

- All new positions will be advertised as detailed above.
- Promotion opportunities are advertised to all staff.
- The same questions will be asked to both internal and external candidates to ensure equality in the interview process.
- Promotion decisions will be based solely on merit.

Training and Development

- All staff have the same access to training opportunities regardless of whether they are part-time or full-time.
- We are flexible about our training times and locations to ensure that no one is excluded.
- All employees, trustees, volunteers will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential.
- More details about training are contained within our training policy.

Grievance

- Any worker who believes he or she is being discriminated against, victimised or harassed should raise the matter through the TalkFIRST complaints procedure.
- No form of intimidation, victimisation, discrimination, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

Conclusion

TalkFIRST are completely committed to ensuring all aspects of recruitment, training, promotion, along with normal company activities, comply with Equality legislation. We recognise the benefits of encompassing diversity and ensure we do this throughout the company.

Name: Tracy Sheppard
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Next review date: November 2021