



Equality and Diversity Policy

February 2020

This document is relevant to:	
Staff	✓
Volunteers	✓
Trustees	✓

Policy Owner	Chair of Trustees
Date first adopted by Trustees	February 2020
Date this version approved	February 2020
Date for next review	January 2022

Change History

Version	Date	Author	Reason

Reviewers

Name	Position
Paul Curd	Chair of Trustees
Bernie Mayall	CEO

Consult the South Kent Mind website for the latest version of this policy.



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Policy Statement

South Kent Mind wholeheartedly supports the principle of equality and diversity in employment and in access to our services. We aim to encourage, value and manage diversity in all we do.

Policy

South Kent Mind 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 and cannot be justified).

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not. Employees and volunteers have a duty to co-operate with South Kent Mind to ensure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination. If you believe that you may have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, you should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with your line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority.

Employees should draw the attention of their line manager to suspected discriminatory acts or practices or cases of bullying or harassment.

Statement of Intent

South Kent Mind 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.

The pursuit of this policy is aimed at encouraging the employment of a diverse and multi-talented workforce, and sets out our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and

eliminating discrimination from the membership, management and activities and of the organisation.

In particular it prevents discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of:

- Sexual orientation
- Marital status.
- Pregnancy or maternity.
- Race, ethnic or national origin.
- Religion or belief.
- Disability.
- Age.
- Gender identity/reassignment.

We aim to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals or groups from realising their potential and contributing fully to our organisation's performance and to develop an organisational culture that positively values diversity.

All employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development and progression opportunities within South Kent MIND. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

We are committed, wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce that broadly reflects the local community in which we operate.

Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated fairly in all aspects of their employment, engagement or whilst volunteering at South Kent Mind.

We will foster positive action in the following areas:

- Access to services
- Involving people who use our services
- Service delivery
- Cultural awareness
- Recruitment of staff and volunteers
- Training and supervision
- Publicity and communication
- Partnerships
- Governance
- Monitoring and review

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive is responsible for managing this policy and overseeing its implementation through operational guidelines. Senior Managers are responsible for implementing the policy and guidelines within their areas of work, and for overseeing adherence by staff and volunteers. Every member of staff and every volunteer should take personal responsibility for conforming to the policy and guidelines.

Associated Policies and Procedures

- Equality and Diversity Guidelines
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Grievance Procedure