



Equality & Diversity Policy

Approved by:	Lisa-Jane Colyer
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Introduction

Coggeshall Road Therapeutic Provision is committed to promoting equality and diversity in all its activities, providing an inclusive environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. We believe that a diverse and inclusive environment enriches the educational experience and therapeutic outcomes for all individuals. This policy outlines our commitment to equality and diversity, the legal framework we adhere to, and the practical steps we take to ensure these principles are embedded in our provision.

Coggeshall Road Therapeutic Provision does not discriminate against, harass or victimise a young person attending our provision or a potential attendee:

- in relation to admissions
- in the way it provides education for young people
- in the way it provides young people access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- by excluding a young person or subjecting them to any other detriment.

In this we include all those connected to Coggeshall Road Therapeutic Provision: young people, staff, stakeholders, parents and others from our local community. Partners, contractors and other visitors to Coggeshall Road Therapeutic Provision are also expected to adhere to this policy.

Legal Framework

This policy is guided by UK legislation, including but not limited to:

- **Equality Act 2010:** Provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.
- **Human Rights Act 1998:** Incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law, ensuring fundamental rights and freedoms.
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001:** Strengthens the rights of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities to be educated in mainstream schools.
- **Children and Families Act 2014:** Focuses on improving services for vulnerable children and families, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) 2011:** Requires public bodies to consider how their policies and decisions can help reduce inequalities in the workplace and in society.

Our Commitment

1. Non-Discrimination

Coggeshall Road Therapeutic Provision is committed to preventing and eliminating discrimination, harassment, and victimisation in any form. We do not tolerate discrimination based on race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children

or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, living situation, or spent convictions.

2. Equal Opportunities

We strive to provide equal opportunities for all individuals, ensuring that everyone has access to our services and can participate fully in our educational and therapeutic programs. We make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities and other specific needs.

3. Diversity and Inclusion

We celebrate and value the diversity of our community. Our policies and practices reflect our commitment to creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected. We recognise and appreciate the unique contributions of each individual and the importance of diverse perspectives.

Implementation

1. Leadership and Governance

- Our leadership team is responsible for promoting and monitoring equality and diversity across the provision.
- Equality and diversity considerations are integrated into our strategic planning and decision-making processes.

2. Training and Development

- All staff receive regular training on equality and diversity to ensure they understand their responsibilities and are equipped to support an inclusive environment.
- We provide ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance staff understanding and skills related to equality and diversity.

3. Curriculum and Programs

- Our curriculum and therapeutic programs are designed to be inclusive and to reflect the diverse backgrounds and experiences of our community.
- We regularly review and update our materials and resources to ensure they are free from bias and promote equality.

4. Accessibility

- We are committed to making our facilities accessible to all individuals. This includes physical accessibility as well as access to information and services.
- Reasonable adjustments are made to support the participation of individuals with disabilities and other specific needs.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- We regularly monitor and evaluate our policies and practices to ensure they are effective in promoting equality and diversity.
- Feedback from students, parents, staff, and other stakeholders is actively sought and used to inform improvements.

6. Reporting and Addressing Concerns

- We have clear procedures in place for reporting and addressing concerns related to equality and diversity. These procedures are accessible to all members of our community.
- Concerns are taken seriously and handled promptly and sensitively. Appropriate action is taken to address any issues and prevent recurrence.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective. Amendments are made as necessary in response to legislative changes, feedback, and best practices.

Definitions

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people. This describes the most clear-cut and obvious examples of discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a “provision, criterion or practice” is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic. It is a defence against a claim of indirect discrimination if it can be shown to be “a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim”. This means both that the reason for the rule or practice is legitimate, and that it could not reasonably be achieved in a different way which did not discriminate.

Harassment is “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”. This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends also to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic.

Definition of parents A parent is a wide reference (as in education law generally) not only to a pupil's birth parents but to adoptive, step and foster parents, or other persons who have parental responsibility for, or who have care of, a pupil.

Race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. Religion is any religion, and "belief" as any religious or philosophical belief. A lack of religion or a lack of belief is also protected characteristics.

Disability is when a person 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.' Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.