



Mental Health Arts Project

Registered Charity 1160300

The Lodge, Hall Place, Bourne Road, Bexley, Kent DA5 1PQ
Tel 01322 554589 or 07476 339718 Email info@centrepieces.org

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Our aim

1.1 In carrying out our functions as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Centrepieces is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all, and to ensuring that no individual is discriminated against in the planning and delivery of any of our activities.

1.2 We therefore aim to ensure that the values of equality, diversity, and respect for all are embedded into everything that we do.

2. About our policy

2.1 This policy is intended to demonstrate Centrepieces' commitment to eliminating discrimination and encouraging and valuing diversity among users of our service, volunteers, trustees, partners and staff.

2.2 We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, and are committed to meeting them in full. We believe that a culture that embraces equality and values diversity will help us to ensure that everyone feels involved and included in our plans, programmes and activities.

2.3 We aim to create an environment which respects and welcomes everyone, and in which no form of bullying, harassment, disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour is tolerated by anyone towards anyone. This particularly applies in relation to the 'protected characteristics' named in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, income, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

3. Our responsibilities

3.1 Centrepieces understands that for equality to be achieved, this policy needs to be made understandable to, and embraced by service users, staff, volunteers, trustees and partners.

3.2 The policy is fully supported and welcomed by all staff and volunteers and has been agreed by our Board of Trustees.

3.3 All service users, staff, volunteers, trustees and partners have a responsibility to ensure that their own language and actions are consistent with the spirit as well as the contents of this policy.

3.4 Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with Centrepieces' Co-ordinator and its Trustees.

4. Our commitments

4.1 Centrepieces recognises that an Equality and Diversity Policy alone is not enough to ensure that equality and diversity are central to everything that we do.

4.2 We will seek to create an environment in which diversity and the contributions of all service users, staff, volunteers, trustees and partners are recognised and valued in all that we do. In this way we hope to provide an example of good equality practice to everyone connected with the charity.

4.3 In introducing this policy, we recognise that many people are unfamiliar with the ways in which discrimination and disadvantage affect people's health, well-being and quality of life. We will therefore support people to develop equalities awareness and understanding.

4.4 To ensure that we are meeting the aims and the spirit of this policy we will:

- a) Discuss and review how well we are implementing this policy, and adjust our practices where necessary
- b) Assess any significant new or revised policies and procedures for their impact on equality
- c) Embed equality and diversity into our development plans
- d) Ensure our employment practices and procedures are consistent with the aims of this policy, when applicable

5. Working with contractors, suppliers and partners

It is important to us that suppliers, contractors and any other individual or organisation working on behalf of Centrepieces are aware of and agree to comply with our equality and diversity policy while that work is underway. In addition we are committed to:

- using accessible venues for events and meetings;
- using plain English, and offering accessible communications, for example, emails, letters, reports and publicity materials as far as it is within our means to do so.

6. Review and Action

6.1 We encourage staff, volunteers, trustees, service users and partners who have been subjected to or witnessed discriminatory behaviour, harassment or bullying to report it to the Project Co-ordinator or other appropriate person, who will follow our complaints procedure in investigating and dealing with the matter.

6.2 We recognise that it is important for us to review this policy regularly to ensure that it reflects up to date equality legislation and best practice.

6.3 A review of our Equality and Diversity Policy will be carried out on an annual basis as a minimum, and any necessary actions taken.

Date of policy: 31/10/16

To be reviewed: October 2017