

Policy for

Equal Opportunities

Policy Statement

As a Christian Charity, Bods has a firm belief that we are equal before God. Therefore, Bods is committed to providing equal opportunities for young people and employees, regardless of race, skin colour, religious or cultural beliefs or because of their nationality, ethnic or national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, age, HIV status, disability or health. We seek to create an organisational culture where each individual is valued and given the opportunity to develop to their full potential.

Relationship to other documents

Procedures: Behaviour: Expectations of Visitors & Staff

Risk Assessments:

Guidelines: Employment, Service Users, Premises, Contractors, Agency Services, Participation, Trustees, Confidentiality, Monitoring (all att.)

Legal: Framework attached

Policy signed _____ date _____

Policy for review on _____ date _____

Employment

Bods aspires to a diverse workforce which has the skills and understanding to achieve our goals by the provision of a quality service, responsive to individual and community needs. Bods are committed to ensuring that all staff and workers are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination. As an employer, we strive to ensure that all employees treat each other with dignity and respect.

Bods seeks to recruit staff and workers with appropriate skills or potential to meet the requirements of the relevant post. It is the intention of Bods for its recruitment, selection and employment practices to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Where practicable, services will be widely advertised and applications from all sections of the community will be encouraged. Bods will not deny an interview to anyone registered as disabled who meets the basic criteria for the job, and will endeavour to provide special facilities at the interviews to cater for the applicant's disability.

To achieve Bods aims, we will provide full and fair consideration to all job applications. We require all our employees to undergo relevant training before taking part in recruitment and selection.

Provided that the interests of Bods are best served, job share arrangements and other flexible working arrangements which will enable those with appropriate skills to take up employment, will be considered.

Job applications should be monitored by gender, ethnic origin and disability and Bods procedures should be reviewed in light of those results. This information will be reported to the Trustees on request.

It is Bods intention to ensure that, wherever practicable, all existing and future premises are adapted or designed with a view to meeting the needs of disabled people in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Bods will provide sufficient training and support to meet all employees' needs in recognising and discharging their work responsibilities. It will also assist all employees to help realise their full potential by ensuring that they receive fair consideration of their training and career development needs and promotion opportunities.

Service Users

Bods will actively encourage access to our services to ensure all sections of the community can fully participate. Bods endeavours to ensure that applications are treated both fairly and consistently. In publicising the availability of services, Bods will ensure that information is available to disadvantaged and minority groups within the community. This will be supported by the building of links with agencies who work with ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups.

Our aim is for all customer information leaflets to be offered on audio tape for visually impaired as well as containing a paragraph in a variety of minority ethnic languages offering information in translation on request. Applications and service should be monitored by ethnic origin and procedures regularly reviewed in light of the results. The results of this monitoring will be reported appropriately to the Trustees.

A reflection of the local demographic should be present amongst the diversity of Bods staff and workers.

Premises

Bods infrastructure development has regard to the needs of persons with physical disabilities and special needs. Bods will endeavour to undertake or to facilitate any adaptation or alteration to the premises which are required to enable continued use by service users whose circumstances change. Necessary finances will be made available for this purpose. Bods will endeavour to continually monitor service user satisfaction in relation to the provision and design of new infrastructure components through informal consultation.

Contractors, Consultants and Suppliers

Bods will ensure that all contractors, consultants and main suppliers are aware of its equal opportunity policy and will encourage them to have similar objectives.

All contractors, consultants and main suppliers will be asked to provide Bods with a summary of its equal opportunities policy or alternatively to subscribe to Bods own Equal Opportunities Policy.

Bods will expect anyone working on its behalf to behave towards customers and staff in a way that reflects Bods policies. Bods will terminate forthwith any contract where there are proven incidents of discrimination to any residents or employees of Bods.

Bods will continue to encourage contractors from minority groups to be used fairly.

Agency Services

Bods will ensure that all external partners providing services are aware of this equal opportunities policy and will encourage them to have similar objectives. Bods will monitor the organisations activity and assist them, if necessary, to ensure delivery of equal opportunities.

Harassment and Bullying

Bods has clear procedures for investigating and dealing with cases of harassment committed by its service users, staff or contractors/consultants.

Any harassment or bullying will be taken seriously and is likely to result in action being taken that could ultimately lead to services users being excluded; the dismissal of staff or the termination of contracts.

Bods aims to deal with complaints of harassment and bullying promptly, supportively and sensitively.

Complaints against Users, Staff or Contractors should be in accordance with the relevant Behaviour policy.

Service User Participation

Bods encourages the participation of service users in all of its activities, from service delivery feedback through involvement in developing policy to representation at Trustees meetings.

Bods aims to encourage and facilitate minority groups in all forms of participation.

Trustees

Bods' Trustees are aware of their legal responsibilities in respect of equal opportunities. It is Bods' aim, where practicable, to attract further representation of minority communities in order to reflect the ethnic make up of Herefordshire.

Confidentiality

Bods will strive to ensure that any information about the ethnicity, disability and sexuality of customers and staff is treated in confidence where desired.

Monitoring

Regular reports to the Trustees monitor staffing issues related to this policy and resulting actions are reported back to ensure continuous improvement.

Legal Framework

Bods is aware of its legal obligations in relation to equal opportunities and recognised good practice guidelines, and its intention is that its policies and practices will meet the requirements of both. The present statutory framework within which we apply this policy includes, for example, the legislation below:

- The Race Relations Act 1976 and associated Employment Code of Practice issued by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE).
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and associated Codes of Practice issued by the CRE.
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986 (as amended) and associated Codes of Practice issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC).
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and associated Codes of Practice.
- The Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended), including the Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations 2003, and the EOC Code of Practice on Equal Pay.
- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Employment Rights Act 1996.
- The Employment Relations Act 1999.
- The Employment Act 2002.
- EC Council Directive 2000/78/EC (equal treatment in the field of employment and vocational training, including religion and belief, sexual orientation, disability and age) and UK legislation to implement this, including:
 - the DfEE Voluntary Code of Practice for Age Diversity in Employment (1999)
- EC Council Directive 2000/43/EC (equal treatment between people irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin) and UK legislation to implement this, including the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003.
- The Flexible Working (Procedural Requirements) Regulations 2002 and The Flexible Working (Eligibility, Complaints and Remedies) Regulations 2002.
- The Part-time Workers (Prevention of less favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 and the subsequent Amendment Regulations, 2002.
- The Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of less favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002.
- The Maternity and Parental Leave etc. Regulations 1999 and The Maternity and Parental Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2001 and 2002.
- The Paternity and Adoption Leave Regulations 2002.
- The Paternity and Adoption Leave (Adoption from Overseas) Regulations 2003.
- The Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992; The Statutory Maternity Pay (General) Regulations 1986; The Social Security, Statutory Maternity Pay and Statutory Sick Pay (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002; The Statutory Paternity Pay and Statutory Adoption Pay (General) Regulations 2002; The Employment Rights Act 1996 (Application of Section 80B to Adoptions from Overseas) Regulations 2003 and The Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 (Application of Parts 12ZA and 12ZB to Adoptions from Overseas) Regulations 2003.