

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Policy Data Sheet

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Aim

Big Life Schools recognises that providing equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and promoting a culture of inclusion are vital to our success, and by investing in a diverse staff team this enables us to deliver better services and create more opportunities for the communities we work within.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy set's out Big Life Schools approach to creating a safe environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying, ensuring it is a place where everyone is valued and has an equal chance to succeed.

The policy's purpose is to provide equality, fairness and respect for all and to ensure that no-one is unlawfully discriminated against in line with the 9 protected characteristics as detailed in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We aim to be a place that employees want to join, enjoy working in and are proud to contribute to. Big Life Schools is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in recruitment, selection, training and career progression for all staff. We value the different perspectives people bring and believe by harnessing them we can make a greater impact.

2. Scope

This policy covers all areas of Big Life Schools including recruitment, service delivery, volunteering, work placements, employees, staff terms and conditions, training, HR policies and procedures. Where it is found that employees have contravened the responsibilities as set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, appropriate action may be taken under the Disciplinary Policy.

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3. Roles and Responsibilities

All parties are required to work within this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Specific responsibilities are below:

Management Responsibilities –

- To create and promote an inclusive and collaborative working environment
- To attend and complete relevant training to broaden awareness of and promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion issues.
- To ensure all employees have an understanding of this policy and have completed training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- To ensure that services are designed and delivered to cater for the diverse needs of the communities in which we work
- To ensure fair and objective application of all employment and recruitment practices, so that selection is based on individual merit and that the staff recruited reflect the communities in which we work. They should ensure diversity monitoring procedures are in place and operated within their service and staff team.

Employee's Responsibilities:

- To understand and apply the principles set out in this policy at all times when working for Big Life Schools
- To treat all colleagues, children and families and any visitors with dignity and respect
- To attend and complete relevant training to broaden awareness of and promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion issues.
- To take appropriate action if there are breaches of this policy by reporting incidents to either management or via the Whistleblowing Policy

SLT and Board – will ensure that the group's strategic direction responds to the diverse needs of the communities in which we work and that any operational plans take account of their impact on Equality and Diversity.

4. Recruitment

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Recruitment and Selection Policy. Big Life Schools aim to ensure that we positively encourage applications from groups in the community who are traditionally discriminated against.

We recognise the barriers to employment facing many of the people we work with. We will therefore offer a range of opportunities for people to volunteer or gain work experience within the group. We will enable volunteers and work placements to gain employment through offering internal recruitment opportunities whenever possible.

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Where posts are advertised externally, consideration is given to the most appropriate outlets to ensure that a wide range of potentially suitable applicants have the opportunity to apply.

Selection methods, including interviews, are conducted in accordance with the Recruitment and Selection Policy and are designed to ensure that discrimination forms no part of recruitment processes. We will assess every person in their own right and will not automatically disbar anyone from employment due to a previous criminal conviction. The Disclosure Policy will enable staff to make informed decisions which safely maximise participation for people with convictions.

5. Staff Terms and Conditions

We will offer flexible and supportive work arrangements to enable people to maximise their contribution at work. We will ensure that our policies and procedures take account of the diversity of our workforce. We have a range of policies including:

- Family Friendly Policies
- Special Leave
- Wellbeing Policy
- Agile Working

We will review all policies regularly to ensure that our working policies reflect best practice and meet legislative requirements.

6. Staff Training

Big Life Schools will provide training in equality diversity and inclusion to all employees to help staff understand their responsibilities and help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment.

Big Life Schools offers a range of training and will ensure that access to training is fair and equitable for all staff. The appraisal process enables employees and managers to discuss career aspirations and training opportunities

7. Harassment

Where an employee considers that they have been unlawfully discriminated against or the complaint involves bullying or harassment, they may use the Grievance Policy.

Big Life Schools will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that is received.

A person harasses another if they engage in unwanted conduct which devalues or intimidates others on basis of their difference. It is important to remember

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that it is not the intention of the harasser but how the recipient perceives their behaviour, which determines whether harassment has occurred. Big Life Schools will not tolerate harassment from any person, including staff, volunteers, and third parties including clients, customers, contractors, partner organisations and suppliers. Any staff member who is found to be harassing another person on these grounds will face disciplinary action.

We will support staff to feel confident to challenge discrimination in all its forms. We will ensure that our workplaces prominently display our commitment to diversity and that discriminatory behaviour of any nature is not permitted.

8. Disciplinary

Big Life Schools takes a serious view of any discrimination and breaches of this policy are deemed as misconduct. Any such actions will be investigated as possible disciplinary offences and dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy.

9. Equality Impact Assessments

Big Life Schools gives priority to working with people who have the least access to traditional services and work opportunities. This means people whose participation in society is limited by economic or social disadvantage, or who have suffered discrimination.

Our reception teams and staff will be trained to provide a welcoming and confidential service which encourages use of our services.

We will carry out Equality Impact Assessments, to ensure we identify and eliminate inequity wherever possible. We will develop an action plan to address gaps and barriers, and develop tailored and unique services to meet specific needs where this is identified as a priority.

10. Environment

We will complete Access Plans and Audits to ensure our buildings are accessible to people with physical disabilities, including ramped access, lifts, clear signage and induction loops. We will provide adaptations wherever possible to meet the specific needs of staff or clients.

11. Communications

The Communications Team will work with schools to ensure that marketing materials, signage, and social media are relevant and accessible to all the people we work with and enable access to translations, interpreters, large print, and audio/visual materials are made available.

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12. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

Big Life Schools will monitor service user and volunteer demographics, the recruitment process, HR interventions, training opportunities and promotion to ensure that we do not discriminate intentionally or unintentionally against any one group and that we offer opportunities fairly.

Big Life Schools will monitor the diversity of children and families to ensure that we are reaching all the targeted communities we work with.

Annually we will review all diversity monitoring information and implement plans for improving our services, recruitment, training, environments, communication and resources to continue to strive to meet the needs of the communities in which we work. The Senior leadership Team will ensure that these plans are incorporated into annual targets and five-year business plans.

13. Associated Policies

- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Disclosure Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- BLG Volunteer Policy
- BLG Health and Wellbeing
- Flexible Working
- BLG Family Friendly Policies
- Absence
- BLG Community Engagement Policy
- Whistle Blowing

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Appendix 1 Equality Impact assessment form

Equality Impact Analysis

The Big Life group's mission is to fight inequality, working with people and places to create opportunities and inspire change. As an organisation we need to ensure our services and activities are equitable for people, regardless of their circumstances, protected characteristics or a known disadvantage.

The Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) is used to identify potential inequality, discrimination or disadvantage for a service or activity we are implementing or reviewing and set actions to address them. The analysis is also used to identify, implement, and promote approaches that actively address inequalities and disadvantage in our communities

This analysis will assess how equitable the service is in accessibility, intervention and outcome and work with experts by experience, partners and other stakeholders to identify and implement improvements.

Section 1: Service / Activity information	
Service / business area (e.g. Unity School, Children and Families Division)	
Form completed by:	
Date completed:	
Name of service / project / activity to be analysed	
What are the main aims/ purpose of your service / project / activity	

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Who is the service / project / activity aimed at (demographic, socio- economic, place)	
Are any other organisations involved in the service / project / activity?	
What are the expected outcomes of the service, project or activity? Include if service aim is to reduce impact of inequalities	

Section 2: Data and evidence		
	Source of data/info	Summary of data/info

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What are the key sources of data, information, and evidence that allow you to identify inequalities for your service / activity? • Consider nationally available data such as health profiles and Census • Consider local data such as that available in JSNA, contract performance data, and qualitative data from local research • Internal data on service performance, take up, demographic, satisfaction, outcome (if current service) • Populate with pre agreed data sets and data from DAM		
Is there a relevant equality impact analysis that you can use or build on?		
		Summary of feedback

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Have you consulted stakeholders yet or do you have feedback from service users?	Yes / No	
Are there gaps in data or information that make it difficult to form an opinion on how the service or activity effects people?	Evidence gap	How will the evidence be collated / who / when

From your sources of information, who experiences the biggest inequalities for your service / activity, what impact, gaps or barriers have you identified?	Socio – economic status or geographic deprivation:	
	Inclusion health and vulnerable groups (for example, people experiencing homelessness, prison leavers, young people leaving care):	
	Experience related to protected characteristics that are relevant for your service / activity	
	Age	
Disability		
Gender		

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	Race	
	Religion/ belief	
	Sexual Orientation	
	Transgender and non- binary status	
	Pregnancy or maternity	
	Marriage /civil partnership	

Section 3: Involvement and consultation		
	Involvement group	Actions

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How do you plan to engage and consult with experts by experience, partners and other stakeholders on the findings so far and support the development of actions to improve?		
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Action Plan (Title: Equality Impact Assessment Report – MM/YYYY)

Action/ Activity	Owner and Interested Stakeholders	Dependencies /Risk/ Constraints	Completion Date	Progress Update
This should be a list of recommendations identified in the EIA report. A short description of the issue being taken forward	Team/Department/Service Internal and external stakeholders How will you ensure your stakeholders continue to be involved/engaged in shaping the development/delivery of this policy?	There may be other projects/initiatives that will deliver the action, so refer to these.	The date by which the action is to be completed.	Progress to date. Any barriers. New stakeholders, etc. Give RAG (red/amber/green) rating if appropriate. Details of monitoring and review methods

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