

Date of issue	2012	Reviewed	Sept 2024	Next review	Sept 2026	Approved by	Children's Committee
For	Employees, volunteers, students, visitors, members, referrer						

Equality, Diversity, and Equal Opportunities Policies



STATEMENT

Equality

Ride High will contribute towards creating a fair society through the services we provide, the people we employ and the money we spend. Equality is integral to everything that Ride High does. We are committed to making Ride High a place of opportunity where everyone can belong, addressing the needs and aspirations of all those who benefit from its services, and who work or volunteer for the charity.

Diversity and Social Inclusion

Ride High recognises values and promotes the richly diverse community in Milton Keynes and understands the strategic importance of achieving a diverse workforce, which reflects that community.

Ride High promotes social inclusion for those who use our services and for the services themselves, working with the local community to tackle stigma and oppression.

Ride High will meet its legal duties under the Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations (Amendment Act 2000), Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Human Rights Act 1998 and any other legislation relating to equality and diversity.

Service users, volunteers including trustees and staff are required to uphold the principles of this statement.

All staff, volunteers and service users must follow the implementation guidance for this policy.

Equal Opportunity

Ride High will work positively towards achieving equal opportunities in its organisational structure, employment, service provision and any other area of its work.

Anti-Discriminatory Practice

Ride High aims to provide services that are easily accessible and respond to the needs of the individuals. To this end we recognise that people in our society may face prejudice and experience oppression as a result of direct or indirect discrimination.

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All members and potential members are of equal value and benefit. Ride High is committed to equal opportunities and diversity in respect of the children and young people who qualify for acceptance on to the Ride High programme in accordance with our Entrance, Progression and Exit Policies, save that we may be unable to cater for children or young people who have special physical or other needs, or who are otherwise disqualified from riding under the rules of The Ride High Equestrian Centre. Where possible, Ride High will refer such children or young people to a local centre for Riding for the Disabled, or another appropriate riding school.

Ride High affirms that everyone should be treated fairly irrespective of gender, race, disability, health including mental health status, responsibility for dependents, religion, creed, trade union activity, age and any other area of potential prejudice. All people will be valued and respected as equals within the Organisation.

Training and Information

- At first point of contact all staff, volunteers and service users will receive a copy of the statement.
- At the point of induction to Ride High an appointed person or persons will ensure that service users, volunteers, trustees and staff are made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the statement.
- Training will be provided in induction and core training courses for staff, volunteers and service users.

Responsibilities and monitoring of the Policy

- Responsibility for the policy rests with the Children's Committee, a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees.

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Ride High Equality and Diversity Policy



1. Purpose

This policy sets out our commitment to the values of Equality and Diversity in all our dealings as an employer, provider of support services, community services and partner of choice in the community.

We celebrate the diversity of society and are committed to treating all people with fairness and respect. We aim to actively help remove barriers and open doors for children and young people and staff, fostering good relations within the communities we serve.

The Policy sets out:

- What we understand by “equality” and “diversity” and related terms;
- How we will promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination in all areas of our operations and foster good relations between different groups;
- How we will implement the actions we need to take, and monitor the impact and outcomes of our efforts in line with statutory requirements and best practice.

The policy is aimed to achieve the following:

- open, fair and transparent operations;
- a consistent approach to equality and diversity in all aspects of our business;
- promotion, awareness raising and understanding of equality and diversity.

The policy will support and be an integral part of all service standards.

The policy will reflect the current standards of operation and will be reviewed whenever industry standards, legislation or guidelines change.

2. Scope

Ride High is committed to creating an environment in which everyone is treated with dignity, fairness and respect. We actively oppose and seek to prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation, exclusion and unfair treatment.

This policy sets out the responsibilities and obligations placed upon us in relation to the protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race

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- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In line with the Equality Act 2010, Ride High will give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different groups

Ride High recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, by association, by perception, arise from disability, or take the form of harassment or victimisation. We are committed to identifying and removing barriers that may prevent individuals from accessing our services, employment opportunities, volunteering opportunities or participation in our activities.

We aim to ensure that no person or group, whether accessing services, applying for a job, volunteering, through employment, or through a partnership or contractual arrangement, is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. In addition, Ride High seeks to prevent disadvantage arising from factors outside the scope of protected characteristics, including social position, background, political opinion, trade union membership, social or financial disadvantage, and social exclusion.

Where possible, we will identify the needs of disadvantaged and underrepresented groups within our areas of operation and actively assist them to access and benefit from our services.

All trustees, employees, volunteers, service users, contractors and partners are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of their work and conduct.
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour, language or practices where appropriate.
- Support an environment in which differences are valued and respected.
- Comply with Ride High's Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policies.

Ride High operates a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation and hate-related behaviour. We are committed to protecting vulnerable children and young people from bullying, harassment, victimisation, abuse, coercion, exploitation and any other form of inappropriate treatment. We comply with all relevant safeguarding requirements, including local procedures for the recording and reporting of safeguarding concerns.

Any allegation of discriminatory conduct, harassment, bullying or victimisation will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, fairly and confidentially in accordance with the appropriate Ride High policies and procedures. Anyone who experiences, witnesses or becomes aware of such behaviour is encouraged to raise their concerns through the

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relevant reporting channels, including the Complaints Policy, Grievance Policy, Safeguarding Policy or Whistleblowing Policy, as appropriate.

Through this policy, Ride High seeks to promote equality of opportunity, celebrate diversity, advance social inclusion and foster positive relationships within the communities we serve.

3. Communication of this policy

Effective communication of this policy is a key factor in its implementation.

Ride High's policies and strategies are available online and are communicated to staff and volunteers through a range of methods overseen by the Senior Management Team and the Board. This includes induction, training and briefings at team meetings.

Ride High's Policy, Strategy and approach to equality and diversity is available and actively promoted to people who use our services, staff, volunteers and stakeholders through a variety of media including the website and newsletters.

4. Definitions

We use these definitions in all areas of the business:

Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone has the same opportunities of access and participation regardless of who they are.

It is not about treating everyone in the same way; rather, it is about understanding that not everyone's experience is the same and that people's needs can be met in different ways.

Recognising inequalities and tackling the barriers which limit what people can do and prevent them from being treated fairly and respectfully is an ongoing process which is backed by legislation designed to address discrimination.

Diversity is about valuing and recognising our individual and cultural differences. These differences can be visible and non-visible and include characteristics that are inborn and unchangeable such as ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. It also includes differences that are acquired and those that may change throughout our lives, such as educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, religious beliefs, health and work experience. Diversity extends beyond fair and equal treatment to recognise and appreciate the benefits that people's differences and talents bring to the community and organisations. Embracing and celebrating diversity helps create an environment where everyone feels valued.

Discrimination is the unfair treatment of a person or group on the basis of one or more aspects of their identity, or because of stereotyped assumptions and usually results in fewer opportunities for them. Under the Equality Act 2010 people are protected from the following form of discrimination:

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- Direct
- Indirect
- Discrimination by perception or association
- Discrimination arising from disability
- Harassment
- Victimisation

Harassment is unwanted conduct, including that of a sexual nature, related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating the victim's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Victimisation is discrimination against someone because they made or supported a complaint under Equality Act 2010 legislation. Victimisation applies to all the protected characteristics.

Community cohesion is what needs to happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together and develop a sense of belonging.

Key contributors to community cohesion are initiatives which promote integration and good relations through the development of strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds within the community.

5. Leadership

The responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy lies with all staff, volunteers, Board members, contractors, service users and partner stakeholders.

Internally, the overarching responsibility lies with the Senior Management team, this includes critically assessing the equalities monitoring statistics, equality targets and action plans as well as identifying any areas of concern and suggestions for continuous improvement.

6. How the policy will be implemented

The policy will be implemented through a range of actions:

Eliminate Discrimination

- Effective use of monitoring information
- Challenging prejudice, discrimination and harassment as it arises;
- Zero tolerance of bullying and harassment;
- Complaints and grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with promptly and fairly;
- Open and fair recruitment processes;
- Accessible services;
- Equality data analysis;
- Equality monitoring (including action plans to address areas for improvement);

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- Members agreement enforced to ensure behaviour related to harassment and discrimination is addressed.

Advance Equality of Opportunity

- Providing all reasonable adaptations for staff to work for us, volunteers, for children and young people to be involved and for membership of the Board;
- Ensuring the communication needs of customers and staff are met by the provision of accessible information;
- Provision of aids and adaptations and reasonable adjustments to ensure access to our services and participation in our decision-making processes;
- Requirement of contractors, consultants, suppliers and partners to operate an effective equality and diversity policy, or commit to comply with this equality and diversity policy;
- Procurement strategy and practices reflect our commitment to equality and diversity;
- Encouraging diversity in our workforce, Board membership and in our service users;
- Provision of a range of learning resources and equality and diversity information to support staff.

Foster good relationships

- Active partnership working with organisations who specialise in meeting the needs of and promoting the rights of people from minority groups;
- Implementation of our code of conduct and behaviour policy and procedures to foster good relations;
- Ongoing service user involvement, participation and consultation;
- Participation and involvement in local events and our wider work as a leading community partner and advocate for community cohesion;
- Staff induction outlines our ethos and approach to Equality and Diversity, which includes equality and diversity training for all staff, volunteers and Board members;
- Staff management aims to embed Equality and Diversity through activities such as team meetings, 1-1 supervision meetings and appraisals.

7. Approval and Review

This Equality and Diversity Policy was approved by the Children's Committee , a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees. It will be reviewed bi-annually, or more frequently if appropriate.

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Ride High's Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Purpose

As an employer, we aim for fair and equal access in all areas of employment, including recruitment and selection, training and development and career progression. We recognise the benefits of a diverse workforce – a workforce which reflects all the different sections of society.

Ride High is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to following this principle in all of its employment and recruitment practices. Individuals will be selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their abilities and merits and according to the requirements of the

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job. We have a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, bullying, hate crime and harassment.

It is unlawful to discriminate against any employee, job applicant or previous employee, on the grounds of sex, race, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, disability, pregnancy and maternity or age either directly or indirectly. Under the Equality Act 2010 these are known as "protected characteristics".

This policy applies to all individuals working at all levels and grades, including Board and senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency workers, apprentices, work and student placements and volunteers (collectively referred to as "**colleagues**" in this policy).

This policy will be applied when Ride High is:

- Recruiting staff;
- Making decisions on promotion, pay rises and training;
- Dealing with requests for part-time working;
- Managing pregnant workers and working parents;
- Making selections for redundancies; and
- Dealing with colleagues on a daily basis.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

2. Forms of discrimination

Discrimination can take a number of forms, as set out below:

Direct discrimination - Direct discrimination occurs when someone treats another person less favorably on the grounds of their race, sex, marriage or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, disability, gender identity or on the grounds of any protected characteristic or assumptions about an individual.

Indirect discrimination - Indirect discrimination is where an apparently neutral provision, practice or criterion applied to staff may place members of one group at a disadvantage when compared to others.

Harassment - Harassment is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating another person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him/her/them. This is a subjective test, which means that it is not what colleagues consider to be offensive, but what the colleague in receipt of the unwanted conduct considers offensive. The Hate Crime and Harassment policy provides more detail and can be found on the EPM.

Colleagues are referred to Ride High's Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Conduct Procedure which sets out the type conduct which can constitute harassment.

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Victimisation - It is discriminatory to treat anyone less favorably because:

- (a) They have either made a complaint about discrimination during their present or previous employment; or
- (b) They intend to make a complaint; or
- (c) They have assisted someone else's complaint by giving evidence or corroborating a story.

3. Bullying

Bullying is a very serious matter and will not be tolerated. All colleagues are expected to comply with the Ride High Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure and breaches of this policy will be taken very seriously.

Bullying is persistent, abusive, offensive, malicious, intimidating or insulting behaviour directed against either an individual or a group of colleagues, which is intimidating, cruel, offensive, humiliating or malicious and which undermines the confidence and self-esteem of the recipient(s).

4. Reasonable adjustments

If a colleague experiences difficulties at work because of their protected characteristic, they should speak to their line manager in the first instance, or the CEO to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty so that Ride High can provide appropriate support. Examples of where support may be requested could include, but is not limited to the following:

The colleague's line manager may wish to consult with the colleague and/or medical adviser(s) and/or other agencies about possible adjustments. Ride High will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the colleague's needs within reason. Any adjustments made will need to be reasonable based on the individual circumstances and the specific facts that are known at that point in time and which can be supported with appropriate evidence. If Ride High considers a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, they are under no obligation to make the changes, however, an alternative solution will be sought where possible.

5. Responsibility, training and promotion

All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice.

Colleagues training needs will be identified through regular appraisals. All colleagues will

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be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

6. Breaches of the policy

Colleagues who feel that the conduct of another colleague is in breach of this policy should report their concerns to their line manager or the CEO.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Colleagues who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations may be dealt with under Ride High's Disciplinary Procedure.

Formal disciplinary proceedings under the Ride High Disciplinary Procedure will be taken against a colleague in breach of this policy and may lead to their summary dismissal or their relationship with Ride High being terminated.

7. Monitoring and review

Ride High will monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives.

8. Approval and Review

This Equal Opportunities Policy was approved at a Board Meeting of the Trustees. It will be reviewed bi-annually, or more frequently if appropriate.

Annual Equality Impact Assessment Audit Tool

		Yes/No	Comments
1.	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:		
	• Race		
	• Ethnic origins (including gypsies and travellers)		

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	Nationality		
	Gender		
	Culture		
	Religion or belief		
	Sexual orientation including lesbian, gay or bisexual people		
	Age		
	Disability – learning disabilities, physical disability, sensory impairment and mental health problems.		
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?		
3.	If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?		
4.	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?		
5.	If so can the impact be avoided?		
6.	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?		
7.	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?		