

encounter

move, play, connect, thrive

Equalities Policy

ANDREA RICHARDS

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Our Values.....	2
The Equality Act 2010	2
Direct Discrimination	3
Indirect Discrimination.....	3
Discrimination by Association.....	3
Discrimination by Perception.....	3
Our Intent.....	3
Specific Areas	4
People with Disabilities.....	4
People Living with HIV or AIDS	4
Race, Ethnicity, Culture, Religion and Heritage	4



Our Values

Everything we do at Encounter is based on the belief that adults and children are individuals in their own right, and that they are of equal worth whatever their race, culture, disability, gender, sexual orientation, social class, marital status, gender reassignment, age, religion or other belief systems.

Encounter is fully committed to the active promotion of equal opportunity in all the work we undertake and all of the services we provided.

Every possible step will be taken to ensure that parents, carers, children, and everyone connected or working with the service are treated equally and fairly, and that all decisions are based on our principle of equality.

Encounter is opposed to all discriminatory practices and attitudes and is committed to translating this into all aspects of its work.

In our capacity as a provider of services, information and other resources, Encounter endeavours to make every effort to prevent discrimination against anyone using or connected with its services regardless of their race, culture, disability, gender, sexual orientation, social class, marital status, gender reassignment, age, religion or other belief systems.

We will work to ensure that anyone connected with our organisation is valued and that their talents and skills are recognised and utilised to support the interests of parents, carers and children seeking our support.

The Equality Act 2010

This Act replaced all other legislation relating to discrimination and brings a greater consistency to the way in which certain groups are protected by legislation. It brings together all the groups covered by the legislation and calls them “protected characteristics” (PCs).

All PCs are protected from victimization, which is defined as treating someone badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under the Act.

The PCs covered by legislation are:

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



Direct Discrimination

All people are protected from direct discrimination, which is defined as treating someone less favourably than another person because of a PC.

Indirect Discrimination

All people are protected from indirect discrimination (excluding pregnancy and maternity), which is defined as having a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular PC.

Discrimination by Association

Discrimination by association is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a particular PC, with the exception of marriage and civil partnership, perception and pregnancy and maternity.

Discrimination by Perception

Discrimination by perception is direct discrimination against someone because someone thinks they possess a particular PC.

Our Intent

We will purposefully enact the behaviours defined in our policy in all our interactions and in all of our work.

Encounter recognises that passive policies will not in themselves provide equality of opportunity and acknowledges that specific and positive programmes of action are needed.

As part of our work strategy and annual mandatory training and updates, Encounter has devised the following measures to combat all types of discrimination in its daily practices, in the work it undertakes and in the services it provides.

It is the responsibility of the manager at Encounter to ensure that systems are in place to:

- Regularly examine the day to day activities of the organisation and its decision making processes at all levels, and introduce special measures to develop ways of combating any discrimination found within its own practices
- Monitor all our activities in order to identify any inequalities in content or participation, and to determine the steps needed to rectify them. This is done through service user forums and regular feedback opportunities for service users
- Continue to develop greater awareness as the service grows, of the needs of those who possess PCs that may experience discrimination, and develop strategies to ensure that in its practices and procedures Encounter is doing everything it can to meet those needs



- Work to ensure that the services Encounter provides, the research and development work it undertakes, and the information it provides, are in line with this policy and are appropriate, relevant and accessible to individuals or groups who experience discrimination.
- Regularly monitor and review Encounter's Equalities Policy

Specific Areas

Whilst Encounter supports equality of opportunity for all the groups outlined above, we acknowledge that the specific areas below have statistically been shown to experience a greater degree of discrimination. We will make extra efforts to ensure that discrimination does not exist in the following areas.

People with Disabilities

People with disabilities often do not receive equal treatment or access to opportunities. This is not acceptable. Encounter will actively work to ensure that people with disabilities are treated fairly. Children with disabilities must be given the same opportunities to develop and make the most of their talents as other children, commensurate with their physical and mental capacities. This includes access to school, leisure and recreation.

We recognise that with our premises being located on the first floor, with no lift, that this may provide accessibility issues for those that are physically disabled. We also acknowledge that for some people, visiting a new location and meeting new people may initially be too difficult to face.

In these circumstances, we will make every effort to either see them in their home or school environment.

People Living with HIV or AIDS

Encounter recognises that stigma and discrimination, together with concerns about health, can result in high levels of stress for people living with HIV and AIDS. We acknowledge the need to provide extra support to people affected by HIV and AIDS.

Race, Ethnicity, Culture, Religion and Heritage

We strongly support our obligations under the Equalities Act in relation to these areas, and work to promote communication and good relationships with racial, cultural, ethnic and religious groups in the development of policies and practice to meet the needs of black and minority ethnic parents, carers and children.