

**ARUN SUNSHINE GROUP**  
**For Adults With A Learning Difficulty**

Registered Office, 2 Beechlands Cottages, Beechland Close,  
East Preston, West Sussex, BN16 1JT

**Document Name:** **Equal Opportunities Policy**

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Review Schedule Every two years  
Next review due September 2023

Owner (Responsibility) Gary McHardy – Chair of Trustees  
Pass amendments to: Project Leader  
Revision History See Appendix A  
Document Location ASG Master File

**Document Description**

Arun Sunshine Group, as an employer and service provider, has a part to play in reducing the disadvantages which certain people and groups have experienced. We also want our staff and volunteers to be truly representative of the community they service. This policy sets out how we aim to achieve this.

**Implementation & Quality Assurance**

Implementation is immediate and this Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice, or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time. If you have any comments or suggestions on the content of this policy, please contact: Gary McHardy [gazzamac@aol.com](mailto:gazzamac@aol.com) Mob: 07944 527886 or Registered Office, 2 Beechlands Cottages, Beechland Close, East Preston, West Sussex, BN16 1JT

# Equal Opportunities Policy

## Introduction

Arun Sunshine Group, as an employer and service provider, has a part to play in reducing the disadvantages which certain people and groups have experienced, both now and in the past. We also want our staff and volunteers to be truly representative of the community they serve.

We extend the same principle to everyone. We recognise that, while much can be achieved through developing policies and procedures to meet our legal and other obligations, real progress requires a programme of action that involves the participation of our staff and volunteers. Genuine Equal Opportunities in every workplace and every service requires a commitment from everyone.

## The Law

We wholeheartedly accept the statutory requirements laid down in the Equality Act. It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, pregnancy, parenthood, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion, or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as 'protected characteristics'.

In addition, staff should not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation, or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

Unlawful discrimination can include:

Direct discrimination – where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic

- Indirect discrimination – where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic.
- Harassment – where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics.

- Associative discrimination – where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- Perceptive discrimination – where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic.
- Third-party harassment – when an employee is harassed by third parties such as clients and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic and the employer has failed to act.
- Victimisation – where an employee is subject to a detriment because he/she has made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance, or because he/she is suspected of doing so.
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments – where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

The following statements of policy provide a framework within which we will seek to develop programmes and initiatives.

## **Responsibilities**

The Charity's trustees and senior management team are responsible for promoting equal opportunities.

All staff, volunteers and trustees of the Charity share the responsibility for ensuring that the Equal Opportunities Policy is promoted and implemented fairly and effectively.

The Chairperson will ensure the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and report to the board of trustees annually. It is, however, the responsibility of the Charity's Board of Trustees and Staff members to actively promote equality of opportunity in their respective departments and services.

It is the individual responsibility of every member of staff and all volunteers to seek to ensure the practical application of the policy. Arun Sunshine Group wishes to state explicitly that acts of direct and indirect discrimination and failure to comply with the provisions of the policy cannot and will not be tolerated and will be investigated. Disciplinary action may then be taken against the individual(s) concerned.

In addition, if any member of staff or volunteer considers that he or she is the subject of, or witnesses, unequal treatment, a complaint may be made through the agreed procedures for dealing with grievances, harassment, or whistleblowing.

# **Equal Opportunities in Employment and Volunteering**

## **Statement of Policy**

Arun Sunshine Group aims to achieve genuine equality of opportunity in all aspects of its activities as an employer and in its engagement of volunteers.

## **Implementation**

This policy is made available to all new staff via the Project Leader and copies are available on the website. Volunteers are asked to refer to the website for the policy although a paper copy can be made available if this is a difficulty for them. The principles and practices of the policy are covered by the Project Leader during induction and during the Introduction to Arun Sunshine Group.

## **Staff**

- Arun Sunshine Group will ensure that the ways in which jobs are designed, advertised, and filled meet the requirements of our equal opportunities policy and the Equality Act.
- Information, training, advice, and guidance, as appropriate, will be given to those staff and trustees involved in the recruitment and selection process.
- Permanent paid posts will normally be advertised externally, and all posts will be advertised internally within Arun Sunshine Group as a minimum. Advertisements, job descriptions, application forms and person specifications for each job will be designed to ensure that no unnecessary requirements or qualifications are called for. Unrelated criminal convictions will not be considered.
- All potential applicants for jobs will be asked to complete and return a diversity monitoring form so that we can check how inclusive our recruitment processes are.
- Interviews will take an unbiased approach, asking only those questions which relate to the job and are non-discriminatory.

## **Volunteers**

- Interviewers will take an unbiased approach, asking only those questions which relate to the task or role and are non-discriminatory.
- Applicants will be supported within the interview process and in their ongoing engagement according to their needs and within the resources at our disposal.
- Links will be sought with a diverse range of groups to promote and encourage the recruitment of volunteers from all backgrounds.
- Volunteers will be placed based on their knowledge, skills, experience, and ability. Where no suitable opportunity exists within Arun Sunshine Group alternatives will be suggested.

- Personal details of volunteers will be confidential to those members of staff dealing with recruitment. The only information passed to other staff will be that necessary to ensure appropriate support for the volunteers.
- All potential applicants for volunteer roles will be asked to complete and return a diversity monitoring form so that we can check how inclusive our recruitment processes are.
- The reasons for not placing someone as a volunteer will be recorded.

## Equal Opportunities in Service Delivery

### Statement of Policy

We recognise that certain groups in our society are discriminated against, directly or indirectly, intentionally, or unintentionally. Direct and indirect discrimination can occur when services are inappropriate, insensitive, or inaccessible.

We are committed to providing quality services to our service users. We aim to promote equal access and appropriate levels of take-up of our services and facilities by all groups in the community.

### Implementation

In pursuit of our aims, the Arun Sunshine Group resolves to undertake a continuing review of our policy and practice and will, in particular: -

- *Ensure that any person representing Arun Sunshine Group will not discriminate based on race, colour, religion, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, or family circumstances.*
- *Become more aware of discrimination and the problems it causes, how it affects us and of the implications for our work.*
- *Work to ensure that organisation staffing reflects the diverse composition of our society.*
- *Work to ensure that the services the organisation offers are accessible and relevant to all sections of the community.*
- *Make every effort to ensure that members from minority groups will receive appropriate information about the services offered and have access to them.*
- *Ensure that no employee or volunteer (potential or current) will suffer discrimination because they are disabled, or they are from a minority group. Modifications would be made to accommodate individual requirements where possible.*
- *Treat everyone equally and fairly and no one shall be discriminated against because of personal prejudice.*
- *Work to increase the number of ethnic minority organisations in membership in our*

*organisation.*

- *Undertake positive action to encourage member organisations and others to undertake similar initiatives based on a declaration of intent.*

## Monitoring

The success of any policy depends upon the commitment of all employees and volunteers but particularly of senior management and Trustees. The effectiveness of the policy in meeting the aims of the Charity can be judged by careful monitoring of the operation of the policy.

## Appendix A

### Revision History

Revision date	Summary of Changes	Other Comments
29.9.21	Approved by Board of Trustees	Next review due June 2023

Further guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>