

Equality and Diversity Policy



Keats Community Library

1. Introduction

Keats Community Library is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive culture for:

- All who wish to use our services
- Our volunteers
- Our staff
- Other stakeholders including the community in general.

We recognise the positive value of diversity, promoting equality and fairness, and challenging discrimination. We aim to go beyond the narrow scope of legislative compliance and follow, even set, best practice, making equality, fairness and diversity a fundamental part of all our activities.

We recognise people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and we wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant and approachable. Keats Community Library recognizes that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable.

It is the firm policy of Keats Community Library that it will not discriminate directly or indirectly or tolerate discriminatory behaviour on the grounds of race, colour, sex, gender identity or orientation (including transgender and those in transition), pregnancy and maternity, disability, nationality, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, marital, civil partnership, or family status, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, social class, educational background, employment status, working pattern, trade union membership or any other irrelevant factor.

2. Scope

This policy relates to all aspects of Keats Community Library including employment (recruitment and selection), meeting visitors' needs and service delivery, working with volunteers, suppliers, supporters and other associated third parties.

3. Legal obligations

In valuing diversity and ensuring equality, Keats Community Library is committed to embracing the legislation. The Equality Act 2010 harmonises and strengthens and replaces most previous equality legislation. The following legislation is relevant:

- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Work and Families Act 2006.
- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended).

4. Meeting visitors' needs

Keats Community Library is committed to meeting the diverse needs of our visitors and potential visitors to the Library. We will take steps to identify the needs of visitors in our community and develop policies and procedures accordingly.

Equality and Diversity Policy



Keats Community Library

We aim to ensure that the services we provide are accessible to all. We will take account, in particular, the needs of visitors with a disability (including mental health problems) and visitors who are unable to communicate effectively in English, including those who are deaf who use BSL and who are hard of hearing.

We will consider whether particular groups are predominant within our volunteer or visitor base and if appropriate devise appropriate policies / procedures to meet their needs. Such groups include: men and women; carers; older people; the mentally or physically challenged, members of religious groups; ethnic groups or nationalities and lesbian, gay or transgender people.

5. Volunteers and employees

Volunteers are essential to the functioning of the Keats Community Library and can contribute significantly to the diversity of the organisation.

Volunteers will be recruited, trained and managed with full regard to the policy of equality set out in 1 above.

Volunteers can expect to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and without discrimination.

Volunteers are likewise expected to treat others - staff volunteers and visitors - fairly, with dignity and respect, and without discrimination.

Due to the restrictions imposed by employment law, volunteers are not entitled to the same rights and protections as employees.

We will ensure that employees, if any, are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Selection for all training and career development opportunities will be purely on the basis of merit.

6. Implementing the policy

The Board is responsible for implementing this Equality and Diversity policy

All staff, managers, volunteers and trustees will be given access to this Equality and Diversity Policy as part of their induction.

6.1 All staff and volunteers

This policy is posted on our website and copied in the volunteer handbooks to give all levels of the organisation access. All colleagues are expected to have read and understood this policy, to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles and requirements, to encourage the same level of behaviour in colleagues and to immediately report any breaches witnessed, whenever it is reasonable for them to do so.

Equality and Diversity Policy



Keats Community Library

6.2 Trustees

Trustees are primarily responsible for promoting this policy and ensuring it is understood and complied with by all staff and volunteers, dealing with breaches and complaints (whether reported or not) seriously, speedily, sensitively and confidentially and contributing ideas for the advancement of diversity principles within the organisation. Trustees are expected to be proactive in identifying circumstances in which elements of the policy can benefit individuals.

6.3 Conduct and general standards of behaviour:

All staff and volunteers including Trustees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and considerate manner at all times. This means between each other and also in their interaction with visitors to the Library.

Keats Community Library will not tolerate behaviour such as:

- making threats,
- physical violence
- shouting
- swearing at others
- persistent rudeness
- isolating, ignoring or refusing to work with certain people
- telling offensive jokes or name calling
- displaying offensive material such as pornography or sexist / racist cartoons, or the distribution of such material via email / text message or any other format.
- any other forms of harassment or victimisation.

The items on the above list of unacceptable behaviours are considered to be disciplinary offences within Keats Community Library and can lead to disciplinary action being taken.

Visitors who display such unacceptable behaviour will be asked to apologise and if necessary leave the library. The Trustees may also consider excluding library access to any visitor who may demonstrate such unacceptable behavior. This policy on visitor behavior is set out in the terms and conditions given to card holders on joining and displayed in the library

Keats Community Library encourages staff and volunteers to resolve misunderstandings and problems informally wherever possible, depending on the circumstances.

Nevertheless, whether dealt with informally or formally, it is important for staff or volunteers who may have caused offence to understand that it is no defence to say that they did not intend to do so, or to blame individuals for being over sensitive. It is the impact of the behaviour, rather than the intent, that counts, and that should shape the solution found both to the immediate problem and to preventing further similar problems in the future.

Equality and Diversity Policy



Keats Community Library

6.4 Complaints of breaches of this policy

Keats Community Library will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any forbidden grounds made by employees, volunteers, visitors or other third parties and will take action where appropriate.

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the organisation's grievance, complaints or disciplinary procedure, as appropriate and the complainant will be informed of the outcome in line with these procedures.

We will also monitor the number and outcomes of complaints of discrimination made by staff, volunteers, visitors and other third parties.

7. Monitoring

We will store equal opportunities data as confidential personal data and restrict access to this information. Equal opportunities information will be used exclusively for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring and will have no bearing on opportunities or benefits.

Any breaches of this policy or concerns over potential breaches shall be reported to a Trustee and also raised at the next Trustee Board Meeting if the matter or concern continues.

8 Review of Monitoring Data

At appropriate intervals we will review :

- recruitment and selection processes (including profiles of successful and unsuccessful job applicants)
- training
- grievance and disciplinary procedures
- resignations, redundancies and dismissals.

A report of the findings of the review, based on the data and other information collected and evaluated, will be presented to the trustee board annually, and appropriate action taken.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and if we identify any non-compliance or problem or in the light of emerging legislation or best practice that could impact on this policy.