



## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

### **STATEMENT**

Milton Keynes YMCA aims to foster environments where all people can develop as individuals and make a contribution towards a society within which values are important and can be explored.

Milton Keynes YMCA aims to be socially inclusive and therefore no person or groups of people using the services or working for the organisation will be treated less favourably than any other person because of their age\*, appearance, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, HIV status, medical condition, political views, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or trade union involvement. (Milton Keynes YMCA does not recognise unions in relation to joint bargaining).

\*excepting some services that are by their nature specifically related to a client group.

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **The YMCA stands for:**

- A worldwide fellowship based on the equal value of all persons
- Respect and freedom for all
- Acceptance and understanding between people of different opinions and lifestyles
- Active concerns for the need of the community
- Valuing diversity
- United effort by Christians of different traditions

#### **The YMCA aims to:**

1. Provide a welcome to members for themselves, in a meeting place, which is theirs to share, where friendships can be made and support, information and advice gained.
2. Develop activities, which stimulate and challenge its members in an environment that enables them to take responsibility in their lives and find a sense of achievement.
3. Involve all members in care and work for others.
4. Create opportunities for exchanging views, so that its members can improve their understanding of the world, of themselves and of one another.
5. Ensure that the composition of the Board of Directors reflects as far as practical, the local community of the YMCA.
6. Aim to, wherever possible, increase the number of staff from under represented groups within the organisation.
7. Ensure that all staff and Board Members understand the reasons for the Equality & Diversity policy and receive training on it.

8. Review and adapt services to ensure that they reflect the needs of people from under represented groups.
9. Introduce equal opportunities and diversity as a core element in all forward planning.
10. Raise awareness of under represented group and community issues.
11. Work within the guidelines of the following acts:
  - The Equal Pay Act 1970 (EPA) amended 1983
  - Sex Discriminations Act 1975 and 1986
  - Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) 1999
  - Gender Recognition Action 2004
  - Gender Equality Duty 2007
  - Race Relations Act 1976 and 2000
  - Race Regulations 2003
  - Disability Discrimination Act 1995 amended 2003 & 2005
  - Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
  - Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
  - Employment Equality Age Regulations 2006
  - Human Rights Act 1998
  - Equality Act 2010

We will achieve these objectives through a clear process of recruitment, training, awareness raising, monitoring and positive action.

**Milton Keynes YMCA aims to be an equal opportunities organisation and supports wholeheartedly a policy of valuing diversity and equal opportunity in all areas of its work and responsibilities. Milton Keynes YMCA's Policy Statement on Equal Opportunities and Diversity (Appendix 1) and Board Statement (Appendix II) is a fundamental part of our equal opportunities and valuing diversity commitment and should be read in conjunction with this document.**

### **SERVICE PROVISION**

Milton Keynes YMCA is committed to providing equality of opportunity in its diverse service provision. Services include all aspects of Housing; Community based work and Commercial Services.

We aim to provide high quality services that are accessible to all and recognise differences which are reviewed on a regular basis. We aim to promote its diverse services throughout all sections of the community using a range of mediums which are accessible to all.

### **RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT**

Entry to employment or change of post within the YMCA is determined by personal merit, staff development/training and ability relevant to the Aims and Purposes of the YMCA.

Selection criteria and procedures will be kept under review, to ensure that individuals are selected on the basis of their merits and abilities. Candidates are encouraged to have a good working knowledge of equal opportunities and diversity issues.

All employees will be given equal opportunities and diversity training to progress within the organisation.

Milton Keynes YMCA will support positive action to ensure our staff teams reflect the community we aim to serve.

If a member of staff believes that he/she has been discriminated against, it is his/her responsibility to report the matter to his/her line manager or to the most appropriate person in authority. All allegations of discrimination will be treated seriously in accordance with Milton Keynes YMCA's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures (which can be obtained from the HR department).

Milton Keynes YMCA recognises that it has clear obligations towards all its members and the community to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal access to enter employment. In addition, when staff members become disabled while employed by Milton Keynes YMCA then wherever possible, steps will be taken, to enable them to remain in employment. This applies equally to registered and non-registered disabled staff. We guarantee interviews to all disabled people who meet the basic job requirements in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

As outlined in Milton Keynes YMCA's Harassment Policy, harassment is totally unacceptable and any such behaviour will be considered a disciplinary offence. All allegations of harassment are treated seriously and all reasonable practicable steps will be taken to prevent such behaviour.

### **INDUCTION AND TRAINING**

All new staff, volunteers and Board members will receive an induction on joining Milton Keynes YMCA. It is the responsibility of all Managers to ensure that all employees:

1. Undertake a thorough induction into the roles and nature of the organisation and their role/responsibilities within it.
2. Fully understand the spirit and aim of the YMCA's Equal Opportunities commitment.
3. Understand the practical day to day implications of what is expected of them at work.
4. Comply with Milton Keynes YMCA policy guidelines.

It is the responsibility of the HR department:

1. Issue contracts and ensure all staff and volunteers understand the terms and conditions of their employment.
2. Issue a Staff Handbook ensuring staff and volunteers are aware of organisational policies and they comply with them.
3. Issue a Disclosure form, complete the relevant details and forward it to the YMCA England for a Criminal Records Bureau check.

Training is open to all members of the Board, staff and volunteers. Please refer to Milton Keynes YMCA's Training Policy for further details.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The success of this equal opportunities/diversity policy depends on the commitment of all employees. It is the responsibility of every individual to eliminate discrimination and to ensure the practical implementation of this policy.

Implementation is principally about two things – making the policy known and understood and ensuring that the principles are applied in all areas of work. To this end the YMCA recognises that successful implementation means the following:

1. The designation of responsibility for the oversight of the policy.
2. The communication of the policy to make it known and understood; access to training for all if necessary.
3. The implementation of procedures to ensure that discrimination, however slight, does not occur.
4. The implementation of a procedure for handling complaints of discrimination, including harassment, and ensuring that people are aware of it, how it works and how to use it.
5. The collation of statistics and analysis of them in order to monitor the effectiveness of the policy and to determine the nature of any corrective action.

#### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Monitoring is carried out by Milton Keynes YMCA to ensure that the policies and procedures are observed and to enable Milton Keynes YMCA to review, update and improve its approach to equal opportunities/diversity.

This policy will be subject to annual review in line with legislative changes.

#### **INFORMAL AND FORMAL GRIEVANCES**

We recognise there may be occasions where you have a problem or concern that you wish to raise. If you have a complaint or grievance regarding the application of this policy, you should raise it with your immediate line manager or the HR department as appropriate.

Most routine complaints and grievances are best resolved informally in discussion with your immediate line manager. If you are unable to do this you may wish to discuss the issue with the HR department who will then advise you of options.

If you cannot resolve your grievance informally you may wish to raise your concerns formally. The Milton Keynes YMCA grievance procedure provides a mechanism for these to be dealt with fairly and speedily. The full grievance procedure is available from the HR Office.

If a service user raises a grievance to you, you should ensure that the complainant completes the *Resident & Service User Complaints / Grievance Procedure Form* which should be submitted to the *Housing Support Manager or other appropriate Manager*, in order that an investigation can be conducted. The process to be followed in such cases is detailed within the *MKYMCA Resident & Service User Complaints / Grievance Procedure*.

**APPENDIX I**  
**MILTON KEYNES YMCA**  
**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENT**

The Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy reflects both the Aims and Purposes of the YMCA and the spirit and intentions of legislation which outlaws discrimination.

The YMCA recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and skills. It values diversity and welcomes interest from all sections of the community. It is committed to build and reinforce a culture where people value each other and treat each together with dignity and respect.

As an employer of paid staff and an organisation which has Board members and volunteers, the YMCA aims to ensure that no individual receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, appearance, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, HIV status, medical condition, political views, religious belief, sexual orientation or trade union involvement.

It welcomes difference and recognises that action may be needed to give everyone a chance to contribute on equal terms within the Aims and Purposes of the YMCA.

In order to achieve this, the YMCA will strive to follow the principles detailed within this policy, keep requirements and practices under review and to take action where necessary in order to facilitate the recruitment, involvement and development of paid staff, Board members and volunteers from all sections of the community.

The Aims and Purposes of the YMCA commit the Movement to further the work of Christ in the world. In accordance with the Ecumenical Christian Movement, all staff in posts which are central to the fulfilment of the YMCA's Aims and Purposes is required to demonstrate a clear commitment to the Christian Faith, whilst at all times respecting and recognising the value of diversity in our community.

**APPENDIX II  
MILTON KEYNES YMCA  
BOARD STATEMENT**

The Board of Milton Keynes YMCA has endorsed this statement to clarify the Association's position in relation to a commitment to Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Valuing Diversity.

Whilst the underlying ethos of the YMCA is Christian, our clients and staff come from many differing cultural backgrounds and faiths. We try to express our commitment through care, compassion and tolerance in our work rather than evangelism. Milton Keynes YMCA is thus, a fully equal opportunities organisation which recognises the diversity of the community in which we live and serve and as such will not support discrimination on the grounds of age, appearance, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, HIV status, medical condition, political views, religious belief, sexual orientation or trade union involvement.

As part of our commitment to recognise the importance of the differing cultures and faiths within the geographical areas of our operations we support our clients, members and residents should they wish to practice their belief. As part of this commitment all staff are expected to help facilitate the arrangements necessary for such cultural or religious festivals which may include the provision of food, decorating of the space and sharing of information where this is beneficial to clients in accordance with their beliefs.

Staff, clients or customers are not expected to, or required to worship any other god but their own.

Milton Keynes YMCA recognises that society is made up of people from a number of different faiths, each of which is important to them. As a Christian organisation we value the diversity of our community.

