

Inclusion, Equality and Accessibility Policy

Introduction

This document is a statement of the rationale, aims, principles, approaches, roles, responsibilities and strategies for ensuring Steamworks Learning adopts a consistent and equitable approach to all procedures and processes within the organisation; respects the equal rights of staff, children and young people; and actively seeks to remove barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude children, young people, staff and volunteers. The government's publications 'The Equality Act 2010 and Schools' (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7e3237ed915d74e33f0ac9/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf), Sheffield City Council's 'Equality, diversity and Inclusion Policy statement 2022' (<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/your-city-council/our-equality-duty>) and information published by The National College (<https://nationalcollege.com/news/the-uk-equality-act-2010-promoting-inclusivity-and-equality-in-education>) and the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Services (ACAS) (<https://www.acas.org.uk/equality-policy-template>) have provided the framework for the development of this policy.

The statutory and non-statutory framework for this policy is:

- The Equality Act (2010)
- SEN and disability Act (2001)
- Disability and Discrimination Act (1995)
- Diversity Strategy 2018-2025 (DfE 2022)
- Protection from Harassment Act (1997)

Rationale

The primary purpose of the UK Equality Act 2010 in education settings is to ensure that all children and young people, staff and volunteers, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or characteristics, are treated fairly, equitably and without discrimination. Promoting equality of opportunity, means creating an environment where everyone has the chance to thrive and achieve their potential, free from barriers, prejudice and discrimination, and Steamworks Learning is committed to achieving this by creating and fostering a culture in which everyone is respected and included and understands their rights, and responsibilities associated with them. Diversity is about understanding that each individual is unique, recognising, respecting and celebrating the added value that differences bring and in order to continue to be innovative, creative and effective in meeting everyone's needs, Steamworks Learning acknowledges the need for a diversity of skills and knowledge and therefore welcomes staff and volunteers from different backgrounds. Inclusion and equality is not about 'treating everyone the same' but recognising that everyone is different and that people's needs are met in different ways and Steamworks Learning recognises that some people and communities may need extra help to reach their full potential, particularly when they face multiple layers of disadvantage and discrimination, and seeks to prevent and oppose discrimination, prejudice and inequality in all its operations and processes and make adjustments to ensure that children, young people, staff and volunteers with a disability are not placed at a disadvantage.

Aims and Principles

Steamworks Learning is committed to promoting dignity and respect for all and developing a culture of inclusion and equality in which diversity is valued and staff, volunteers, children and young people can thrive within an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by:

- Opposing unlawful discrimination by ensuring that all individuals with protected characteristics, or associated with individuals with protected characteristics, are treated fairly and equally: (<https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights>)
 - Age
 - disability (including mental or physical ability, neurodivergent conditions such as, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Autism, OCD, developmental language and tick disorders);
 - gender (including gender reassignment);
 - marital or civil partnership status;
 - pregnancy and maternity;
 - ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race;
 - religion or belief (including the absence of belief).
 - Sex (based on biological sex)
 - sexual orientation (heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, etc);
- Opposing and avoiding all forms of unlawful discrimination in relation to:
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment;
 - dealing with grievances and discipline;
 - dismissal;
 - redundancy;
 - leave for parents;
 - requests for flexible working;
 - selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities;
 - political belief;
 - socio-economic status.

Staffing and Volunteers

To carry out its work, Steamworks Learning seeks to appoint effective officers and involve volunteers in supporting roles who are suitable for the job/role and can carry out their responsibilities effectively. As all staff/volunteers will have unsupervised access to children/young people, the primary consideration when making all appointments will be the welfare, safety and security of the children and young people in their care and their ability to facilitate interesting, stimulating and creative activities. Therefore, all staff or volunteers must be 'fit and proper' persons to undertake the job/role and responsibilities/expectations of the position to which they have been appointed and in making an appointment to a particular leadership or support position, it may be appropriate and necessary to consider the gender and/or ethnicity of the individual to ensure appropriate composition of leadership or supporting teams and to fulfil certain aims such as female engineer role models.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role and responsibilities of the Director/s is to:

- actively encouraging inclusion, equality and accessibility within all its processes and operations;
- train staff and volunteers about their rights and responsibilities under the Equality and Accessibility Policy, including personal conduct that supports the organisational aim to provide equal opportunities and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination;
- regularly review employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness, equity and inclusion and update policy to reflect current legislation;
- monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.
- making reasonable adjustments where possible for staff and volunteers with disabilities to ensure that they are not disadvantaged by any form of disability;
- encourage all staff and volunteers to progress and develop their skills and capabilities by providing continued professional development opportunities (CPD);
- make staffing decisions based solely on merit and suitability in relation to the job/role;
- take complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by staff, volunteers, children, young people and members of the public seriously and acting promptly to address misconduct and take appropriate action (See Grievance Policy and Disciplinary Procedures).

The role and responsibilities of staff/volunteers is to:

- implement reasonable adjustments where possible (physical adaptations, alternative teaching strategies and approaches, specialist resources, etc) for children and young people with disabilities to overcome barriers to learning and ensure that they are not disadvantaged by any form of disability;
- support and promote the organisational aim to provide equal opportunities and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination;
- challenge all forms of discrimination, unfairness, bullying or harassment present within the organisation, raising grievances/complaints directly with the director/s (See Grievance Policy and Disciplinary Procedures);
- Behave with respect and fairness to all colleagues, pupils/young people, parents and carers in accordance with the Inclusion, Equality and Accessibility Policy.

Approved by: Rosey Andrassy

Date of next review: July 2025