

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AT SOUTH KILBURN TRUST

South Kilburn Trust is committed to treating all employees and job applicants equally. No employee or potential employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, religion or belief, sex, disability, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership status. The organisation will appoint, train, develop and promote on the basis of merit and ability.

All employees have personal responsibility for the practical application of the organisation's equal opportunities policy. Those involved in the recruitment, selection, promotion or training of employees have a special responsibility to ensure compliance and will receive the requisite training to ensure they can carry out these roles.

Our grievance procedure is available to any employee who believes that they may have been discriminated against unfairly. Any employee who is found to have committed an act of unlawful discrimination may face disciplinary action. Harassment or bullying on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race or religion for any other reason may be treated as gross misconduct and may lead to summary dismissal without notice.

We believe that a diverse workforce with people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas, thinking and approaches which improve business performance, as well as reflecting a diverse customer base.

We will not tolerate direct, indirect, perceptive or associative* discrimination against any person on the grounds of actual or perceived race, religion, philosophical belief, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, disability or secondary issues arising from a disability.

**Direct discrimination is where an individual is treated less favourably than another person or group (the comparator), of a different protected characteristic. For example a woman being treated less favourably than a male comparator.*

**Indirect discrimination is where a policy, decision, rule or act, although applied consistently to all, disadvantages a particular protected characteristic. For example holding a compulsory training course in a venue with no disabled access.*

**Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is treated less favourably based on a perceived protected characteristic that may not be correct. The act of discrimination is still unlawful.*

**Associative discrimination is where an individual is treated less favourably than another because of their association with someone in a protected group, for example, because they care for a disabled relative.*

It is also the responsibility of all employees in their daily actions, decisions and behaviour to endeavour to promote these concepts, to comply with all relevant legislation and to ensure that they do not discriminate against colleagues, customers, suppliers or any other person associated with the organisation. All employees must also report any acts of discrimination, bullying and harassment that they witness to their line manager. Where such witnessed acts have been committed by the line manager, employees should report their concerns to a more senior manager or to the Chair of the Trust.

Key Actions

In adopting these principles, South Kilburn Trust:-

1. Will not tolerate acts that breach this policy and all such breaches or alleged breaches will be taken seriously, be fully investigated and may result in disciplinary action.
2. Fully recognises its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and relevant codes of practice.
3. Will encourage employees to pursue any matter through the grievance procedure where they believe they have been exposed to inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy.
4. Will ensure that all managers understand and maintain their responsibilities and those of their team under this policy.
5. Will consider requests for flexible working patterns, wherever operationally feasible, to help employees to combine a career with their domestic responsibilities.
6. Will provide equal opportunity to all who apply for vacancies.
7. Will select candidates only on the basis of their ability to carry out the job, using a clear and objective process.
8. Will provide all employees with the training and development that they need to carry out their job effectively.
9. Will provide all reasonable assistance to employees who are or who become disabled, making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to provide continued employment. We will ensure an appropriate risk assessment is carried out and that appropriate specialist advice is obtained when necessary.
10. Will publicise and make this policy statement available throughout the Company

Dignity at Work

The Trust believes that the working environment should at all times be supportive of the dignity and respect of individuals. If a complaint of direct, indirect or third party harassment is brought to the attention of management, it will be investigated promptly and appropriate action will be taken.

Bullying and Harassment

Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Indirect harassment is conduct that although not directed at an individual, has created a hostile environment which has had an adverse effect on them.

Sexual harassment is defined as "unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or other conduct based on sex, affecting the dignity of women and men at work". This can include unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct.

People can be subject to harassment on a wide variety of actual or perceived grounds including:

- race, ethnic origin, nationality or skin colour
- sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment
- religious, philosophical or political beliefs
- willingness to challenge harassment, leading to victimisation
- disability, sensory impairments or learning difficulties or actions arising from these conditions (e.g. spelling mistakes caused by dyslexia).
- status as ex-offenders
- age
- real or suspected infection with a blood borne virus (e.g. AIDS/HIV)

- membership of a trade union or activities associated with membership

Forms of bullying and harassment may include:

- physical contact ranging from touching to serious assault
- verbal and written harassment through jokes, offensive language, gossip and slander, sectarian songs, letters, cards and so on. This could be either in the workplace, or via email and social media sites.
- visual display of posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags and emblems
- isolation or non-cooperation at work, exclusion from social activities
- coercion ranging from pressure for sexual favours to pressure to participate in political/religious groups
- intrusion by pestering, spying, following someone

What should you do if subject to Harassment?

If you feel that you are being directly or indirectly harassed you are strongly encouraged to seek early advice/support from your line manager. If you feel that your line manager is harassing you, then you should contact their immediate line manager, the Chief Executive or the Chair of the Board.

You should also keep a written record detailing the incidents of harassment and any requests made to the harasser to stop. This written record should be made as soon as possible after the events giving rise to concern and should include dates, times, places and the circumstances of what happened.

Ultimately, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should submit a written complaint to your line manager, or a more senior manager if the complaint is about your line manager, under the Grievance Procedure.