

# **Equal Opportunities Policy**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Youth United does not seek to differentiate between its volunteer staff, or the children in their care, simply on the grounds of status; and, within the definition and application of its regular activities, believes in equal opportunity for all, irrespective of gender, marital status, colour, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, disability, or age; as long as they present no threat (apparent or perceived) to the children or staff with whom they will be interacting

Youth United believes that the performance of its volunteer staff is central to the success of the organisation. The management committee, and the children in their care, depend upon the skills and motivation of all those employed by the organisation to promote and develop the ethos of the organisation, and to recognise that positive reinforcement of equal opportunities for all employees, and the young people the organisation seeks to serve, is essential for continued success and prosperity

However, if any circumstances arise, wherein a statement within this Equal Opportunities Policy should be at conflict with our Child Protection Policy; the policies within the latter will automatically have priority status, and acted upon quickly and accordingly to protect any child in our care

Youth United welcomes applications from children for membership of its activities, on the condition that they are recommended by a parent of one of its existing members, and who can vouch for the integrity of the new member. This policy is in place for the protection of the children in its care

Subject to good moral and social behaviour, the young people with whom Youth United works are a fair representation of the general population of Harrow

Youth United will maintain relevant records of the young people with whom it works

The procedures laid out in this policy are with regard to legislation defined by the Sexual Discrimination Act 1975; the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Amendment Act 2000. Harassment is an unacceptable form of behaviour, and may be in breach of the Sexual Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1975 and 2000

## **Training and Appraisal**

Youth United actively, and regularly, supports all its adult and teenage staff to attend training that is beneficial to their personal and professional development, and which supports the organisation's goals

## PROCEDURES FOR CONCERN POLICY

One nominated representative in each project will be responsible for co-ordinating child protection policy and monitoring its implementation in practice. This representative will also ensure that all members of staff and volunteers are provided with appropriate training opportunities

In cases where teenagers are being trained, or are acting, as team leaders; they will have the status of both 'child' and 'staff'

For the purpose of this policy, Youth United has defined harassment, from child to child, staff to staff, staff to child, or child to staff as:

- Intentionally offensive remarks and jokes
- Unwanted or uninvited physical contact
- Being rejected or made to feel unwelcome

For the purpose of this policy, Youth United has defined sexual harassment, from child to child, staff to staff, staff to child, or child to staff as:

- Making suggestive remarks or innuendos
- Leering
- Offering compromising invitations
- Unnecessary or uninvited touching/physical contact
- Physical assault of a sexual nature

Any child, or member of staff, who experiences such harassment has a right to complain, without fear of recrimination, to any Senior member of staff, or the management committee; and can expect to be listened to, taken seriously and treated fairly

Should Youth United identify that harassment is taking place, it will withdraw the child or member of staff from all situations where they are considered to be potentially at risk of harm, or at risk of harming others, until the situation has been resolved

Youth United will respond quickly, fairly and impartially to all allegations of harassment, and will enable all parties involved to supply their version of events before any disciplinary action is taken

Youth United does not expect its staff, or the children in its care, to be subjected to, or endure, any form of harassment or abuse whilst participating in their activities, and will regard any incidents of such as an extremely serious concern

## **Procedure for Concern - Stage 1**

- Any child or young person with such a concern must, in the first instance, seek advice from a member of staff, who must report it to a Senior staff member
- Any member of staff, or team leader, with such a concern must, in the first instance, seek advice from a Senior staff member
- Should the Senior staff member be satisfied that the concern is genuine then they must make it clear to the offender that the behaviour is unacceptable. The Senior staff member must report their action back to the complainant; their parents or carer (if applicable); the nominated representative; and if necessary, the management committee

## **Procedure for Concern - Stage 2**

- If the situation remains the same, and a second complaint is made, the Senior staff member must report it to the management committee
- If the management committee and other representatives are satisfied that the complaint is genuine, they may recommend that the offender is requested not to return; and to take positive action to ensure this

In this case, a written record will be kept of the facts surrounding the concern, what action was taken and why; using the following guidelines:

- Name of the child, or member of staff
- Parent's details, if applicable
- The child's address
- Relevant phone numbers
- What is said to have happened, or what was seen?
- When it occurred
- Who was involved in the incident?
- Who else, if anyone, was there?
- What was said by those involved?
- What, if any, evidence of abuse can be recorded, e.g. bruises, bleeding, changed behaviour?
- Who has been told about it?
- Was the child able to say what happened, if so how did they describe it?
- Were the parents or carer advised?