

Equal Opportunities Policy

Core Principles:

Battle Youth Zone (BYZ) is committed to equal opportunities policy and practice and will ensure that all management, staff, volunteers, committee members and BYZ members are treated equally and as individuals regardless of age, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital or parental status, political belief, race, religion or sexual orientation. In implementing this policy, BYZ will take account of the appropriate legislation. For more info on the legal framework for equality in the UK, please see the Equality Act 2010.

- We value the diversity of the communities we serve and seek to support all of them. We acknowledge the importance of reflecting this diversity in our organisation;
- We recognise that every worker can influence how equality is achieved, both in the group/project and through the activities/service we provide.
- We will ensure that all workers are aware of their rights and responsibilities in this respect.
- We recognise the importance of effective communication.
- We will endeavour to provide a comprehensive range of information, including direct information about the group/project for young people and the community, in a variety of appropriate forms.
- We will also consult and listen to the views of the local young people and community.

The group of directors of Battle Youth Zone CIC aim to be representative of the community and users which it serves, and it will be responsible for ensuring that the equal opportunities policy is properly implemented, monitored and reviewed. The directors will aim to undertake equal opportunities training.

Good Practice

WE DO:

- Create a positive, accepting environment where young people and youth workers meet together.
- Respect other people's life experiences.
- Value each person for her or his uniqueness regardless of age.
- Focus on people's ability rather than disability.
- Take the opportunity to experience or explore other people's culture.
- Think about the programme: make sure opportunities are planned to enable young people to explore non-stereotypical activities.
- Consider our own prejudices; accept other people's personal choices and are prepared to challenge oppressive behaviour and language.

WE DON'T:

- Allow racist comments or jokes by workers or young people to go unchallenged.
- Ignore complaints or warning signs of discrimination on the assumption that the matter is trivial.
- Expect everyone to share our values and standards.
- Ignore abuse of power on the basis of age; more years don't necessarily mean more wisdom.
- Think about disability as just an issue about physical access.
- Display only posters and other material which reinforce stereotypical role-models.
- Stereotype or make assumptions about young people's sexuality.

STAFFING/VOLUNTEERING

The organisation will ensure that no job applicant, employee or volunteer receives less favourable treatment than another on grounds of age, disability, ethnic origin, marital or parental status, political belief, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

The organisation is committed to undertaking open recruitment and selection procedures and wherever possible all vacancies will be advertised, and fair and equitable short listing and interview processes will be followed.

Employees and volunteers working with the organisation will be informed of the equal opportunities policy and receive training on equal opportunities issues as appropriate.

The organisation operates disciplinary, grievance or complaints procedures which all staff will be appraised of. Behaviour or actions against the spirit and /or letter of the equal opportunity laws, on which this policy is based, will be considered serious disciplinary matters.

The organisation aims to make its services accessible to as wide a range of young people as possible and in order to achieve this will take steps to remove barriers which prevent potential young people from having equal access to the organisation's activities.

This will include:

- ensuring that activities take place in venues which are accessible to disabled young people;
- providing facilities for disabled young people to enable them to participate fully in activities;
- ensuring that the design of publicity material takes account of the needs of disabled young people both in terms of print, format, information on access;
- encouraging and enabling people from underrepresented groups to attend and participate. This will be implemented across all aspects of the organisation's work including:
 - the appointment of members to its management;
 - the appointment of staff and volunteers, their conditions of service and employment procedures;
 - all dealings with young people and the wider community.

Dealing with Complaints

- The Directors of Battle Youth Zone will take complaints of discrimination and harassment very seriously.
- They will investigate them thoroughly and provide opportunities for the person making the complaint to speak in a safe environment about their experience.
- If the complaint is against a particular individual, the Directors will hear their point of view.
- The Directors will decide the action to take based on the principle of ensuring the continued inclusion and safety of any member who has experienced discrimination or harassment.
- Any decision to terminate someone's membership will be made in line with the rules set out in BYZ policies and constitution.

Review This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to any changes in legislation or guidelines.

Approved by:..... (BYZ Directors)

Date: