

Merton Mencap

Equal Opportunities, Diversity & Inclusion

Last reviewed
January 2026

Next review
January 2027

**This policy and procedure has been adopted by Merton Mencap
through its Executive Committee which remains responsible for its review**

Statement of Policy

Staff and staff member include Merton Mencap employees, bank workers, agency workers and volunteers (including Trustees).

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Chief Executive, trustees and management team to the promotion of equal opportunity and inclusion, and the valuing of diversity at Merton Mencap.

It is our policy to promote equal opportunity, inclusion and value diversity. While we recognise that the Equality Act 2010 applies to paid employment, it is Merton Mencap's intention that the overall aims and principles should cover our volunteers. Reference should also be made to the charity's other relevant policies and procedures including Recruitment Policy & Procedure, Supervision Policy & Procedure and Code of Conduct.

Merton Mencap will not treat people less favourably with a protected characteristic as stated in the Equality Act 2010 which includes

- age
- sex
- race (including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)
- disability
- religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- marriage and civil partnership (including marital status)
- gender reassignment
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful discrimination. All those having dealings with the charity or involved in its activities will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the grounds stated above.

Equality commitments

We are committed to:

- promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
- promoting a harmonious environment at work and in all our activities in which all persons are treated with respect
- preventing unlawful direct/indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation

All staff have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. For example, Merton Mencap recognises its duty to ensure staff do not suffer any form of unwelcome physical contact at work; our induction will provide adequate information and guidance so staff feel confident in their responsibilities.

Implementation

The Chief Executive has responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. The Executive Committee is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy. We expect all our staff to abide by the policy, and any related legislation, and help us to create an equality environment – this includes drawing to the attention of management any potential or actual breaches of the policy.

In order to implement this policy, we shall:

- publicise this policy
- reflect the aims of this policy in other Merton Mencap policies and procedures
- provide all staff with training in equal opportunity and diversity
- incorporate equal opportunities notices into relevant communications (e.g. job advertisements)
- promote positive images and role models which do not discriminate against anyone
- ensure those who are involved in decisions about recruitment and promotion adhere to anti-discriminatory selection approaches,
- consider the needs and abilities of our staff and service users when planning and developing our programmes
- collect information from our members and service users, staff and monitor it to ensure it reflects our policy
- seek to involve members and service users in the operation of our charity and its activities, in particular through representation on the board of trustees
- provide information in accessible format, where possible
- conduct periodic reviews of our approach to EDI

Legislation, monitoring and review

Merton Mencap acknowledges the Equality Act 2010 as the legislation for ensuring equal opportunities. We will keep up to date on legislation relating to unlawful discrimination, equality of opportunity and good practice.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed regularly, at least annually, and action taken as necessary. For example, where monitoring identifies an under-representation of a relevant group or groups, we will ensure that our practices, policies and procedures do not discourage such groups to be involved in our activities.

Equal Opportunities monitoring

Merton Mencap may request that staff help that the charity with our Equal Opportunities monitoring. This is not a mandatory - monitoring will not affect any recruitment decisions or their work with the charity.

Complaints procedure for challenging discrimination and prejudice

We listen to all complaints and treat them all seriously including any complaints in relation to discrimination and prejudice. Information about the charity's complaints procedure is provided to all service users and advertised prominently on our web site.

Audit Guidance

Check	Evidence
Have all staff received training in Equal Opportunities & Diversity?	View main training record held
Is recruitment for paid and voluntary positions managed fairly?	Check that all job adverts include our commitment to Equal Opportunities Check how vacancies are advertised – ensure a range of channels are used so vacancies reach areas of the community? Check that all operational procedures to appoint candidates were followed (*also see Recruitment Policy & Procedure), particularly during the process of selecting for interview and deciding the appointment
Do our communications promote positive images and role models which do not discriminate against anyone?	Check web site, and our marketing literature Check whether our communications with users is accessible and if it is having the desired impact
Are our activities inclusive?	Check the profile of people taking part in our activities Are there any factors which prevent some people from participating?