

## Equal Opportunities Policy



### THEATRE FOR LIFE

#### General Statement:

Theatre for Life is committed to combating discrimination through the promotion of equal opportunities in respect of:

- Provision of services
- Working practices of the organisation
- Employment and training

Theatre for Life will try to ensure that in respect of the above, no young person shall receive less favourable treatment than others because of her or his:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour or ethnic origins)
- Nationality
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Educational background

#### Practices and Commitments:

In order to ensure that Theatre for Life are accessible to all, Theatre for Life will follow these principles:

- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
- Publicity materials, publications, advertisements, events, workshops and performances shall avoid language which presents a stereotyped, offensive or detrimental view of any group or individual's background on any of the above grounds. However, performances and workshops will necessarily need to present such language and views when tackling hard hitting issues. It should be made clear by Leaders during workshops and performances the difference.



- Theatre for Life will make its services available to disabled people, including wheelchair users – by using premises that are wheelchair accessible for its activities whenever possible. Theatre for Life will discuss with parents, carers and young people how it can try to accommodate specific needs.
- Theatre for Life will not allow its publicity, events, premises or facilities to be used for the expressions of views in conflict with this policy.
- Breaches of equal opportunities policy will be viewed as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings including removal from activities or termination of contracts
- Theatre for Life values diversity and recognises the wealth of benefits diversity can bring to the organisation.

## **STAFF AND RECRUITMENT**

### **Statement of Policy**

1. Theatre for Life recognises that we live in a society where discrimination still operates to the disadvantage of many groups in society.
2. Theatre for Life believes that all persons should have equal rights to recognition of their human dignity, and to have equal opportunities to be educated, to work, receive services and to participate in society.
3. Theatre for Life is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities within the company through the way we manage the organisation and provide services to the community. In order to express this commitment, we develop, promote and maintain policies that will be conducive to the principles of fairness and equality in the workplace.
4. The objective of this policy is that no person should suffer or experience less favourable treatment, discrimination or lack of opportunities on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or philosophical beliefs, health status, HIV status, age, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, political beliefs or trade union membership, class, responsibility for dependents, physical attributes, ex-offender status as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, lack of formal qualifications where such qualifications are not formally required, or any other grounds which cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of this policy.
5. This policy will influence and affect every aspect of activities carried out at Theatre for life.



5. In the provision of services and the employment of staff, Theatre for Life is committed to promoting equal opportunities for everyone. Throughout its activities, Theatre for Life Education will treat all people equally whether they are:

- Seeking or using our services.
- Participating or leading our industry led workshops
- Participating or leading our Youth Theatre
- Participating or leading our Community Outreach projects
- Participating or leading our workshops as part of our Education Programme in schools and colleges
- Applying for a job or already employed/contracted by us.

### **How the policy will be implemented and who is responsible?**

The Artistic Director, Michelle Smith has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy, however, we expect all employees/freelancers to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment which is its objective.

In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to employees, job applicants, volunteers and relevant others.
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff.
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in nondiscriminatory selection techniques.
- Incorporate equal opportunity notices into general communications practices.
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

### **Conduct and general standards of behaviour**

All staff and volunteers will be DBS checked and are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and considerate manner at all times. Theatre for Life Education will not tolerate behaviour such as:

- Making threats
- Physical violence
- Shouting
- Swearing at others
- Persistent rudeness
- Isolating , ignoring or refusing to work with certain people
- Telling offensive jokes or name calling
- Displaying offensive material such as pornography or sexist / racist cartoons, or the distribution of such material via email / text message or any other format



- Any other forms of harassment or victimisation.
- Interact or contact participants outside of Theatre for Life Education activities, through email, social media or in person
- Use Theatre for Life as a platform for your own self promotion to recruit extra business or to make further revenue in addition to your workshop leader payment

The items on the above list of unacceptable behaviours are considered to be disciplinary offences within Theatre for Life Education and can lead to disciplinary action being taken. Theatre for Life does, however, encourage staff to resolve misunderstandings and problems informally wherever possible, depending on the circumstances. However, whether dealt with informally or formally, it is important for staff who may have caused offence to understand that it is no defence to say that they did not intend to do so, or to blame individuals for being over sensitive. It is the impact of the behaviour, rather than the intent, that counts, and that should shape the solution found both to the immediate problem and to preventing further similar problems in the future.

## **Complaints of discrimination**

Theatre for Life Education will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any forbidden grounds made by employees, trustees, clients or other third parties and will take action where appropriate. All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the organisation's grievance, complaints or disciplinary procedure, as appropriate and the complainant will be informed of the outcome in line with these procedures. We will also monitor the number and outcomes of complaints of discrimination made by staff, volunteers, clients and other third parties.

## **Legal Obligations**

### **Equal Opportunities and Discrimination (Equality Act 2010)**

The new Equality Act came into force in October 2010 and replaces all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales – namely the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, The Civil Partnership Act 2004, the Employment Equality Regulations 2003 (religions and belief and sexual orientation).

**The Equality Act 2010** protected characteristics are:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief sex and sexual orientation.

In valuing diversity Theatre for Life is committed to go beyond the legal minimum regarding equality.

The **Equality Act 2010** harmonises and strengthens and replaces most previous equality legislation. The following legislation is still relevant:



- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Work and Families Act 2006.
- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended)

I hereby acknowledge that I have read the Theatre for Life Equal Opportunities Policy and will abide to the expected professional practice set out by the company at all times.

Name:

Signed:

Date: