

Equality, Diversity & Dignity at Work Policy

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 PBE is committed to valuing diversity and seeks to provide all staff with equal opportunity for employment, career and personal development on the basis of ability, qualifications and suitability for the work as well as their potential to be developed in the job.
- 1.2 The Charity will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination against any person on grounds of age, disability, gender or gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or caring responsibilities whether in the field of recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, career progression, training, transfer or dismissal.
- 1.3 It is also the responsibility of all staff in their daily actions, decisions and behaviour to endeavour to promote equality, diversity and dignity at work and 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 Charity.

2. Key Principles and Commitments

PBE will:

- Create a working environment that promotes equality, dignity and respect for all members of staff, which PBE believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- Not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and all such breaches or alleged breaches will be taken seriously, be fully investigated and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal
- Ensure corrective action is implemented which will prevent recurrence
- Fully recognise its legal obligations under all relevant legislation and codes of practice
- Encourage staff to use relevant procedures (including the Grievance Policy) where they believe they have been subjected to any act of discrimination, bullying or harassment at work
- Consider opportunities for flexible working patterns, where operationally feasible, to help employees to combine a career with their domestic responsibilities
- Provide equal opportunity to all who apply for vacancies through open competition and select candidates only on the basis of their ability to carry out the job, using a clear and open process
- Ensure all staff involved in the recruitment process are aware of and comply with the Recruitment and Selection Policy and associated procedures
- Provide assistance to employees who are or who become disabled, making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to provide continued employment. We will ensure a risk assessment is carried out and that appropriate specialist advice is obtained when necessary
- Inform all staff, volunteers and managers that this policy is in operation and that they are obligated to comply with its requirements and promote fairness in the workplace. The policy will be made available to funders, stakeholders, members, external partners and job applicants as required

3. Bullying and Harassment

- 3.1 Bullying is a form of harassment which may be related to an abuse or misuse of power.
- 3.2 Harassment is unwanted conduct, real or perceived, that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or other conduct based on sex, affecting the dignity of individuals at work.
- 3.3 Bullying and harassment may be verbal, non-verbal, written or physical.
- 3.4 Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Unwelcome sexual advances or other conduct of a sexual nature
 - Subjection to obscene or other sexually suggestive or racist comments or gestures, or other derogatory comments or gestures related to a protected characteristic
 - Jokes or pictures of a sexual, sexist or racial nature or which are otherwise derogatory in relation to a protected characteristic
 - Demeaning comments about an employee's appearance
 - Questions about an employee's sex life
 - The use of nicknames related to a protected characteristic whether made orally, by e-mail or on social media
 - Intimidation or ridicule of an employee because of a protected characteristic
 - Isolating an employee or excluding him or her from social activities or relevant work-related matters because of a protected characteristic
 - Coercion ranging from pressure for sexual favours to pressure to participate in political/religious groups
 - Intrusion by pestering, spying, following someone
 - Setting impossible work objectives/ unreasonable demands or expectations that go beyond robust management

4. Raising Awareness

All staff will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities within it as part of their induction.

5. Monitoring

- 5.1 PBE will use an Equal Opportunities monitoring process in order to review the progress of this policy. Monitoring may involve:
- The collection and classification of information regarding all applicants, volunteers and current employees
 - The examination by protected characteristic of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants
 - Recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions
- 5.2 The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.
- 5.3 All sensitive data will be processed and securely stored in line with the Data Protection policy.

6. Responsibilities

Responsibilities of managers:

- 6.1 Managers have an obligation to prevent all forms of discrimination, harassment or bullying taking place and to take immediate action once it has been identified, whether or not a complaint has been made.
- 6.2 All allegations of discrimination, harassment or bullying received either informally or formally must be dealt with promptly and sensitively as well as taking care to ensure that there is no pre-judgement of situations based on individual attitudes and perceptions.

Responsibilities of all staff:

- 6.3 It is the responsibility of every member of staff to ensure that our ethos of equality, diversity and inclusion is recognised as the way in which everyone should behave.
- 6.4 Any member of staff who becomes aware of any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying occurring should bring the matter to the attention of their manager. If the manager is the source of the concern, the matter should be raised with the CEO. If the CEO is the source of the concern, the matter should be raised with the Chair or a Trustee of the Board.
- 6.5 An employee who feels that he/she has been discriminated against, harassed or bullied has a right to seek redress via the Grievance Policy.

Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees:

- 6.6 The Board of Trustees delegate responsibility for the implementation of this policy and procedures to the CEO of PBE. The day to day implementation and monitoring of this policy and procedures is delegated to line managers.

7. Procedure for Raising and Investigating Concerns

- 7.1 All allegations of discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation will be dealt with seriously, confidentially and speedily. PBE will not ignore or treat lightly grievances or complaints of discrimination, bullying or harassment from staff.
- 7.2 While PBE encourages staff, who believe they are being discriminated against, harassed or bullied to notify the offender (by words or by conduct) that their behaviour is unwelcome, it also recognises that actual or perceived power and status disparities may make such confrontation impractical. In the event that such informal direct communication is either ineffective or impractical, or the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, the formal Grievance Policy should be used.
- 7.3 If you wish to make a complaint of discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation, whether against a fellow member of staff or a third party, such as a funder, member, contractor or supplier, you should take the following steps:

- 7.3.1 Any concerns should be raised through the Grievance Policy in as timely a manner as possible providing specific details of the concerns, so that an investigation may proceed and any action taken expeditiously.
- 7.3.2 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.
- 7.3.2 All allegations of discrimination, bullying or harassment will be taken seriously. The allegation will be promptly investigated and, as part of the investigatory process, you will be interviewed and asked to provide a written statement setting out the details of your complaint.
- 7.3.3 Confidentiality will be maintained during the investigatory process to the extent that this is practical and appropriate in the circumstances. However, in order to effectively investigate an allegation, PBE must be able to determine the scope of the investigation and the individuals who should be informed of or interviewed about the allegation. For example, the identity of the complainant and the nature of the allegations must be revealed to the alleged harasser so that he or she is able to fairly respond to the allegations.
- 7.3.4 PBE reserves the right to arrange for another manager to conduct the investigation other than the manager with whom you raised the matter.
- 7.3.5 Once the investigation has been completed, you will be informed in writing of the outcome and the conclusions and decision as soon as possible. PBE is committed to taking appropriate action with respect to all complaints of discrimination, bullying and harassment which are upheld. If appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged perpetrator.
- 7.3.6 No member of staff will be penalised for raising a complaint, even if it is not upheld, unless your complaint was both untrue and made in bad faith.
- 7.3.7 Where appropriate, PBE may suggest the use of mediation to repair working relationships.
- 7.3.8 PBE recognises that alleged instances of sexual harassment will need additional sensitive and confidential handling and will ensure that staff are encouraged to raise their concerns with the knowledge that they will be taken very seriously and investigations completed in an effective and timely manner and be prepared to take action against perpetrators where necessary. In cases of alleged sexual harassment, a male and female investigator will carry out the investigation jointly.
- 7.3.9 Where it appears that a criminal offence has been committed, the CEO will inform the Board or Trustees (unless the matter is already escalated to the board) and the matter will be referred to the police for investigation.

8. Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that equality, diversity and dignity at work is continually promoted in the workplace.