



A COUNSELLING SERVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
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Policy Name

Equal Opportunities

Date reviewed by Policy Action Committee:

October 2024

Date approved by Trustees:

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Version Number

Version 1

Next Review:

September 2025

If any changes are made to these policies, the Board of Trustees will be notified that the policy has been amended.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

At Time to Talk West Berkshire, we recognise that certain individuals and groups are discriminated against on grounds of mental health, disability, race, ethnic origin, culture, socio-economic background, gender, sexuality, religion, creed, marital status and age. We are committed to working towards eliminating all forms of discrimination both through our own work and through our policies and practices.

It is our policy that no person shall be discriminated against on grounds of disability, race, ethnic origin, culture, socio-economic background, gender, sexuality, religion, creed, marital status or age.

We promote equality of opportunity for all, and equality of access to counselling for young people aged 11-25 in West Berkshire. We are committed to maintaining evaluation and monitoring processes.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR CLIENTS

- To respect the dignity and self-worth of every client
- To respect and value individual differences and diversity
- To promote each client's independence and autonomy
- To promote every client's right to be a voluntary participant in the counselling process
- To recognise and respect the potential of each client

OUR COMMITMENT TO STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are made available where possible.
- To promote equality in the workplace.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and volunteers. In particular, staff and volunteers should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day-to-day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

THIRD PARTIES

Third-party harassment occurs where a member of staff or a volunteer is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients. We will not tolerate such actions against staff or volunteers, and the individual concerned should inform their line manager at once that this has occurred. The incident will be fully investigated and we take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.