DERBYSHIRE County Council

Derbyshire Shared Lives Scheme

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

All people have the same human rights. Shared Lives Derbyshire recognises that some individuals and groups can be discriminated against, for example, on the grounds of these protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origin, colour and nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.

We are committed to working in ways that value diversity and promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and will challenge discrimination through positive action. We will ensure that the organisation continues to reflect upon its practice in order to identify areas of inequality and work towards greater equality of opportunity.

Definitions of Equality and Diversity are as follows:

- Equality is a legal framework to protect against discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people with 'protected characteristics'.
- Diversity is the valuing of our individual differences and views, creating a culture where everyone can participate, thrive, and contribute.

Knowledge and understanding in practice

Shared Lives carers are encouraged to be aware of their own behaviour and attitudes to ensure they are not directly or indirectly discriminating.

Shared Lives carers are asked to complete Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training.

Our service respects and promotes everyone's right to:

- live a meaningful and fulfilling life
- achieve all they can
- be valued for who they are, including their ethnic background, language, culture, faith, gender and sexual orientation
- be treated fairly
- live an everyday life as part of their community
- access services and resources available in and for the community
- live in an environment that is free from bullying, harassment, or discrimination

- complain without fear of being victimised.

Providing information

The scheme ensures that anyone who is interested in Shared Lives can access information by providing this in their preferred format. This could include email or letter, in Braille, or in other languages.

Shared Lives carers

Applications to become a Shared Lives carer are actively encouraged from all sectors of the community.

Shared Lives carer assessments aim to find evidence of whether the applicants have the experiences and competences suitable for this role. This includes having awareness and understanding of a multi-cultural society, so applicants are asked about their attitudes and values, their commitment to supporting people as equal members of the community and their ability to challenge prejudice and discrimination.

The scheme manager's approval decisions are based on information and evidence from the assessment and depend on whether the applicants can meet the needs of people choosing to be supported.

Shared Lives Panel

The Shared Lives Panel includes people with a cross-section of experiences. Treating applicants fairly, supporting inclusivity and acting with a zero tolerance of discrimination on any grounds is a fundamental requirement of all panel members.

Matching

'Shared Lives - bringing people together because of similarities and celebrating their differences.'

When matching people who require support with a Shared Lives carer, the scheme will consider a range of information to find the match that is most likely to be successful. Taking into consideration preferences and availability of access to community resources, engagement and support services.