

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY SOUNDLY FOSTERING

This procedure outlines our commitment to provide inclusive and equal services to a diverse range of children and young people and to promote equality and diversity as part of our recruitment practice, both for foster carers and for staff.

### Regulations and Standards:

#### **The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011:**

Regulation 11 – Independent fostering agencies: Duty to secure welfare

Regulation 13 – Behaviour management and children missing from foster parent's home

#### **Fostering services: National Minimum Standards**

Standard 2 – promoting a positive identity, potential and valuing diversity through individualised care

#### **Training and Development Standards**

Standard 1 – Understand the principles and values essential for fostering children and young people

Standard 2 – Understand your role as a foster carer

Standard 4 – Know how to communicate effectively

### Legislation- Equality Act 2010

Soundly Fostering pledge to work and live inclusively, celebrating diversity and individuality.

We commit to equality for children, young people, foster carers and our staff.

We seek to be actively engaged in anti-racism, anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice, working with respect towards all.

## We encourage and offer opportunities to children

- Helping to build and develop children's respect in themselves and for others.
- We recognise and build on the strengths of children and young people from all cultures, religions, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability and backgrounds; in ways that meet their needs and help them to achieve their full potential.
- Soundly Fostering and our carers make every effort to ensure that homes are welcoming to all children and young people and others significant in their care and wellbeing. In addition to this, resources used to develop work with children and young people are chosen for their suitability, positive image and anti-oppressive nature.
- Children and young people are offered opportunities to try out new experiences, which are not restricted by traditional gender roles.
- Staff and foster carers will actively challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive or discriminatory in a thoughtful and positive way. They will learn from the children in their care and will in turn provide positive role models and ways of managing conflict.

## Inclusion for children and young people

- All children/young people are given the opportunity to be cared for and educated. Where possible this is alongside their peers in order to develop each child to reach their full potential
- Children/young people are encouraged and supported to understand their rights and be well-informed about ways of challenging discrimination
- Assessments of the child/young person's specific needs are carried out, with the aim of supporting and helping to develop each child in reaching their full potential
- Children are cared for with foster carers who have been suitably trained in all aspects of equality and diversity, including legislation and their responsibilities

- Foster carers are expected to identify local community resources that contribute to meeting the needs of children/young people - these are highlighted and promoted and where they do not meet required needs, alternatives are sought and suitably identified
- Foster carers are expected to examine ways in which diversity can be valued and activities adapted to meet the individual needs of each child, including religious beliefs, active prayer, food preparation and menu choices,
- Additional practical or therapeutic support accessed through supervision and training will be offered to foster carers who are finding difficulty in understanding diverse or complex situations for children/young people.

### Employment Equality

At Soundly Fostering, we aim to provide equal opportunity throughout our working and recruitment practice. We pledge to actively revise and monitor all aspects of the agency's functioning, recognising conscious and unconscious bias and checking and correcting when this might have occurred. We promote ethical ways of working, meeting the individual and making such adaptations as they might require in order to work as part of the team. Soundly Fostering will actively employ an anti-discriminatory, anti-oppressive and anti-racist stance.

**No job applicant or employee should be discriminated against, either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic national origin, religious belief, political opinion or affiliation, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.**

- We commit to not discriminate, whether consciously or subconsciously, or in making decisions.
- Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy and implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements, guidance and codes of practice.

- Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any person specifications.
- We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of all vacancies.
- We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources, which provide only or mainly applicants of a particular group.
- All applicants who apply for jobs with us, will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job in line with appropriate safeguarding checks - e.g., DBS.
- All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.
- More than one person will carry out short-listing and interviewing where possible.
- Interview questions will relate to the requirements of the job and will not be discriminatory in nature.
- We will not disqualify any applicant because he/she is unable to complete an application unassisted, unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.
- Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.
- The policy will be communicated to all private contractors, reminding them of their responsibilities towards equality of opportunity.
- We will maintain a neutral working environment, in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated.