

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Definitions:

“The Company” means The Loddon Foundation Limited

“We” means The Loddon Foundation Limited

“Employee” means an employee of The Loddon Foundation Limited

“HR” means the Company’s Human Resources Department

Policy:

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equality and fairness to all in our employment and not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the grounds of:

- Sex
- Age
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin
- Religion or belief
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Gender reassignment
- Being pregnant or on maternity leave

At The Loddon Foundation we know that our success depends on our staff. The Loddon Foundation strives to be an organisation where everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

The Company is committed to identifying and eliminating unlawful discriminatory practices, procedures and attitudes throughout the School and wider charity. The Company expects employees to support this commitment and to assist in its realisation in all possible ways.

Please read this policy in conjunction with the Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying policy and procedure.

The definition of Equality and Diversity:

Equality can be described as breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and rights for everyone.

Diversity means celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but for the Foundation.

Scope:

This policy applies to all current employees (whether full-time, part-time, bank or temporary), past employees, job applicants, agency staff, trustees and contractors.

This policy requires commitment from everyone within the company.

When does this policy apply?

This policy applies to all conduct:

- In the workplace (In or out of working hours)
- During working hours (On or off site)
- In school vehicles
- At any social events linked to the company, such as leaving parties, Christmas parties, and social interactions with colleagues, including social events in pubs/clubs
- At training sessions both internally and externally

It also applies to any conduct which may impact on The Loddon Foundation's reputation (e.g., the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy, that could be linked to the company).

Introduction

The Equality Act was introduced in 2010; it legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It protects people from unfair treatment based on 9 protected characteristics as defined above.

The act addresses: Direct Discrimination, discrimination through: Association and Perception, Indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from disability, Harassment and Victimisation. Please see Appendix 1 for definitions and further explanation.

The Company's Commitment

The Loddon Foundation is committed to:

- Encouraging and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce and supporting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.
- Ensuring that all employees and job applicants are given equal opportunity and that the organisation is representative of all sections of society.

All employees, no matter whether they are part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect.

The Loddon Foundation recognises that people have preferences in relation to the world around them. However, every employee has a responsibility to ensure that decisions made at work are not affected by bias or prejudice.

The Loddon Foundation will take seriously complaints of unlawful discrimination.

Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be based on aptitude and ability.

What do we expect from our staff?

All Employees must:

- Adhere to and comply with this policy and the spirit in which it is written
- Always model the company's expectations with regards to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; creating an environment where any form of discrimination and harassment is unacceptable
- Always treat all colleagues and anyone that they come in to contact with through our work setting, with dignity, respect, courtesy and consideration
- Be conscious of their own bias and ensure it does not affect decision making. Treat **everyone** fairly
- Consider each situation/scenario from the other person's perspective
- Challenge any comments which they think are not acceptable. Interrupt harmful language or behaviour in the moment
- Report discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment that is witnessed straight away
- Attend and adhere to all training associated within their role
- Help identify discriminatory practices and bring these to the attention of their manager or HR
- Contribute to creating an inclusive learning environment that values difference

Unacceptable behaviour in the working environment includes someone who:

- Shows no interest in recognising different cultural norms and behaviours
- Demonstrates a low level of curiosity, openness and interest in the possibility of learning from others
- Makes assumptions about people and situations which cause offence and set up barriers to building trust
- Lacks sensitivity and treats people with a lack of respect
- Fails to challenge inappropriate behaviour
- Is unaware of or uninterested in the impact of their behaviour on others

Recruitment and Selection

In seeking to achieve a diverse workforce at all levels, we will ensure that no employee, job applicant or candidate for promotion will be disadvantaged or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the job.

The Company recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will take steps to ensure that:

- We recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates possible. We will advertise jobs via various methods ensuring this attracts a diverse range of candidates.
- All applications are shortlisted based on qualifications and experience.
- For all roles more than one person will be involved in the recruitment and selection process.
- The reasons for the selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies will be recorded on the interview paperwork.
- All recruitment agencies acting for the Loddon Foundation are aware of its requirement not to discriminate and to act accordingly.

DBS

The Loddon Foundation uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to contribute to the assessment of the suitability of applicants and staff to work for the company. We will comply fully with the DBS code of Practice and will treat all applicants and staff fairly. We will not discriminate unfairly against anyone based on a conviction disclosure, or other information received from the DBS. Please read the Disclosure and

Barring DBS Service Policy & Procedure and the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy found on the SharePoint for further information.

Promotion, Training and Career Development

All employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development and progression opportunities. Access to training shall be open and accessible for all staff. All employees will have equal access to training and other career development opportunities appropriate to their experience and abilities. However, the Company will take appropriate positive action measures (as permitted by the equal opportunities legislation) to provide special training and support for groups which are underrepresented in the workforce and encourage them to take up training and career development opportunities.

Promotion within the Company will be made without reference to any of the forbidden grounds and will be based solely on merit. The selection criteria and processes for recruitment and promotion will be kept under review to ensure that there is no unjustifiably discriminatory impact on any group.

Conditions of Service

Terms and conditions of service for employees will comply with U.K. equal opportunities legislation.

The provision of benefits such as working hours, maternity, other leave arrangements, performance appraisal systems, dress code, bonus schemes and any other conditions of employment will not discriminate unlawfully against any employee.

Where appropriate and necessary, the Company will endeavour to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service which consider the specific needs of employees which arise from their sex, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin), disability, sexual orientation, marital or civil status, pregnancy and maternity, part time status, age, religion or belief.

Implementing the Policy

Ultimate responsibility for implementing the policy rests with the Charity Leadership Team. The Company is responsible for setting a culture that reinforces the commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Employees will be trained on this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and will be provided with equality and diversity training appropriate to their needs and responsibilities. All those who act on the Company's behalf will be expected to pay due regard to it when conducting business on the Company's behalf. In all its dealings, including those with clients, customers, suppliers, contractors, recruitment agencies and the public, the Loddon School Company will seek to promote the principles of equality and diversity.

Allegations and Complaints

The Loddon Foundation operates an open-door policy to discuss workplace problems and employees can discuss any matter with their manager on an informal basis. The Loddon Foundation recognises that this may not always be appropriate in the circumstances; however, if this is the case employees can discuss the situation with a senior manager or with a member of HR.

The Company will treat seriously, and act where appropriate in response to all complaints of discrimination or harassment on any of the protected grounds made by employees, agency staff, customers, suppliers, contractors or other third parties.

If an employee decides not to take any action to deal with the problem and the circumstances described are very serious then we reserve the right to investigate the situation. The Loddon Foundation has an overall duty of care to ensure the safety of all employees who may be adversely affected by experiences at work.

It is for the individual to decide which route to take in solving any problem that has occurred. There are two types of solution available – informal and formal.

Informal

Employees can choose to approach an individual who they think is not acting appropriately, telling them their behaviour is unwelcome and that it must not stop. If the individual finds it difficult or embarrassing to raise the issues directly with the person creating the problem, support can be sought from a work colleague, manager or member of HR who can accompany or assist with the conversation. Where the informal route fails or where the employees wish to raise the matter formally, the grievance procedure will be invoked.

Formal

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the Company's grievance or complaints procedure, as appropriate. Confidentiality will be maintained while ensuring that the rights of both the person raising the allegation and the person alleged to have breached policy are protected. Employees and witnesses can be assured that they will not be ridiculed or victimised for making or assisting a colleague in making a complaint; even if it is not upheld, so long as it is made in good faith. Everyone involved in the investigation, including witnesses, will be required to maintain confidentiality. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Any complaints about discrimination or harassment will be treated seriously. Where a staff member is found to be practising any form of harassment or discrimination, they may be subject to action under the disciplinary policy and associated procedures. This may include the need for further training or development or in more serious cases action up to and including dismissal.

The Loddon Foundation has an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which offers free confidential advice, information and counselling available 24 hours a day. AXA Health can be contacted on 0800 072 7072. The Foundation also operates a separate counselling service; for further information please contact HR.

Monitoring

Equal opportunities practice is developing constantly as social attitudes and legislation change. This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that equality and diversity is continually promoted in the workplace.

In order to demonstrate our commitment to equality of opportunity and to demonstrate our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity in employment the Company will monitor the diversity of the workforce by asking new employees to complete an Equal Opportunities monitoring form. The results of

any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. This can be an important tool to ascertain at an early stage whether there appear to be any roles which certain disadvantaged groups are excluded. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.

Related Policies

Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying

Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying Procedure

Disciplinary Policy

Disciplinary Procedure

Grievance Procedure

Staff Code of Conduct

Recruitment and Selection of Staff

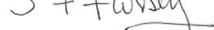

Maternity and Adoption Policy

Maternity and Adoption Procedure

DBS Service Policy

DBS Procedure

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy

Date	Summary of Changes	Signature (Chairman of Committee)	Date of next review
Oct 2023	Minor amendments made		Nov 2024
Nov 2024	Minor amendment to include reference to Sexual Harassment in Policy Title		Nov 2025

Appendix 1

Direct Discrimination – Occurs where one person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic

Discrimination by perception – Involves a person being treated less favourably because someone mistakenly perceives the person to have a protected characteristic

Associative discrimination – Occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they are linked or associated with a protected characteristic, e.g., a friend, a spouse, partner, or another person that they are associated with

Indirect discrimination – Occurs when rules, conditions or arrangements are put in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at any unfair disadvantage

Diversity – Means acknowledging everyone is different; respecting these differences and placing value on the differences