

## **Equality and diversity policy**

### **1. Policy statement**

- 1.1 Wimborne Community Theatre (WCT) is committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and diversity and recognises that employees, service providers, volunteers, members or service users should not experience discrimination on any grounds.
- 1.2 We aim to encourage, value and manage diversity and to promote equality of opportunity in all areas of activities.
- 1.3 We are unreservedly opposed to and will not tolerate any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (defined as Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010).
- 1.4 We believe that all forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.
- 1.5 We aim to provide an environment where all volunteers and members are valued and respected and where discrimination and harassment are not tolerated.

### **2. Definitions**

- 2.1 'Equality' means understanding and seeking to remove the different barriers to equal opportunities for different groups of people.
- 2.2 'Discrimination' is acting unfairly against a group or individual through actions such as exclusion, verbal comment, denigration, harassment, victimisation, a failure to appreciate needs or the assumption of such needs without consultation.
- 2.3 The term 'disability' applies to a person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out their normal day-to-day activities.
- 2.4 'Race' includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality.
- 2.5 The Equality Act 2010 is the statute replacing previous anti-discrimination laws. It applies to all organisations that provide a service to the public, sell goods or provide facilities, irrespective of whether they charge for them.

### **3. Implementation**

- 3.1 WCT's steering group has the responsibility to implement this policy, and to review it every three years or earlier if there are changes to regulations or legislation.
- 3.2 Volunteers, members, steering group members and service users have a duty to co-operate with WCT to make sure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination. They should draw the attention to a member of the steering group to suspected discriminatory acts or practices or cases of bullying or harassment.
- 3.3 WCT will ensure that the users of this policy are made aware of its contents and responsibilities by presenting it in a suitable form, offering an accessible copy, where appropriate.
- 3.4 All facilitators and consultants contracted to work for WCT will be required to support our Equality and Diversity policy.
- 3.5 Copies of this policy will be freely available to volunteers, members and any other interested parties. A copy will be displayed on our website.
- 3.6 Training will be provided steering group members and volunteers on cultural awareness, disability awareness and other subjects that will develop from equality and diversity.

#### 4. **Action we will take**

We will:

- develop an organisational culture that positively values diversity
- make it clear that intimidation, harassment and bullying will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action
- ensure that we work in a way which promotes awareness of the rights and needs of the people who face discrimination and enables all people to have access to them
- seek to make sure that our rehearsal and performance spaces are accessible and inviting for all members of the community
- challenge any discrimination or oppressive behaviour from and towards any members, volunteers, clients or agencies we work with
- work in a way that recognises peoples' individual needs
- regularly evaluate this policy and seek feedback from those who are affected by it.

*Revised and approved by WCT steering group 31.10.18*