Equality & Diversity Policy

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 provides a legal framework to tackle disadvantage and discrimination, protect individuals from unfair treatment and promote a fair and more equal society.

Pirton JoyCare (PJC) believes that every person is individual and by recognising, respecting and embracing difference we help engender improvement for all. This includes a better volunteering environment which is free from harassment or discrimination and an inclusive and accessible service for all of PJC's service users.

Purpose of policy

PJC's Equality & Diversity Policy sets out our commitment to providing an inclusive environment which is free from discrimination for everyone who volunteers for and accesses our organisation, services and activities.

Discrimination

PJC believes discrimination in any form is unacceptable, regardless of whether there is any intention to discriminate or not.

PJC will not tolerate discrimination on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other reason which cannot be justified. The Equality Act 2010 describes these types of discrimination as protected characteristics, which are safeguarded against discrimination by law.

Discrimination can take one or more of the following forms:

- **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic. For example, refusing to support a service user because of their sexual orientation or declining the offer of help from a volunteer because they have a disability.
- **Indirect discrimination:** a requirement or condition that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a protected characteristic more than others and which cannot be justified.
- **Harassment:** abuse, harassment or other unwanted behaviour which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- **Victimisation:** treating someone unfavourably because they have taken (or might be taking) action under the Equality Act or are supporting someone who is doing so.

Principles

- PJC recognise and value difference and seek to redress inequality and disadvantage.
- PJC recognise the right of service users, volunteers and trustees to be treated fairly, with dignity, respect and without discrimination of any kind.
- All trustees and volunteers are required to read this policy and behave in a manner which supports its ethos and help PJC be a genuinely inviting and inclusive organisation.
- Discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated. Any complaint of bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination will be taken seriously.

Reporting Discrimination

If you believe you have been discriminated against or if you witness something you think is discrimination you should report it by email to admin@pirtonjoycare.co.uk or contact the PJC Secretary with your concerns. Any complaint or breach of this policy will be investigated promptly by the PJC Secretary and a trustee who is independent from the complaint/breach to ensure no conflict of interest. The outcome of the investigation will be notified to the Chair, complainant and Board of Trustees and appropriate action taken to prevent further discrimination or victimisation.

Policy governance

This policy will be reviewed every two years and will be published on PJC's website.

Version	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date	Next review due
1		PJC Trustees	July 2007	
2	Elaine Derrick	PJC Trustees	September 2021	August 2023
3	Elaine Derrick	PJC Trustees	January 2023	January 2025
4	Elaine Derrick	PJC Trustees	February 2025	January 2027
5	Elaine Derrick	PJC Trustees	October 2026	October 2028