

MOORLAND ROAD COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy



1. Introduction

Moorland Road Community Library (the Organisation) is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in all of our activities. This commitment extends to our volunteers and we welcome everyone from our community as a volunteer. The organisation is also committed to ensure against unlawful discrimination of library users and other members of the public.

The Organisation encourages all people it works with to contribute to an environment in which people feel comfortable expressing how they feel and what they need, knowing they will be treated with respect and that their contribution will be valued.

The way we work and learn within the Organisation reflects both the mission and objectives of the Organisation and the spirit and intentions of legislation that outlaws discrimination and promotes equality and diversity.

The Organisation will endeavour to deliver services in a way that genuinely recognises the importance of an inclusive society that brings opportunities and access, not barriers to individuals.

2. Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 aims to protect people from unfair treatment. The nine protected characteristics covered by the legislation are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Marriage and Civil Partnership
5. Maternity and Pregnancy
6. Race
7. Religion or belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation

To reflect our commitment to the Act, we ensure that volunteers and members of the public who access our services are not discriminated against directly or indirectly because of any characteristic they have or may have had.

In addition, we also recognise that some potential volunteers have criminal records and may be reluctant to apply for volunteering roles. Having a criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering with us. Furthermore, we value difference, and recognise the value that the different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences of our volunteers bring to the Organisation. (See Appendix for Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders.)

3. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are:

- to ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality including Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation currently in force
- to be mindful of equality, diversity and inclusion in all our activities and services
- to ensure equal access to services for the public and to opportunities for volunteers within the Organisation
- to create environments free from harassment and discrimination
- to confront and challenge discrimination where and whenever it arises, whether it is between colleagues, or in any other area relating to the Organisation's work
- to ensure through positive action and so far as is practicable, that the Organisation's premises and services are accessible to all people
- to accept and implement this policy as a necessary qualification for any position in the Organisation

4. Responsibility

The Trustees have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. However, all volunteers also have a duty as part of their involvement with the Organisation, to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice.

All volunteers should understand that they, as well as the Organisation, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, against fellow volunteers, members, suppliers and the public.

The Organisation takes seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow volunteers, members, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the Organisation's activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct and will be managed in accordance with the Volunteer Policy. Particularly serious complaints could result in the cessation of the relationship between the Organisation and the volunteer.

5. Our commitment

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our volunteers are recognised and valued.
- To ensure that every volunteer works in an environment that promotes dignity and respect for all.
- Breaches of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are taken seriously and will be regarded as misconduct.

6. Policy Enforcement

Any volunteer or service user who believes that they have been treated unfairly and contrary to the intention of this policy should raise the issue, in the first instance, with a Trustee. If a satisfactory outcome is not agreed the complainant should contact the Secretary. If this fails the complainant has the right of appeal to the Chair of Trustees of the Organisation.

Any Trustee or volunteer of the Organisation found in breach of this policy will be counselled on their actions and may, where necessary, be asked to leave the Organisation.

Any library user found in breach of this policy will be counselled, where appropriate, on their actions and appropriate, action will be taken where necessary.

7. Monitoring

The Organisation regards the collection/analysis of data as vital in informing change and improving performance. Where appropriate, statistics on the Organisation services will be collected and analysed in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion matters. We will review volunteer turnover and seek information on reasons for leaving.

The Trustees will regularly review the equality of opportunity relating to the Organisation's services. Recruitment and selection procedures for volunteers will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that they do not operate against the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. If appropriate, action will be taken to encourage wider take up of volunteering, and community use of its services.

If it is found that the policy is excluding or discouraging volunteers or restricting library users, the Management Committee shall take action to re-adjust the policy.

This policy has been approved by the Trustees of Moorland Road Community Library.

Date: 04 January 2022

Review Date: 04 January 2023

MOORLAND ROAD COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Policy on Recruiting Ex-Offenders

Background

Moorland Road Community Library (the Organisation) is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

The Organisation complies fully with current legislation regarding the fair treatment of ex-offenders in our recruitment of volunteers. When assessing applicants' suitability for volunteer positions, the Organisation will request criminal records checks known as DBS checks where required.

The Legislation

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 determines what information can be taken into account when recruiting ex-offenders to volunteer roles. Some spent convictions may be disclosed to the Organisation when a DBS check is requested.

The Organisation complies fully with "The Revised Code of Practice for Disclosure and Barring Service Registered Persons, November 2015" and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.

- The Organisation undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed. The Organisation can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that MRCL are legally entitled to know about.
- The Organisation can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.

Our Commitment

The Organisation commits to providing a copy of this policy to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process.

An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.

The Organisation ensures that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences and also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, the Organisation will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to the termination of the Volunteer Agreement.

The Organisation makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of The Revised Code of Practice for Disclosure and Barring Service Registered Persons, November 2015” <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice> and makes a copy available on request.

This policy has been approved by the Trustees of Moorland Road Community Library.

Date: 1 September 2021

Review Date: 1 September 2024