

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

A POLICY STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. AFTERHOURS Youth Groups is committed to the respect, care and development of each individual's dignity, value and potential as a human being.
- 1.2. To this end, Equal Opportunities should permeate every aspect of its life and work.
- 1.3. Legislation and passive support are not enough. Discrimination on any grounds affects everyone and tackling it must be the responsibility of all. Such discrimination is incompatible with good youth and community work and educational practice.

2. DEFINITION

Equal opportunities are about enabling individuals to achieve their full potential by:

⇒ respecting each person as an individual, treating them with equal care and consideration, and identifying and meeting their individual needs;

⇒ providing equal access to all aspects of the Project's life;

- * challenging the myths and stereotypes which provide false grounds for unequal treatment of the groups to which they belong.

3. RANGE

This statement refers to all activities of Afterhours Youth Groups, its users, managers, oversight committee, employees, students, staff and volunteers.

4. RATIONALE

- 4.1 Discrimination on any grounds is unjust and damaging to the person affected as well as being a waste of human potential. It also damages the discriminators, reinforcing their distorted view of society and its history, and of their own identity.
- 4.2 Education has a major role to play in combating discrimination, enabling all people to achieve their potential, and providing them with opportunities which will equip them for life in a rapidly changing society.

5. ENTITLEMENT

- 5.1 All users of the groups are entitled to full access to a broad and balanced range of activities, advice and curriculum, which both reflects and challenges the realities of society and of the wider world.
- 5.2 They are entitled to be treated with respect and as of equal status and value whatever their race, sex, intellectual or physical capability, social or cultural background, sexual orientation or age.
- 5.3 They are entitled to respect for their religious or cultural beliefs and requirements.
- 5.4 They are entitled to protection from harassment and discrimination.

6. **AIMS**

This policy aims:

- 6.1 To develop an awareness of the responsibility of everyone to promote equal opportunities for all.
- 6.2 To ensure that all people achieve their full potential.
- 6.3 To combat discriminatory practices and stereotyping in activities and curriculum materials.
- 6.4 To encourage appreciation and respect for the richness of cultural and personal diversity.
- 6.5 To encourage people to have non-discriminatory, non-stereotyped views of themselves, of society, and of their roles within it.
- 6.6 To encourage consideration of the widest possible range of educational, training, and non-vocational choices.
- 6.7 The ultimate aim is to enable everyone whatever their race, sex, intellectual, or physical capability, social or cultural background, sexual orientation or age, to have equal access to power, decision making and earning capacities; and to enable them to have the choice of using their own experiences and perspectives to examine, and if necessary redefine, what constitutes power, skill, and achievement.

7. **EXPECTATIONS**

The groups will:

- Seek to create an ethos where prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour is challenged whenever and whenever it occurs, and to operate an appropriate code of practice to deal with all forms of harassment.
- Comply with the wider Methodist Church Equal Opportunities Policy, legislation, standing orders and Guidelines as published and revised from time to time. (Methodist Church Policy is attached to the original document and is available as a copy on request).

