

POLICY STATEMENT BY PRINCIPAL

This policy explains what equality of opportunity is, how it works and why it is important to The Dental Practice in Dulwich Village.

The business case for equal opportunities is clear. Any organisation needs to use and develop its available skills and experience to the full. We wish to employ a workforce which reflects the diverse community at large and considerations such as gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, race, colour, ethnic origin and creed should not be allowed to limit the practice's access to the best possible talent available.

I commend this leaflet to you. With your help and commitment we can realise the potential which exists among present staff and those who would like to join us.

Katherine Opie-Smith

INTRODUCTION

The Dental Practice in Dulwich Village values the rich diversity and creative potential that men and women with differing backgrounds, skills and abilities bring to the workplace.

In addition to its moral responsibilities, it is in the practice's interest to promote equal opportunities in employment.

Putting equal opportunities into practice makes business sense because it is about getting the best from people.

That is important for the practice as people who use their full potential are more productive and give a better service to our patients.

When equal opportunities is not applied, we waste a valuable source of talent and potential. Worse still, when actual discrimination, harassment or victimisation takes place, it brings about a climate of fear, insecurity and poor work performance. It is also illegal.

Our Equal Opportunities Policy will help us to:

- ◆ make full use of the talents of all our workforce;
- ◆ provide the same level of opportunity for everyone;
- ◆ improve our management and personnel management practice;
- ◆ strengthen our reputation as a good employer;
- ◆ attract and retain new recruits;
- ◆ show our patients and clients that we are a fair business organisation;
- ◆ ensure that our employment and business practices do not infringe the law and
- ◆ demonstrate our commitment to be an equal opportunities employer.

However, a policy does nothing by itself. It is what happens in practice that counts – our day to day actions and behaviour. That is why it is important that we all understand what our responsibilities are and act accordingly.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

We seek to employ a workforce which reflects the diverse community at large, because we value the individual contribution of people, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, race, colour, ethnic or national origin or creed.

We will treat all practice employees with dignity and respect and we will provide a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

We expect each individual employee to promote the spirit of Equal Opportunities. Each employee has a duty, both morally and legally, not to discriminate against other employees.

We will not tolerate acts which breach this policy and all instances of such behaviour, or alleged behaviour, will be taken seriously and fully investigated and may be subject to the practice's disciplinary procedures. This is stated as a possible misconduct under the Disciplinary Rules.

We will provide services to our patients and clients without any form of unlawful discrimination.

We are committed to developing, monitoring and reviewing appropriate employment practices which help to avoid direct and indirect discrimination.

DISCRIMINATION

Unfair discrimination in employment occurs as a result of prejudice, misconception and stereotyping which hinders the proper consideration of an individual's talents, skills, abilities, potential and experience. It can be direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional.

HARASSMENT

Harassment can take many forms, and may involve inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that is unwanted, objectionable or causes offence. It can cause the recipient to feel threatened, humiliated or patronised and it creates an intimidating working environment.

Harassment can have an adverse effect on a person's working life and general health, and can prevent them from doing their job effectively. Furthermore, if their performance at work is marred they should decide to leave, then there is a real cost to the employer. If, as a result of sexual/racial harassment, a person suffers a detriment in terms of job opportunities, training or security employment, then it could constitute a breach of the law.

The practice is strongly opposed to all forms of harassment. All managers are required to ensure that none of the employees for whom they are responsible are subject to harassment, nor should anyone be left in any doubt as to the consequences of such behaviour. This means that managers and employees should be aware of what is meant by harassment, the detrimental effects it can have and how it can be prevented. The practice's Disciplinary Code states that sexual/racial harassment is gross misconduct for which the penalty of dismissal is justified at the first offence.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES OBJECTIVES

To ensure that a positive equal opportunities climate exists, the practice expects each individual employee to promote the spirit of the Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy. Each employee has a duty, both morally and legally, not to discriminate against other employees. The practice will not tolerate acts of discrimination by any of its employees against other staff or against its patients and customers.

If any employee feels that they have not been treated in accordance with this policy, they should approach the Principal.