



Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

SV2 is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion amongst its workforce and our ethos is to respect and value peoples' differences, to help everyone achieve more at work as well as in their personal lives so that they feel proud of the part they play in our success. We aim to be supportive, fair, just and treat people dignity, eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce and our clients to be truly representative of most, if not all, sections of society and for each individual to feel respected and able to give their best. We encourage a culture that enables staff and clients to feel welcome and comfortable.

This policy relates to all staff, volunteers, students, sub-contractors and clients.

- **Equality** is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.
- **Diversity** is about recognising, respecting and valuing the different backgrounds and beliefs of people we provide a service to or work with. These differences can be both visible and non-visible.
- **Inclusion** is a broad term which people may have a different understanding of and it is a word that is interchangeable with equality and diversity. At SV2 we focus on workplace and service user inclusion. It is about valuing all people.
- **Direct Discrimination:** Refers to treating a person less favourably than others in similar circumstances.
- **Indirect Discrimination:** Refers to the application of requirements which intentionally or not, have an adverse effect on one particular group
- **Harassment:** Is any behaviour, deliberate or otherwise, which is unwarranted, unwelcome, found to be offensive, objectionable, upsetting or embarrassing to the recipient.
- **Victimisation:** Treating a person less favourably than others because he/she has exercised his/her rights under this policy

SV2 recognizes that all sections of society are not represented within the organisation and that we have limited time, resources and capacity to reach everyone. However, we are committed to developing a more diverse and inclusive workforce and service for our clients by using an innovative and inclusive approach whilst also being realistic about how much we can achieve.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Provide equality, fairness and respect to all those in our employment, whether temporary, part-time full-time, volunteering or sub-contracted and for all those accessing SV2's services.
- Not unlawfully discriminate against staff or service users because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

SV2 commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued
- This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities which will be dealt with SV2 grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff through line management and annual appraisals, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation and meet the diverse needs of our clients
- Ensure training specifically includes training in relation to equality and diversity for all staff within their first year of employment with SV2
- Take decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce and service users regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy

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Review date: January 2022

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in the Staff Handbook and the Therapy Handbook for Sub-contracted Therapists. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Provision of Service

SV2 aims to deliver services throughout Derby and Derbyshire to people who need them without discrimination. Every client will be treated in a professional manner, with courtesy and respect. Users of our services and those who take part in our activities will be informed that SV2 is committed to an Equality and Diversity Policy so that:

- They will know that a policy exists and that a copy is available to them
- They understand that any contact with SV2 staff will meet the standards set out in the policy
- They will know they have the right to complain, if they feel these standards are not being adhered to or they are dissatisfied with the service provided to them

SV2 will endeavour to ensure that its services meet the needs of the diverse communities in Derbyshire by involving communities in identifying their needs and by seeking to meet these needs, wherever practicable. SV2's inclusion sub-group will identify key priority groups initially taking into account the resources available to the organisation.

SV2 aims to develop services to make sure there is maximum take up by all communities and particularly those groups facing disadvantage and discrimination. It will do this by:

- Setting up an inclusion sub-group to assess, review and monitor how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy and any supporting action plan are working in practice in relation to access to SV2's services
- Monitoring, quarterly and annually any inclusion action plan and supporting data and consider taking action to address any issues
- Providing information in plain English and use methods other than written documents to present information as appropriate
- Offering information on request in accessible formats, including spoken community languages, large print, audio tape/CD, on DVD in British Sign Language and on the internet as appropriate.
- Accessing interpretation, translation and sign language services on request as appropriate (Language line)
- Ensuring its services are physically accessible

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by SV2's Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team and has been agreed employee representatives. (Members of the inclusion sub-group)

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