



Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Policy

This policy was reviewed and approved by the Board December 2025

1. Statement of Policy

- 1.1 As a charity we are committed to the fair treatment of all people within our work through the way we manage the organisation and provide services to the community. We will develop, promote and maintain policies that are conducive to the principles of fairness and equality and inclusion. These policies help to ensure there is no unlawful discrimination within or perpetrated by KNS or it's representatives.
- 1.2 We celebrate the diversity of the communities in which we work and look to build a stronger, more connected community and so ensure that no one is marginalised or excluded. Ensuring fair treatment for our workforce and those we work with is therefore closely linked to our mission as a charity.
- 1.3 The overall purpose of this policy is that no person should suffer or experience less or more favourable treatment, discrimination or lack of opportunities on the grounds of:

Age
Gender reassignment
Being married or in a civil partnership
Being pregnant or on maternity leave
Disability
Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
Religion or belief
Sex
Sexual orientation

- 1.4 In the provision of our projects and activities and the employment of staff, we are committed to promoting equal opportunities for everyone. Throughout its activities, Karis Neighbour Scheme will treat people with respect whether they are:
 - Seeking or using our services
 - Applying for a job or already employed by us
 - Volunteers
 - Sessional workers or students on work experience or placements.
- 1.5 With regard to employees, we will oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination within the workplace. This includes in:
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment
 - dealing with grievances and discipline

- dismissal
- redundancy
- leave arrangements
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

2. Responsibilities and implementation

2.1 The CEO has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Project leads also have responsibilities and we expect all our employees and volunteers to abide by the policy and the principles it sets out.

2.2 In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to employees, job applicants, volunteers and relevant others.
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques.
- Provide training and foster understanding of other people's needs and backgrounds in order to promote positive behaviour and attitudes and prevent discrimination. This will be covered through training on commencing employment and in regular team meetings.
- Attempt to make reasonable work adjustments to take into account individual's circumstances.

3. Conduct and general standards of behaviour

3.1 All staff and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a considerate and appropriate manner at all times. We will not tolerate behaviour such as:

- Making threats
- Physical violence
- Shouting or swearing at others
- Persistent rudeness
- Isolating, ignoring or refusing to work with certain people
- Telling offensive jokes or name calling
- Displaying offensive material such as pornography or sexist / racist cartoons, or the distribution of such material via e-mail / text message or any other format
- Unwanted physical contact
- Any other forms of harassment, victimisation or bullying.

The above examples of unacceptable behaviours are considered to be disciplinary offences and may lead to disciplinary action. This list is not meant to be exhaustive.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence. For further

details on our response to sexual harassment, please refer to the Health & Safety policy.

3.2 We may also find it necessary to challenge unacceptable behaviours by clients, certainly when directed at others who may be vulnerable or when it makes a member of staff or volunteer feel unsafe or threatened. In this situation, we will assess the impact of the behaviour on others involved with KNS and take appropriate action. This may include addressing the challenging behaviour with the client and/or if the impact of the ongoing behaviour is considered severe the individual may be refused access to our support. However, as an organisation our values do mean we seek to be understanding of, and patient with, individuals we are supporting, demonstrating grace.

4. Complaints of discrimination

4.1 We will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any forbidden grounds made by employees, trustees, clients or other third parties, where these take place at activities or premises we have responsibility for, and will take action where appropriate.

4.2 All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the organisation's grievance, complaints or disciplinary procedure. The complainant will be informed of the outcome in line with these procedures.

4.3 The number and outcomes of complaints of discrimination will be monitored and records kept by the CEO.

5. Legal Obligations

5.1 Equal Opportunities and Discrimination (Equality Act 2010)

The new Equality Act came into force in October 2010 and replaces all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales – namely the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, The Civil Partnership Act 2004, the Employment Equality Regulations 2003 (religions and belief and sexual orientation).

5.2 As well as The Equality Act 2010, the following legislation is still relevant:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Work and Families Act 2006
- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended).

5.3 The Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics are:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

6. Recruitment and Selection

6.1 In the case of recruitment, we will approach each individual with fairness and equality, taking into account that some roles will require specific characteristics. The person specification would clearly detail what is essential and what is desired for the role and

candidates would be selected only on their suitability for the role. **Linked process:**
Recruitment Process

- 6.2 We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.
- 6.3 Promotion and advancement will be made on merit, and non-job-related factors will not be allowed to influence decisions. All decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principle of this policy.
- 6.4 All employees will be given opportunity to undertake training appropriate to their present role. Additional training requests beyond what is required for the current post is assessed on a case by case basis on the benefit it would bring to the organisation.
- 6.5 We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.
- 6.6 All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to meet the job criteria.
- 6.7 Short-listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person, preferably bringing a range of expertise and experiences.
- 6.8 The short-listing panel are required to read a document surrounding 'unconscious bias' before assessing for the recruitment of new staff.

7. Monitoring

- 7.1 We will maintain appropriate records to ensure the implementation of this policy can be monitored. This includes:
 - Requesting only information relevant to the job role advertised.
 - Recording decisions reached and the reasons for decisions with regards to recruitment, appraisals and training.

Associated Policies:

Complaints Procedure
Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure
Volunteer Policy
Data Protection Policy
Recruitment Process

Appendix – additional information that does not make up the policy

Ethos behind this policy:

Karis Neighbour Scheme was established on the ethos of karis/charis, in greek, which means 'grace'. Grace is the giving and receiving of unearned loving kindness and acceptance. Along with compassion, honouring the individual, caring for the whole person, partnership working, relationship building and hope, grace is one of the key values which shape the services we offer and thus links to the strong belief in equal acceptance and opportunity for all

Useful Definitions:

Harassment is unwanted behaviour that you find offensive, where the other person's behaviour is because:

- you have a protected characteristic
- there is any connection with a protected characteristic (for example, you are treated as though you have a particular characteristic, even if the other person knows this isn't true)

Unwanted behaviour could include:

- spoken or written abuse
- offensive emails
- tweets or comments on websites and social media
- images and graffiti
- physical gestures
- facial expressions
- banter that is offensive to you

Anything that is unwelcome to you is unwanted. You don't need to have previously objected to it.

The unwanted behaviour must have the purpose or effect of violating your dignity, or creating a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment for you.

To be unlawful, the treatment must have happened in one of the situations that are covered by the Equality Act. For example, in the workplace or when you are receiving goods or services.

Victimisation

This is treating someone badly because they have done a 'protected act', or because an employer, service provider or other organisation believes that you have done or are going to do a protected act. The reason for the treatment does not need to be linked to a protected characteristic.

A protected act is:

- making a claim or complaint of discrimination (under the Equality Act)
- helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information
- making an allegation that you or someone else has breached the Equality Act
- doing anything else in connection with the Equality Act

Workplace bullying

Bullying is usually seen as acts or verbal comments that could 'mentally' hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression.

Workplace Bullying is repeated, health-harming mistreatment of one or more persons (the targets) by one or more perpetrators. It is **abusive conduct** that is :

- Threatening, humiliating, or intimidating, or
- Work interference — sabotage — which prevents work from getting done, or
- Verbal abuse