

## **Storyy Group Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

*Storyy Group refers to the following sectors: Storyy Homes, Storyy AP and Storyy Training.*

### **Policy Statement:**

At Storyy Group, we are committed to creating an inclusive, respectful, safe and empowering environment in which every individual is recognised, valued, and supported to thrive. We actively promote equality of opportunity, celebrate diversity, and challenge discrimination at all levels across our organisation.

This policy underpins our ethos and approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) across our holistic provision, which includes:

- Alternative education provision for pupils aged 5-21 with varying levels of need.
- Children's residential care homes offering therapeutic and trauma-informed support.
- Apprenticeships and vocational programmes for young people and adults.
- Supported accommodation services for care leavers and vulnerable individuals.

We believe that inclusive practice is central to safeguarding, wellbeing, and the right to education, care, and progression. We recognise that young people and adults face multiple and intersecting barriers that require sensitivity, understanding, and proactive solutions.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to all areas of our organisation including:

- Employees (including temporary, permanent, agency and contractors)
- Apprentices, learners, and residents
- Volunteers, mentors, and governors
- Visitors, partners, and suppliers
- Stakeholders involved in decision-making, delivery, or oversight of services

It applies across all environments:

- Alternative provision settings
- Outreach work
- Residential and supported living homes
- Online platforms and digital learning environments
- Apprenticeship placements and off-site learning

### **Aims and Objectives:**

Storyy Group aims to:

- Eliminate all forms of direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and prejudice.
- Advance equality of opportunity by reducing barriers to participation, progress, and achievement.
- Foster an inclusive and safe culture where diversity is celebrated and respected.
- Build understanding and empathy through inclusive education, open dialogue, and positive representation.
- Empower all staff and service users to challenge discriminatory behaviour or systems.

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- Embed inclusive and person-centred practice in recruitment, planning, teaching, care, and governance.

### **Legal Framework:**

This policy supports compliance with the following key legislation and statutory duties:

- Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice
- Care Standards Act 2000 and Children's Homes Regulations 2015
- Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE)
- Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework and Social Care Common Inspection Framework

Storyy Group recognises and respects the nine protected characteristics and extends its inclusive practice beyond legal compliance to actively promote social justice, wellbeing, and empowerment.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

All Staff and Volunteers will:

- Model inclusive behaviours and challenge discriminatory attitudes.
- Maintain high expectations of all individuals regardless of background or need.
- Deliver support and services free from bias or stereotyping.
- Be aware of the potential for unconscious bias and reflect on personal practice.
- Report discrimination or exclusion concerns promptly.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), Pastoral Leads and Home Managers will:

- Lead and monitor inclusive practice within their settings.
- Provide guidance to staff on inclusive language and cultural sensitivity.
- Address barriers to access or progression and coordinate targeted interventions.

Operations Managers and Directors will:

- Ensure policies and practices promote equity and representation.
- Analyse data on access, participation and outcomes for all groups.
- Make strategic decisions that advance equality and diversity.
- Monitor trends in complaints or incidents related to EDI.

Apprentices, Learners, Children and Young People are expected to:

- Treat others with respect.
- Recognise the value of diversity.
- Engage positively in inclusive learning and living environments.

### **Commitment to Inclusive Practice:**

We will ensure that:

- Curriculum content reflects diverse voices, histories and perspectives.
- Young people are supported to explore identity, heritage, gender, and values safely.

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- Facilities and routines in homes and accommodation are inclusive (e.g. accessible spaces, dietary needs, faith-based considerations, neurodivergent-friendly environments).
- Care plans, EHCPs and ILPs reflect individual identities and aspirations.
- Equality is embedded in organisational culture, planning and recruitment.

### **Promoting Equality Across Services:**

#### **Alternative Provision:**

- Tailored, inclusive teaching strategies are implemented to meet SEN and SEMH needs.
- Access to speech and language therapy, mental health services, and mentoring is equitably distributed.
- Engagement strategies address cultural identity, trauma informed approaches and lived experience.

#### **Children's Homes and Supported Accommodation:**

- Staff are trained in trauma-informed care, intersectionality, and cultural competence.
- Residents are encouraged to express and explore identity in a safe and respectful environment.
- Activities, routines, and placement planning reflect personal and community diversity.
- All young people are involved in shaping house culture and feel ownership over their space.

#### **Apprenticeships and Post-16 Learning:**

- Targeted outreach supports participation from under-represented groups
- Learner voice is embedded in programme evaluation and development
- Support is available to remove structural and financial barriers (e.g. transport, digital poverty, childcare)
- Employers and training partners are supported to meet inclusive standards

### **Managing Discrimination and Harassment:**

All incidents of discrimination, bullying or harassment are treated seriously. Storyy Group will:

- Maintain clear reporting systems in each setting (including anonymous routes)
- Record and monitor incidents through CPOMS or service-specific logs
- Offer mediation or restorative approaches where appropriate
- Provide support for those affected, including signposting to advocacy and counselling services
- Take disciplinary action where policy is breached

### **Reasonable Adjustments:**

In line with our legal duty, we will make reasonable adjustments for any person with a disability or additional need. This includes:

- Adapted learning materials or communication tools
- Adjusted working hours, schedules or settings

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- Alternative assessment arrangements
- Use of interpreters or advocacy services

We will work collaboratively with individuals, families and external professionals to review and implement appropriate support plans.

### **Training and Awareness:**

EDI training is mandatory for all staff and includes:

- Unconscious bias and inclusive language
- Protected characteristics and intersectionality
- Inclusive curriculum and trauma-informed care
- Anti-racism, anti-homophobia and disability awareness

Training is revisited annually and updated in response to incidents, national guidance or service reviews.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Our data monitoring includes:

- Enrolment, attendance, exclusions and achievement by gender, ethnicity, SEND, and other protected characteristics
- Placement outcomes in children's homes
- Recruitment and staff progression
- Complaints and safeguarding referrals linked to discrimination

### **Breaches of the Policy:**

If an individual breaches this policy, the following may occur:

- Formal investigation by HR or safeguarding teams
- Referral to external authorities if required
- Action under disciplinary or behaviour management policies

All service users are entitled to escalate concerns via our complaints or whistleblowing procedures.

### **Appendix A – Protected Characteristics:**

As defined in the Equality Act 2010, the nine protected characteristics are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
7. Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation

**Policy Reviewed by Natalie Lee – 01/08/2025**

**Review Date - August 2026**

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