**POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

**EQUAL OPPORTUNTIES** **& ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE**

**PURPOSE:** To set out the approach of GNFC in relation to ensuring equality of opportunity for staff and service users in terms of employment and access to services and to provide guidance on anti-discriminatory practice.

**RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES:**

All other policies and procedures of GNFC.

**INTRODUCTION**

This document contains a policy statement (Part One) and procedural guidance (Part Two). The functions of each are set out briefly below.

**Part One – Policy Statement.** The policy statement sets out the broad framework of principles within which the particular area of work will be carried out. It sets out the organisation’s broad style and approach to the issue including any aims and guiding principles.

**Part Two – Procedural Guidance.** The procedural guidance sets out the details that staff will require to carry out their duties in this particular area of work. It also sets out the specific tasks involved in undertaking this area of work and identifies who is responsible for carrying them out.

**PART ONE – POLICY STATEMENT**: **AIMS AND PRINCIPLES**

1. GNFC considers that every human being is made in the image of, and for the glory of God.  Every person has intrinsic worth and must be valued and respected by all.  GNFC is committed to strive for equality in the provision of its services and the employment of the staff, volunteers and management committee members who provide these services and contribute to the organisation. We do not discriminate against these individuals on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (referred to as protected characteristics).
2. GNFC is committed to encouraging equality and diversity with service-users and among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.
3. GNFC will work to ensure that individuals are not be affected by discrimination, harassment or victimisation. GNFC expects that directors, staff, volunteers and service users will show respect and value to each other.
4. GNFC recognises that certain groups in society are more vulnerable than others and continue to be discriminated against.  Our practices, however, will seek to ensure service users will not be discriminated against on the basis of the protected characteristics set out above.
5. GNFC’s commitment to anti-discriminatory practice relates to both direct and indirect discrimination, as set out below:

• Direct discrimination - where someone is treated less favourably than another on any of the grounds set out above.

• Indirect discrimination - when a requirement or condition is applied which has a detrimental effect on a particular group as set out above. This applies even if there was not a deliberate intention to discriminate.

1. GNFC will adhere to the requirements and guidance contained in the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 (and any subsequent amendments to them) in all of its work.
2. GNFC will also adhere to the Equality and Human Rights Commission’s Code of Practice.

**PART TWO – PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE ON EQUAL** **OPPORTUNITIES AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE**

**RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

The ethos of GNFC is based on the Christian faith as set out in the Basis of Faith (Appendix 1).  By reason of the activities involved in posts within the organisation and the context in which they are carried out, the holding of the Christian faith constitutes a genuine, legitimate and justified occupational requirement.

The Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure sets out the process in detail. The main elements in terms of anti-discriminatory practice are set out below.

**Advertisement of posts:**

All posts will be advertised both internally and externally in the local (and where appropriate national and/or specialist publications or online media. GNFC will as far as possible ensure that people from ethnic minority groups and disabled groups are encouraged to apply.

**Wording of advertisements:**

Job descriptions and supporting information will not contain any unnecessary stereotypes or expectations about the future post holder.  In line with our responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, GNFC will make any ‘reasonable’ adjustment to overcome any factor that puts a disabled employee or job applicant at a disadvantage.

**Short listing:**

Short listing will always be carried out by at least two members of staff.

**Selection:**

Selection will be on the basis of job experience, qualifications and supporting details provided by the applicant on his or her reasons for applying for the job.

GNFC is satisfied that because of the nature and context of the work carried out by GNFC that being a Christian is an occupational requirement.  All employees and members of the board must endorse the Basis of Faith, forming Appendix 1 to this policy, which is fundamental to the ethos of GNFC.  The successful candidate must desire to be a demonstration of God’s care and compassion to all service users.

Formal in-depth interviews are held with consideration to the applicant’s suitability for the post. The interview is conducted to establish the suitability of the applicant, with careful consideration given to child & vulnerable adult protection concerns. Particular reference is paid to the organisation’s protection from abuse policy.  Attitudes to children’s welfare, and the well-being of clients are of paramount importance.

Interviews will always be conducted by at least two members of staff, one of whom must be a management committee member who has been trained in interviewing techniques. The Equal Opportunities policy must be adhered to throughout the recruitment process.  Service-user representatives are invited to be involved in the interview process. The decision on whom to appoint must be agreed by a majority of the interviewers and be in accordance with the Recruitment and selection policy and procedure.

A declaration of any offences is requested and questions regarding offences against children/ vulnerable adults are asked during the recruitment process.

Applicants are requested to provide at least two references, one should be from a previous employer and the other we would expect to be from either their Church or another Christian organisation. Applicants are informed that the references will be obtained and that a DBS check must also be obtained before the post can be confirmed.

**Following the Interview**

All candidates are informed of the outcome of their application in writing.

Successful candidates are offered the post subject to a satisfactory DBS check and at least two references, which must be in writing. A link to the online application for a DBS check and explanatory notes is given to successful applicants. An appointment is made to meet with the recruiter with sufficient evidence of identity to process the application.

References are then followed up for the successful candidate, and others who know the successful candidate are consulted if possible.  All reference information is then assessed by a minimum of two members of the management team one of who should be the Charity Manager wherever possible.

The Manager must be informed of recommendations regarding selection of the appropriate candidate/s.

A probationary period, as specified in the offer letter (or otherwise as set out in our Terms and Conditions of Employment) is always worked.  During this time induction takes place with the new staff member shadows experienced staff with close supervision.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT

GNFC has in place policies and procedures that cover other aspects of employment and staff are expected to follow these conscientiously, these include but are not limited to:

- Training and development

- Support and supervision

- Staff appraisal

- Capability

- Disciplinary and grievance

Anyone who feels they have been discriminated against should discuss this with their line manager. If this does not resolve the concern, the staff member may raise a formal grievance under the grievance policy and procedure.

# **ACCESS TO AND RECEIPT OF SERVICES (INCLUDING FAIR EXIT)**

Regardless of any protected characteristics as set out above:

* GNFC will take practical steps to ensure that its services are accessible to all service users;
* Service users seeking to access GNFC’s services will be treated equally and will not be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable;
* Service users receiving GNFC’s services will be treated equally.  This applies to all aspects of receiving services, including application, referral, acceptance into Charis House, Good News Nursery, Oldfield Farm or Farm Skills Projects, needs assessment, individual support planning, risk assessment, consultation, involvement, move-on and after-care;
* Service users will be treated equally and fairly with regard to the exiting of any GNFC service;
* Wherever possible, GNFC will seek to treat all service users equally in a planned move-on from any of its services.

# **BREACHES OF THIS POLICY**

GNFC will take action against any member of staff, volunteer, management committee member, service user or visitor who commits any form of discrimination based on the protected characteristics.

**Appendix 1**

**Basis of Faith**

1. One God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Creator and sustainer of all life.
2. The deity of Christ, the Son of God. His birth of a virgin, His sinless humanity, His atoning death on the cross, His bodily resurrection, ascension and present intercession for those who believe.
3. The Bible as God’s inspired word, being the final authority in all things, and His revelation of Himself to mankind.
4. The intrinsic worth of every human being. We are made in the image of God and for the glory of God and therefore every person must be valued and esteemed.
5. The need for repentance for sin and a New Birth by the Holy Spirit, the justification of the sinner only by the grace of God through faith in Christ, and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in the life of all those who have faith.
6. The resurrection of all mankind, for judgement by Christ at His future visible return in power and glory.
7. The underlying theological basis of the work of Good News Family Care is the belief that all people are made in God’s image and are objects of His love. Therefore every human being should be treated with dignity, respect and love. *(See Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1-2 and 1 John 4:19-21)*

Signed:

    Hazel Guest

    23.03.2020