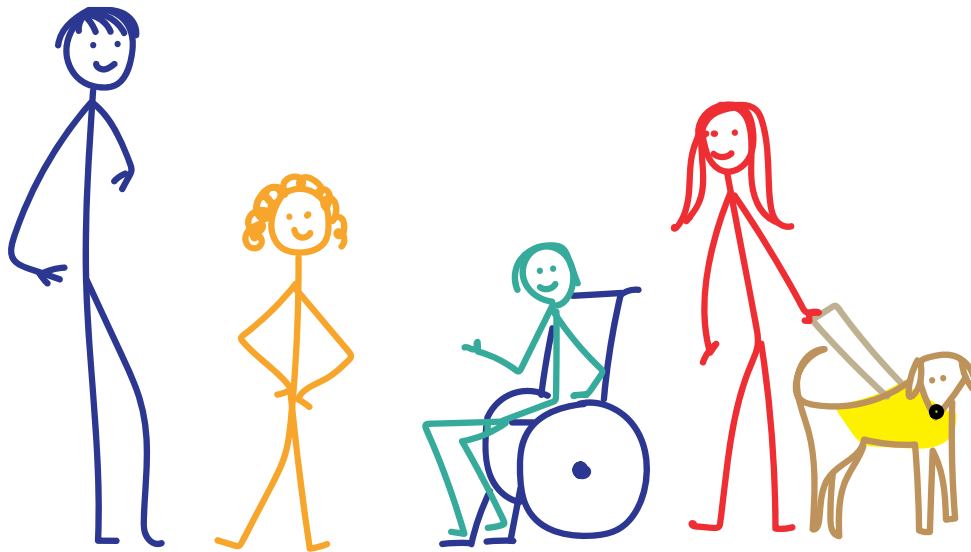


## Joanna North Adoption Ltd

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion January 2024

## Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policy

Within Joanna North Adoption we recognise the importance of valuing diversity within the workplace and within the wider community. As an organisation with responsibility for significant interaction with vulnerable young people and adults, we take on board the responsibility for helping staff members to adhere to a bench-mark of equality within the organisation. We believe we have an obligation to model appropriate behaviour within our organisation so that client's using our service can be treated with respect, dignity and equality. We detail below the expectations from our staff so that within our organisation users will be met by people who are equality minded and who understand the detrimental impact of bias on the lives of people.



Within Joanna North Adoption the Registered Provider and Registered Manager are trained in Unconscious Bias and Equality and Diversity. They consistently keep the importance of inclusion at the top of the agenda for clients who are served by our organisation.

This means that we train our staff particularly to be aware of the importance of cultural differences as impacting on the identity, development and mental health and wellbeing of our clients. Staff will receive dedicated training or instruction in this area so that they can provide an environment in which the person's unique qualities, racial identity and cultural characteristics can be nurtured. Equally our staff will be valued for their own racial, cultural, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, religious and disability differences. If at any time you don't feel you have been treated respectfully or fairly please go to our Complaints Procedure.

We are aware that an equal playing field has not necessarily been developed by the development of Equality Legislation over the last thirty years and we seek to remedy some of the inequalities that still exist in the workplace by paying attention to social groups who may still be excluded or not given the same opportunity as the majority groupings. This particularly includes attention to:

### **Race Relations Act 1976 (amended in 2000)**

Following the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry, this piece of legislation requires that we pay particular attention to institutionalised behaviours that may cause harm or offence to members of our staff or make us blind to the needs and experiences of our clients. Staff will be trained in the details of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.

We believe that institutionalised behaviours are particularly damaging and we train all of our staff to be aware of their behaviour and attitude towards others, especially in regard to those in vulnerable or minority groups. We aim to have this sensitivity to others as a bench-mark of our working environment and that this should benefit our clients.

We are aware that the Race Relations Amendment Act places a duty on Public Authorities to monitor the practices of those who provide services to that authority. In this regard we are fully open to the monitoring function of the Local Authority and Government Inspectors such as Ofsted to our practices in Racial Equality and potential institutionalised inequalities and welcome feedback on areas that need development.

### **Sex Discrimination Act 1975**

Despite this thirty-year old piece of legislation, we are aware that underlying sex discrimination is still prevalent within our society and workplace. Within our organisation the registered Manager Joanna North is the champion for equality and we will particularly seek to create an environment in which sexism can be challenged but moreover discussed and debated openly and within a constructive framework. Whilst we seek equality in all aspects of our work we are aware that there will be times when we all have the possibility of falling into entrenched, unconscious and biased patterns of behaviour.

These patterns may be equally offensive to both men and women as well as persons of transgender. We therefore seek to be thoughtful about these issues as part of our practice and particularly with regard to our clients. We will consider work patterns and family arrangements within this framework, bearing in mind that those with caring responsibilities may be disadvantaged by rigid work patterns. We are willing to think flexibly on these issues so that we do not inadvertently cause discrimination through appointment rotas. We offer appointment times to families so that they may meet with us outside of school and working hours.

### **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**

We recognise the importance of an inclusive stance for those with disabilities and seek to offer an equal footing for those involved in work with us. With regard to our clients we will always take your disability into consideration with regard to the premises that we provide. With regard to employment, whilst some of our work may not be suitable for those with severe physical impairment (for their own safety) we would seek to provide employment in other areas of adoption support for those who wish to work in this field. We will organise suitable access to our premises for meetings if they are inaccessible to people.

## **Equal Pay Act 1976**

We are aware of inequalities in pay structure that still exist. Within Joanna North Adoption we provide a pay structure that is in relation to experience, qualifications and company appraisal. It is irrespective of gender. We are aware that some parents struggle financially due to inequalities in the system and we always work to help them with funding for Adoption Support Work.

## **Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003**

Within the workplace we seek to ensure that our staff are respectful and thoughtful regardless of sexual orientation. We especially seek to build an inclusive culture, free from harassment and persecution due to individual differences for both our employees and our clients. We are mindful of sensitivities within the current cultural climate towards transgender especially in young people for example with regard to choice of Pronouns. We respect gender fluidity and choices of identity and respond accordingly in our practice.

## **Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003**

We embrace the experience of working with team or other professionals who are members of varied cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds as we feel this enhances the level of diversity within our workgroup. We also encourage the practice and understanding of religious festivals and rituals as they arise within our diverse world. We do encourage people to tell us about their religious beliefs so that our practice can be appropriate to their needs and values.

## **Human Rights Act 1998**

Our staff are fully cognisant of the essential features of the Human Rights Act. This is included within our Equality and Diversity training for staff. They are particularly mindful of the rights of all people within this Act and if also the Rights of Children under the UN Charter (these are displayed on our website under our Service User Information letter for children).

The right to freedom of expression.

The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

The right to privacy.

The right to be free from cruel inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment.

We also ask our staff to consider Article 12 of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. We subscribe to the National Youth Advocacy Services to help keep our staff up to date with the rights of children and the Human Rights of Adults.

As we are a small organisation we do not as such employ people. However if we do and in the future we will abide by the regulations that provide equality and decency for all in the workplace especially so that these values can be reflected in our work with our clients.