EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Introduction & Statement of Intent

1.2 NEMCA acknowledges and strives to celebrate that it operates and provides services within a socially diverse society.

1.3 NEMCA is committed to developing equal opportunities in all areas of its work, structure and service provision. We aim to ensure that no person or group of people should suffer discrimination, lack of opportunity or receive favourable treatment based on race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, responsibility for dependants, employment status, age, political beliefs, disability or geographical location.

1.4 Although the prime responsibility for achieving and providing equality of opportunity rests with NEMCA, employees, volunteers and those in leadership positions at every level have an individual responsibility for complying with and promoting this policy

1.5 NEMCA will ensure staff have relevant training in matters relating to equalities to include:

- Equality and diversity
- Disability Awareness
- Racial Awareness
- Sexuality
- Legal issues relating to employment and discrimination

1.5 At NEMCA we understand that equal opportunity does not follow from good intentions alone, but recognise that it is important to support this policy with practical action. Both this policy and the associated action will be implemented in accordance with the statutory requirements.

1.6 Nemca will ensure that its own publications, publications from outside organisation used in it work and displays and images within the building show positive images of people and young people with disabilities and from other cultures.

1.7 Nemca will comply with legal requirements and best practice to ensure the building and its activities are accessible to all

2. Legislation

2.1 NEMCA's, Equal Opportunities Policy has been developed within the framework of existing legislation, including:

- Sex Discrimination Act (1975 & amendment 1986)
- Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- Race Relations Act (1976 & amendment 2000)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Protection From Harassment Act (1997)
- Employment Relations Act (1999)
- Equal Pay Act (1970) & National Minimum wage Act (1998)
- Employment Rights Act (1996)
- Maternity & Parental Leave Regulations (1998 & 2002)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- Health & Safety at Work Act (1974)

2.2 Implications of the Legislation

NEMCA will investigate any complaint rising from breach of policy as a serious matter. Both the management and individual member of staff (paid & unpaid) concerned may be liable to legal proceedings if found to be in contravention of the RRA, SDA and DDA. NEMCA will take all reasonable practicable steps to prevent any acts of discrimination.

2.3 Codes of Practice

Codes of Practice have been issued by the Commission for Racial Equality and the Equal Opportunities Commission, which set out the practices that employers should adopt in order to ensure equal opportunities at work. A Voluntary Code on Age Discrimination has also been introduced. These Codes do not have statutory provisions, but lay down well-defined operating practices for employers, which if not followed, may result in action through Employment Tribunals. In such a case, the Tribunal will have regard to the extent to which an employer had followed the guidelines contained in the Codes of Practice.

3. The Nature of Discrimination

3.1 Direct Discrimination

Means treating a person less favourably on the grounds of sex, marital status, responsibility for dependants, disability - mental, sensory or physical, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion, politics, social background, part time employment or age.

3.2 Indirect Discrimination

Means the imposition of a requirement or a condition, applied equally to individuals within the groups mentioned in 3.1 above, has the effect of excluding or treating less favourably any individual or individuals within these groups and cannot be shown to be justifiable (e.g. a height requirement which would preclude more women than men).

3.3 Victimisation

Occurs when someone is given less favourable treatment than others because they have exercised their rights under this policy or the relevant legislation, or brought to the attention of others, acts of discrimination (e.g. by making a complaint or providing information on discrimination) includes forms of bullying or harassment, most commonly from a more senior member of staff although not exclusively. Examples include being singled out, being made to look or feel silly, the removal of opportunities within the workplace – e.g. training and promotion amongst others.

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3.4 Harassment

Any activity that causes an individual to feel threatened, humiliated, patronised, harassed or interferes with an individual's job performance, undermines job security or creates a threatening intimidating work environment is considered by (Name of Organisation) to be harassment. Examples and further descriptions of forms of harassment are given below.

- **Racial harassment** includes racial abuse, racially explicit derogatory statements that are found objectionable and offensive and make the employee to whom they are addressed feel threatened or humiliated. Offensive jokes of a racial nature or an offensive manner in communication not used with other employees are likely to constitute racial harassment.

- **Sexual harassment** includes unwanted verbal or sexual advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminating remarks made by someone in the

working environment which are offensive to the worker involved.

4. Responsibilities under the Equal Opportunities Policy

All staff (paid or unpaid) share responsibility for promoting equality of opportunity. These responsibilities are as follows:

4.1 Nemca aims to maintain and extend a fair working environment for all employees and volunteers through the revision and development of policies to promote equal opportunities in employment at every stage, this includes.

- Advertisement
- Recruitment and Selection
- Training and Development
- Retention and Retraining
- Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Discipline
- Grievance
- Dismissal, Redundancy or Grading

4.2 NEMCA has overall responsibility to provide equal opportunity for all job applicants and staff (paid & unpaid); to seek to eliminate any discriminatory practice in respect of the treatment of the providers and users of the service; and to promote equality of opportunity. The adoption, implementation and monitoring of an Equal Opportunities Policy will be important steps towards satisfying this responsibility.

4.2 NEMCA will ensure at all times that the Recruitment Policy is adhered to and is responsible for co-ordinating the introduction, operation and monitoring of the Equal Opportunities at NEMCA. It will be our duty to ensure Leaders in Charge & Staff (paid or unpaid) receive guidance on the proper application of the policy, that adequate recording systems are established and that the monitoring of procedures and selection decisions are carried out.

4.3 Staff in Leadership Positions:

Staff in leadership positions will be responsible for the practical application of the equal opportunities policy and in particular should ensure All staff are aware of their responsibilities according to the legislation, relevant codes of practice and the Equal Opportunities Policy of Nemca

- Employment decisions are not discriminatory
- Proper records of employment decisions are maintained
- Fair standards of employment practice are maintained
- Employment practices are reviewed regularly

4.4 The Responsibility of Individual Staff (Paid & Unpaid)

All members of staff have a responsibility for ensuring that they do not unlawfully discriminate during the course of their employment.

In particular, individuals must:

a) Comply with the Policy and their responsibilities in relation to NEMCA colleagues and client group;
b) Adhere to and give support to any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity;
c) Not themselves discriminate e.g. as supervisors or individuals responsible for selection decisions in recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, etc;
d) Not themselves discriminate in the application of any of (Name of Organisation) Policies;
e) Not themselves discriminate in applying conditions of employment;
f) Not induce, or attempt to induce other individuals or leaders to practise discrimination
g) Not victimise or attempt to victimise individuals on the grounds that they have made complaints or provided information on discrimination;
h) Not harass, abuse or intimidate other employees, e.g. in attempts to discourage them from continuing their employment.

5. Monitoring and Reviewing

Monitoring is an essential part of the equal opportunities policy and as such the procedure for this is detailed below.

5.1 To facilitate the ongoing monitoring process, the centre manager will maintain records of the sex, marital status, disablement and ethnic origin of all employees, volunteers and job applicants. Such records will be used solely for the purpose of monitoring the equality of opportunity, analysis of shortlisting & selection, decisions for employment, promotion, transfer and access to training.

5.2 The results of monitoring will be reviewed to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the policy. If necessary, adjustment will be made to the policy to ensure

that equal opportunities are afforded to all applicants and staff. If factual evidence is found which suggests that the policy is ineffective, this should be investigated and appropriate positive action may be taken.

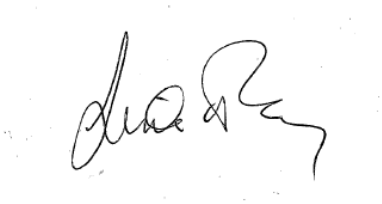
6. Grievances & Complaints

6.1 Where it appears that any employee, volunteers or applicants are not being offered equal opportunity, the circumstances will be investigated by NEMCA to see if there are any policies or criteria which exclude or discourage employees and volunteers, and if so, whether the policies and criteria are justifiable. Appropriate action will be taken where necessary to redress the effects of any policy or criteria which are found to have unjustifiably limited the provision of equal opportunities.

6.2 If further action is necessary, the matter will be referred to a sub-committee of NEMCA. The sub-committee will take care to deal effectively with any complaints about the policy.

6.3 Acts which breach this policy will not be tolerated and all instances of such behaviour or alleged behaviour will be taken seriously, with a full and prompt investigation. Action by employees which is contrary to this policy renders that person liable to action under the (Name of Organisation) Disciplinary Procedure, which may lead to dismissal.

6.4 Those making a complaint in good faith will be given a full, fair and sensitive hearing and may do without fear of subsequent victimisation.



Chair of Trustees

END

Date Implemented:	Future Review Dates					
	2026					
Date reviewed	Mar 2026					
Date approved By Trustees	Mar 2026					

CHAIR OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE