Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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CEO/Chair of Trustees	November 2027

Signed by : Juliet Diener

Date : November 2024

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Statement of Intent

icandance is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among its workforce and members, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. It is dedicated to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture amongst the whole team. It is within our best interest to promote diversity and eliminate discrimination in the workplace.

Our aim is to ensure that all employees, volunteers, job applicants and members are given equal opportunity and that our organisation is representative of all sections of society.

Our Policy's Purpose

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time or volunteer.

2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
• age
• disability
• gender reassignment
• marriage and civil partnership
• pregnancy and maternity
• race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
• religion or belief
• sex
• sexual orientation

3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
•pay and benefits
•terms and conditions of employment
•dealing with grievances and discipline
•dismissal
•redundancy
•leave for parents
•requests for flexible working
•selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Responsibilities

It is the Trustees' responsibility to:

- Ensure that icandance complies with its equality obligations of the 'icandance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy'.
- Ensure that the icandance policies and procedures are monitored in light of this policy and the wider equality obligations.
- From time to time be involved alongside the CEO in dealing with serious breaches of this policy.

It is the CEO and Senior Leadership Team's responsibility to:

- Ensure effective implementation of this policy and its procedures
- Ensure that all staff are sufficiently aware and trained within equality & diversity
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice within the organisation, be it by staff, member, parents or visitors
- Have procedures in place to deal effectively with any reported incidents of discrimination, victimisation or harassment
- Ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, this policy.
- Ensure transparency in assessing the impact of the icandance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and accountable for future goals.

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to:

- All staff and volunteers are required morally and legally not to discriminate against carers, children and young people who attend icandance. This includes treatment of fellow team members, trustees and the wider community.
- Discriminatory conduct and sexual or racial harassment shall be regarded as gross misconduct and a staff member or volunteer is liable to be dismissed immediately.
- icandance appoints, trains, develops and promotes individuals on the basis of merit, ability and the needs of the organisation.
- Managers and supervisors who are involved in the recruitment, selection, promotion and training of staff and volunteers have special responsibility for the practical application of this policy.
- At times specific criteria may be required to meet the needs of an individual child/young person when recruiting or assigning a staff member.
- The concerns and complaints policy is available to any staff member or volunteer who believes that they may have been unfairly discriminated against.
- Discriminatory conduct and sexual or racial harassment shall be regarded as gross misconduct and a staff member or volunteer is liable to be dismissed immediately.

- Positively role model inclusive and anti-discriminatory behaviour, including a spirit of reflection and willingness to be open to challenge.
- Support and participate in any measures introduced to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and report any issues associated with equality and diversity in accordance with this policy
- Be alert to and actively challenge any forms of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying, including banter.
- Promote an inclusive culture, identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the icandance culture, taking all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation from taking place.
- Make effective and reasonable adjustments where appropriate to meet the individual needs of staff, pupils and visitors
- icandance expects staff to commit to broadening their knowledge, confidence and inclusive behaviour by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

It is important to appreciate that an employee is personally responsible for their own acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out during their employment, whether or not the employer is also liable. Any attempt to instruct, cause or induce another person to discriminate, harass or victimise a third person will also amount to unlawful discrimination and any employee doing so will be subject to disciplinary action.

It is the responsibility for the parent, carer, child or young person or other parties to ensure they adhere the principles and practices of this policy.

icandance will not tolerate discrimination of any form towards staff, volunteers and trustees. This is regarded as gross misconduct and would be addressed with immediate effect by trustees.

Parent, carers, each child and other parties are asked to:

- Positively promote inclusive and anti-discriminatory behaviour, including a willingness to reflect on attitudes and/or behaviours and be open to challenge.
- Support any measures introduced by icandance to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and report any issues associated with equality and diversity to their team lead or staff member.
- Be alert to and actively challenge any forms of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying, including banter.

These responsibilities run alongside icandance behaviour expectations which places a high premium on:

- Respect for Self
- Respect for Others
- Respect for our Environment and our Community

The concerns and complaints policy is available to any parent, carer, child or young person or other party who believes that they may have been unfairly discriminated against.

The organisation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense

2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

3. Ensure training for managers and all other employees on their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

4. All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against any of the icandance community.

5.Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

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.

6. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

7. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

8. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

9. Monitor the make-up of the trustee board and workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Our disciplinary and grievance procedures

Details of the icandance grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found on our website www.icandance.org.uk This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance.

Use of the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.