



# Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

This policy was agreed by KLS Trustees on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

All KLS policies are reviewed annually.

This policy will be reviewed again in September 2017.

Katherine Low Settlement Ltd  
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020 7223 2845 (s/b)  
[www.klsettlement.org.uk](http://www.klsettlement.org.uk)

Charity Number: 1081248  
Company Number: 3814833

## **1. About Katherine Low Settlement**

Katherine Low Settlement is a multi-purpose charity that has been serving the communities of Wandsworth since 1924. It is dedicated to fighting poverty and isolation. We strive to provide an opportunity for people to realise their own potential and to understand the contribution they can make to their community.

Visit: [www.klsettlement.org.uk](http://www.klsettlement.org.uk) and @klsettlement (twitter)

## **2. Katherine Low Settlement's Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy**

Katherine Low Settlement (KLS) is committed to promoting equal opportunities and challenging discrimination in all of its work and projects. KLS recognises, respects and values diversity in its employees, volunteers and service users; and it recognises that it must prevent direct and indirect discrimination against staff, volunteers, users or visitors on the grounds of their protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010. These protected characteristics include:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual on these grounds will not be tolerated.

KLS has this policy because it is a people-led organisation that must always ensure it meets the needs of the community through fair and appropriate employment and development of the people who work with, volunteer for and use KLS.

Everyone at KLS is responsible for promoting this Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy and must respect and act in accordance with the policy. Independent organisations renting space at KLS must adhere to this policy, and must have their own Equal Opportunities policy.

The policy is endorsed by the Katherine Low Settlement's Trustees and will be reviewed annually to make sure it remains relevant and appropriate to the needs of KLS: its staff, volunteers, users and visitors.

This Equal Opportunities policy is freely accessible to all.

### **3. KLS values statement in relation to its Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy**

KLS aims to:

- Ensure that all people are treated with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of all.
- Promote equality of opportunity and diversity to all throughout KLS.
- Provide equal access to our services and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of our community.
- Provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and cultural diversity is celebrated.
- Empower our service users, staff and volunteers to make informed choices so that they have an enhanced understanding of their equalities rights and responsibilities.

### **4. Definitions**

Discrimination on the grounds of protected characteristics (e.g. age, disability, race – see full list above) is illegal. At KLS discrimination is also unacceptable on any of the other grounds referred to in this policy statement. There are four ways in which discrimination may occur:

- *Direct discrimination* means treating someone less favourably than others in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of their sex, 'race', colour, nationality, etc. including treatment of people who are perceived to have a protected characteristic regardless of whether they do or not.
- *Indirect discrimination* can occur when a condition or requirement is applied equally but is such that the proportion of members of one sex, racial group etc. who can meet it is considerably smaller than the proportion of members of the other sex or other racial groups. Indirect discrimination is unlawful unless the person imposing the condition can show that it is justified, irrespective of the sex or race of the person to whom it is applied. Indirect discrimination can also occur when a family member or friend is treated less favourably than others due to their association with someone with a protected characteristic.
- *Victimisation* occurs when a person is treated less favourably than other persons would be treated because that person has done a 'protected act' under anti-discrimination legislation, e.g. by giving evidence or information.
- *Harassment* can take many forms, from abusive remarks to subtle use of power. It can be intentional or unintentional. KLS will provide support for anyone at KLS who feels threatened or isolated because of such actions.

### **5. Legal duties**

KLS welcomes the statutory requirements laid down in:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations Amendment Act Feb 2000
- the NHS Community Care Act 1990
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996
- the Human Rights Act Nov 1998
- the Employment (Religion or Belief) and (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

KLS recognises that it has moral and social responsibilities that go beyond the provisions of the above-mentioned Acts and Regulations, and that it should support and contribute to the wider process of change

through all aspects of its work and practices in order to eliminate discrimination and promote equality and diversity.

a) Genuine occupational requirement

KLS is aware that it is legal to recruit someone from a particular group if there is a Genuine Occupational Requirement. This means that someone who was not from that particular group would not be able to do the job (e.g. a man could not be employed in a women-only refuge). KLS is aware that the majority of requirements can be learnt and are not 'inherent' (e.g. someone who speaks Somali and has a good understanding of Somali culture may not necessarily be Somali).

b) Equal Pay

KLS is aware that it has a duty to ensure that men and women whom it employs are paid the same amount for work 'of equal value'. It will review this annually and be mindful of sexual equality when making decisions about pay.

c) Part-time workers

The majority of staff at KLS are part-time. KLS is aware of the Part-Time Workers Regulations 2000, which gives the right to part-time workers not to be discriminated against in comparison with comparable full-time workers. The principle of 'pro rata' should generally apply. Detrimental treatment of part-time workers is also likely to be indirect or sex discrimination as the majority of part-time workers are women.

d) Disability discrimination

KLS is aware of its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) under which it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments if the premises or employment arrangements substantially disadvantage a disabled person compared with a non-disabled person. Whether or not a particular adjustment is 'reasonable' depends on a number of factors such as cost, practicability and effectiveness. KLS will seek expert advice where necessary.

e) Ex-offenders

KLS is aware of its responsibilities under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and the 'exemption employments' including any staff or volunteers who are working with children or vulnerable people.

All staff and volunteers working with children at KLS will undertake an enhanced DBS check (see KLS' Child Protection Policy).

## **6. Service users and project work**

KLS will:

- Provide appropriate, sensitive and impartial services, which are fully accessible to targeted client groups.
- Take into account the particular needs or requirements of people from protected groups.
- Monitor the take-up of KLS services to ensure that they are not inadvertently inaccessible to particular groups.

- Ensure that the principle of empowerment is at the heart of the services provided both to the individual and the community.
- Provide appropriate interpreting and translation services to those whose first language is not English.
- Seek to influence the work and contribution of other organisations we come into contact with by ensuring that equality issues are fully taken into account when developing joint work.

## **7. Staff recruitment and employment**

### a) Recruitment

KLS will ensure that its recruitment process meets Equal Opportunities criteria. It will include monitoring forms (see appendix 1) with all employment application packs and it will analyse data from this monitoring annually (see section below on Monitoring).

KLS actively supports its volunteers, so if one should apply for a paid job at KLS, we will, where possible, fast track that volunteer and give them a job interview, alongside other applicants. This by no means guarantees them being offered the job.

### b) Appointments

All staff appointments will be based on strict professional criteria. All positions are subject to satisfactory references. KLS will operate an open and transparent pay structure.

### c) Family-friendly policies

KLS is a family-friendly employer and will do its best to respond to the changing needs of all staff by publicising existing schemes designed to support employees in combining work and other responsibilities (parental leave arrangements, job share opportunities, flexitime where appropriate, carers' leave provision) where reasonable.

### d) Work environment

KLS will foster a co-operative working environment which is free from harassment or victimisation and which promotes good relations among staff, to create the conditions for the full development of their potential.

## **8. Training and development**

KLS recognises that the success of this policy is closely linked to the provision of relevant training. Trustees, staff and volunteers will all be encouraged to take up regular training on equalities issues.

## **9. Data Collection**

KLS complies with the requirement of the Data Protection Act 1998 (See KLS' Data Protection Policy). Any data, either qualitative and or quantitative, required in order to monitor the requirements or the impact of the Equalities Act 2010 will be collected where it is reasonable, proportionate and practical to do so. Any such requirements will be notified to KLS' clients.

## **10. Monitoring, review and evaluation of Equal Opportunities & Diversity**

KLS trustees have a duty to ensure that Equal Opportunities & Diversity at KLS is regularly monitored and reviewed. Monitoring is an essential aspect of this policy, as it should provide important information by which KLS can measure its performance. Statistical information should enable trustees and staff to detect where potential or actual imbalances exist and take steps to correct them.

The following areas are monitored and reviewed annually:

- composition of staffing
- pay structure and equal pay
- recruitment monitoring forms and procedures
- take-up of equalities training opportunities
- use of complaints procedure
- use of grievance, disciplinary, harassment etc.
- take-up of family-friendly policies (e.g. flexible working etc.)
- composition of service users at KLS
- accessibility of services at KLS
- feedback from exit interviews from staff and volunteers on equalities issues
- the mainstreaming of equalities issues in all KLS policies

A brief report of these issues will be produced, with an action plan for any area in need of improvement. This plan will be updated annually.

**Appendix1: Katherine Low Settlement Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form**

KLS want to make sure that it is an equal opportunities employer in practice, which is why we want to monitor our recruitment procedures. By completing this form, you are helping us improve our equal opportunities practice. We will separate this part of the form from the application form. It will not form part of the selection process. All information will be held confidentially and will be destroyed within 6 months of the application process.

Please tick the appropriate boxes:

1. How would you describe your gender?

Male  Female  Transgender  Prefer not to say

2. What age group do you belong to?

16-24  25-34  35-44  45-54  55-64  over 65

Prefer not to say

3. How would you describe your sexuality?

Heterosexual/straight  Gay man  Gay woman/lesbian

Bi-sexual  Prefer not to say

4. Do you consider that you have a disability?

Yes  No  Prefer not to say

5. Do you have a disability, as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act?

Yes  No  Prefer not to say  Don't know

6. Do you consider that you have a long-term health problem?

Yes  No  Prefer not to say

7. How would you describe your religion or belief?

My religion or belief is \_\_\_\_\_

I have no religion or belief  Prefer not to say

8. How would you describe your nationality?

Please describe \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to say

9. How would you describe your ethnic origin?

Please describe \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to say

**Thank You.**

Please return this form with your application form to:

Katherine Low Settlement  
108 Battersea High Street  
London  
SW11 3HP