

BEDFORDSHIRE MUSIC TRUST

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

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Version: 0.2

1. Policy

As part of its activities the Bedfordshire Music Trust organises and manages courses and events, run by trained staff, for children and young people. In promoting these courses and events, and in engaging the staff to manage and deliver them, the Trust aims to be fair to everybody and to ensure that no-one receives more or less favourable opportunities or treatment on the grounds of, for example:

- Age
- Race
- Colour
- Ethnic or national origin
- Nationality (subject to nationality rules)
- Sex / Gender
- Transgender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Disability
- Religion or religious affiliation / Belief
- Part-time working
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Trade union membership and duties

The Trust is committed to achieving equal opportunities in all aspects of its work and to ensuring no person faces discrimination, exclusion, harassment or bullying.

2. Why do we have an Equal Opportunities Policy

An effectively implemented Equal Opportunities Policy will help us to:

- Provide an environment conducive to the promotion of fair and equal opportunities to all staff
- Ensure fair treatment for all job applicants and existing members of staff whether employed or engaged on a self-employed basis
- Ensure fair treatment for all our students and participants in our music activities
- Avoid unlawful or unfair discrimination

3. To Whom Does this Policy Apply?

All members of the Trust, people working for or on behalf of the Trust and volunteers will work within the guidelines of this policy and will have a responsibility to report any incidents of discrimination, exclusion, harassment or bullying. This policy also relates to all students and participants in Trust activities.

4. Who will receive a copy of this Policy?

The following will receive a copy of this policy:

- Trust administration and course management staff
- All staff employed or engaged by the Trust, or who are working as volunteers, and who are in contact with children or young people;
- All trustees
- On request, organisations with which the Trust works in delivering its events

All parents and carers of children and young people attending events and courses will be notified of the existence of this policy. A copy of this Policy will be made available to any parent or carer who requests one. Also a copy of the Policy will be available on the BMT website when it is launched.

5. Applications, Recruitment and Selection

It is the intention of the Trust that applications to join our courses and recruitment decisions are based solely on the relevant merits and abilities of candidates. The Trust will require, therefore, that those involved with auditioning or recruiting students or with selection of conductors, tutors, administration staff or volunteers do not discriminate, whether directly or indirectly, in the making of those decisions.

Publicity material and application forms shall not imply that there is a preference for one group of applicants unless this is relevant to a post for which an exemption from relevant legislation is available or, in the case of students applying to join a group, the group is governed by standard criteria such as age, instrument played or singing voice or grade of attainment.

Application forms for students may ask personal questions such as age and/or ability so that the Trust can ensure the student has applied for the right group. The Trust reserves the right to refuse entry if a group is clearly not suitable for a student. It is acknowledged that some selection may be made on a competitive basis in which case selection criteria will be made clear to all applicants.

6. Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

The Trust will work to ensure no person faces discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Discrimination

Discrimination is unequal treatment of an individual because of their membership of a particular class or group, such as sex, race, age or disability. It may be direct, for example, refusing to accept a student on a course because they are disabled. It may be indirect, for example, declaring a position in the Youth Choir as only available to female singers.

Without appropriate awareness and safeguards, discrimination may occur in any area of selection for groups or of recruitment, employment or engagement of volunteers including:

- Inappropriate questioning at interview or audition
- Inappropriate appointment to post or selection of a student to a group
- Allocation of volumes and/or type of work
- Transfer decisions
- Promotion and progression opportunities
- Application of disciplinary action

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment may involve unwelcome sexual comments or innuendo, looks and gestures or physical contact by one individual aimed at another, and which is only directed at that other person because of their sex. Sexual harassment cannot be dismissed as a 'bit of harmless fun'. It can lead to an uncomfortable and alienating working environment.

Racial harassment

Racial harassment is offensive or hostile behaviour, which has the purpose or effect of creating discomfort, distress, exclusion or isolation and is based upon someone's race (colour, nationality or ethnic origins) or is directed at them because of their race. If the comment or behaviour is offensive to the individual, it will amount to racial harassment.

Harassment/bullying

As with sexual or racial harassment, any form of harassment or bullying will have the effect of causing undue stress on individuals and of demotivating them. Harassment may for example be by a conductor or tutor towards a student or by one student to another. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated and serves to undermine the good team spirit which the Trust wishes to encourage.

Sex/Gender Harassment

Unlawful sex discrimination happens when someone is treated unfairly because of their gender. Women, men and transsexual people can all experience sex discrimination. Sex discrimination also includes treating someone less favourably because they are married or in a civil partnership: for example, by not hiring married women.

Disability harassment

Offensive or hostile behaviour or comments aimed at an individual because he or she is disabled, will also be harassment.

7. Reporting, Complaints and Action

Any complaint or grievance under this policy, or any report of discrimination or harassment, should be made in writing directly to the Music Manager, in the first instance, who will ensure the complaint, grievance or incident is recorded. The Music Manager will determine if he/she can deal with the case or if it should be passed to the Chairman for investigation. The Music Manager will make the Trust Board aware of all complaints or incidents together with details of any action that has been taken to deal with it.

If, as a result of the investigation, the Chairman considers that a complaint or grievance is reasonable, he/she shall recommend to the Trust Board that appropriate action shall be taken. If the complaint is to the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer, a member of a partner organisation, trustee, a student, parent or any participant in our activities, that action may take the form of a verbal or written warning or for repeated or serious complaints, dismissal from or discontinuance of involvement with the Trust or exclusion from Trust activities.

If requested, the Chairman shall institute an appeal process that shall be chaired and conducted by a Vice Chairman or trustee of the Trust whose decision shall be final. Where a complaint is made against the Music Manager it should be reported directly to the Chairman. Where a complaint is made against the Chairman, the matter shall be investigated by the Vice Chairman or a member of the Trust Board.

8. Contact Details

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