

Calderdale Theatre School

Equality and Diversity Policy

General Statement

Calderdale Theatre School (CTS) works with young people between the ages of 11 and 19. Our programmes aim to be inclusive of all young people regardless of background or ability. CTS is committed to raising awareness of issues related to equality and diversity in its work, to ensuring that all students act in a way that enables equality and inclusion. We aim to achieve this by striving to provide an environment in which all feel safe, respected and valued. Consideration is given to each person as an individual with particular needs, skills and physical abilities.

CTS is committed to combating discrimination through the promotion of equal opportunities in respect of:

- Provision of services
- Working practices of the organisation
- Employment and training

CTS will try to ensure that in respect of the above, no young person shall receive less favourable treatment than others because of her or his:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour or ethnic origins)
- Nationality
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Educational background

CTS will try to ensure that in respect of the above, no contracted person, volunteer or other person involved in CTS activities shall receive less favourable treatment than others because of her or his:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour or ethnic origins)
- Nationality
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Trade Union activity

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- Educational background

Practices and Commitments

Calderdale Theatre School (CTS) will follow these principles to ensure that our services are accessible to all by:

- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect and are able to feel confident of the support of others.
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice.
- Complying with our own equality and diversity policy and associated policies.
- Ensuring that publicity materials, publications, advertisements, events, workshops and performances avoid language which presents a stereotyped, offensive or detrimental view of any group or individual's background on any of the above grounds. However, performances and workshops will necessarily need to present such language and views when tackling hard hitting issues. It should be made clear by Leaders during workshops and performances the difference.
- Exploring the ideas, feelings, prejudices and ambitions of the young people, as well as encouraging them to put themselves in the shoes of others. We aim to break down stereotypes and challenge gender roles through discussion and role-play.
- Working to make our work known about as widely as possible in the borough of Calderdale. We aim to offer a range of fee options to ensure no young person is economically excluded.
- Making our services available to disabled people, including wheelchair users – by using premises that are wheelchair accessible for its activities whenever possible. CTS will discuss with parents, carers and young people how it can try to accommodate specific needs.
- Not allowing its publicity, events, premises or facilities to be used for the expressions of views in conflict with this policy.
- Viewing breaches of the equality and diversity policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings including removal from activities or termination of contracts
- Valuing diversity and recognising the wealth of benefits diversity can bring to the organisation.

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Implementation

The Trustees have collective overall responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy.

All staff and volunteers have individual responsibility for implementation of this policy.

Students and their parents/carers will be supported to understand and uphold the principles of the Equality and Diversity Policy by:

- Receiving CTS's Student Code of Conduct, which includes the following statement:
"Calderdale Theatre School is an inclusive organisation. This means we bring young people of different ages, backgrounds and abilities together to take part in exciting theatre workshops and projects. We are committed to providing a space where every participant can feel welcome, valued and effective. By taking part in CTS, you agree to work with and act respectfully towards people who may be different to you".
- Signing a registration form to confirm that they have read and agree to the Student Code of Conduct.

Before the start of each year, staff and volunteers will receive the Child Protection and Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, Anti-Bullying, Taking, Using and Storing Images, Complaints and Privacy Policies and the Child Protection – Code of Good Practice in order to help them support participants to uphold equalities principles.

CTS recognises that practical application of inclusion includes a firm stance on preventing bullying in all its contexts, whether physical, emotional, verbal or online. CTS's separate Anti-Bullying policy should be read along with this policy as supporting the culture of equal opportunities in the organisation.

Training

All staff, trustees and volunteers will receive and be asked to familiarise themselves with this policy alongside our Student Code of Conduct, Child Protection and Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, Taking, Using and Storing Images, Complaints and Privacy Policies and the Child Protection – Code of Good Practice and Risk Assessments. All staff and volunteers will be provided an induction at the beginning of their engagement, with specific training in safeguarding, health & safety, equal opportunities and data protection.

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Complaints

Any person who believes they have suffered any form of bullying or harassment or have witnessed conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating another person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that other person should raise the matter through our complaints' procedure. All such complaints will be dealt with seriously, sympathetically, fairly, without undue delay and, where practicable.

Monitoring and Review

Regular monitoring of CTS services and participants takes place to ensure that the equality and diversity policy is implemented and effective. Reports are made to the Trustees detailing gender, ethnic origin, disability, etc. of participants, where appropriate.

Document approved by the Trustees and last reviewed August 2022