

Bedfordshire Festival of Music Speech and Drama is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among everyone associated with the Festival and eliminating discrimination.

The aim is for personnel to be truly representative of all sections of society and for everyone to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation – in providing facilities for participants is also committed against unlawful discrimination.

Our Policy's Purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all Festival personnel and participants.
2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of: •
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage or 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 discrimination. This includes but not limited to: •
  - 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.

The organisation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion at the Festival
2. Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all and where individual differences are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes all personnel who should understand they can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the course of their

involvement against fellow personnel, participants and members of the public.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by anyone in the course of the Festival activities during Festival week and during the process of organising Festivals.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance procedures and appropriate action will be taken.

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.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all personnel, 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.
5. Review practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
6. Monitor the Festival to ensure the Festival is supporting and encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in its operation and taking action to address any issues.

Policy reviewed and re-adopted on: September 2023