

# NSSCB Equality Policy



This is an approved North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board document and should not be edited in any way.

<b>Reference Number:</b> NSSCB/LP/002
<b>Target Audience:</b>
<b>Sources of advice in relation to this document:</b> Equality and Diversity Officer, NSC
<b>Replaces if appropriate:</b> n/a
<b>Type of Document:</b>
<b>Approved by:</b> P&P Sub-Group and NSSCB Executive
<b>Date:</b> July 2016
<b>Date displayed on NSSCB web site:</b> October 2016
<b>Date due to be reviewed by responsible person or body:</b> October 2018
<p>The North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board (NSSCB) works to safeguard and promote local child welfare. It does this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinating the safeguarding work of member agencies so that it is effective.</li><li>• Monitoring, evaluating and when necessary, challenging the effectiveness of the work.</li><li>• Advising on ways to improve safeguarding performance.</li></ul> <p>In order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protect children and young people from maltreatment.</li><li>• Prevent their impairment of health and development.</li><li>• Ensure that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.</li><li>• Enable them to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.</li></ul>

# North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board

## Equality Policy

### Introduction

North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board is committed to promoting equality, diversity and cohesion. Our policies and procedures are intended to ensure fairness for all and reinforce our commitment to tackling inequalities wherever they exist and to eradicating the unacceptable treatment of any person.

We will work through our Board and sub groups to ensure that planning for all areas of work considers and assesses the impact of their work on equalities.

We are committed to the positive changes introduced by the Equality Act 2010, and support the implementation of these across North Somerset. Under the Equality Act 2010, the public authorities who are a part of our board have legal duties to:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct.
2. Advance equality of opportunity.
3. Foster good relations between people.


The Public Sector Equality Duties(PSEDs) (as defined by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) help to ensure that public goods and services are accessible to, and meet the diverse needs of all users to ensure that no one group is disadvantaged in accessing public goods and services.

These duties apply to nine 'protected characteristics': age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The communities of North Somerset are diverse and our work should reflect "unique characteristics of the child within their family and community context"<sup>1</sup>.

The NSSCB acknowledges and welcomes these statutory duties and uses its influence to maintain or, where possible, improve standards and be accountable to the people within our communities.

If you would like to comment on the policy or would like any more information please contact Lucy Teteris LSCB Co-ordinator by email: [lucy.teteris@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.teteris@n-somerset.gov.uk)



Tony Oliver  
Independent Chair  
North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board

<sup>1</sup>Working Together Chapter 42

## Our Commitments

We recognise and accept that particular individuals or groups are sometimes denied equality through discrimination and we will work hard to ensure that wherever possible this is challenged and put right.

### We will strive to achieve this by:

1. All of the local policies and protocols that are approved by the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board will be reviewed on a cyclical basis and when each policy becomes due for review an Equalities Impact Assessment will be required to form part of that policy or protocol.
2. All sub groups will recognise their responsibilities under the Equality Act and the role they can play on ensuring the consideration of equality and diversity is at the heart of the work that they do.
3. When commissioning services the Board will ask providers to supply Equalities and Diversity policies to ensure that their practice and considerations are of high standard.
4. Ensure that all training will include an element of equality and diversity to promote discussion and awareness.
5. We will set a range of equality objectives to make a real difference, promote opportunity and fairness, and support children and young people to fulfil their potential. Setting equality objectives helps the Safeguarding Board to do this by placing a focus on equality issues with the intention of improving outcomes for one or more of the protected characteristics.
6. Understand and utilise the demographic information about the communities within North Somerset to respond to identified need and influence change in our practice.

This policy will be reviewed on three yearly basis, unless a change in legislation requires it.

## Equality Impact Assessments

The Board supports the Code of Practice which is required by the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). It states that to comply with the requirements of the duties the following should occur:

- Establish the relevance of the duty to your functions
- Collect and use equality information
- Assess the impact of decision making, policies and practices on equality issues
- Develop an evidence base through engagement with people with different protected characteristics

To support compliance with the PSED, the above steps will be considered as equality impacts are assessed and considered at the development of revision of each of the board's policies and projects.

Colleagues will consider the 9 protected characteristics as stated in the Equality Act. They will also consider other groups that may also be disadvantaged and experience inequality and consider, where relevant the impact of the proposal on any other relevant groups, which includes (but is not exclusive to):

- Parents, Carers (including young carers), Service and Ex-service Personnel and their families, children looked after by the local authority, Ex-offenders, people in low socio-economic groups and those living in rural communities.

The information gathered through an EIA will be used to ensure that the project or policy considers all of the groups listed above that it can influence the approval process.

EIAs will be published on the NSCCB website.

## Involving stakeholders and the community

We recognise that our general duties do not end when we are working in partnership with other organisations, even if those organisations are not under the same proactive duties.

Lay members of the board will be encouraged to ensure that the view of the wider community is considered.

The voluntary sector is represented at the board, through Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS).

The Board will seek to ensure that the voice of young people is represented at all times through the inclusion of a young people's sub group.

National issues and initiatives will be considered by all sub groups when undertaking their work to ensure that a local focus is maintained.

## Providing clear information

**All areas of the Board's work will seek to ensure that information is accessible to everyone.** The Training & Communication Sub Group has a lead role in respect of dissemination of information and training.

The Learning and Development Sub-group is committed to ensuring that equality issues are addressed in all aspects of the planning and delivery of training. Trainers are required to promote equality within the content of training sessions by ensuring that all courses reflect an understanding of how issues of equality (i.e. race, religion, disability, class, sexuality, age and gender) can impact on practice and by promoting anti-oppressive practice.

Equality issues are also addressed within the training context and conduct where it is expected trainers will define expectations and create a climate within training sessions that respects and values diversity, promotes equality and challenges stereotypes.

There is an expectation that all courses, training venues, course materials and visual and Hearing and Physical Disability aids and adaptations written translations, audio, Braille or large print are accessible to all delegates, this is supported by the Corporate Equality Team.

## **Monitoring to Improve Services**

We want to make sure that our services are provided fairly and to those who need them. Equality monitoring information helps us get a picture of who uses or does not access our services so will help us improve what we provide and reduce potential barriers to access. In addition we have a requirement under the Equality Act 2010 to understand the impact of our policies and services on protected groups.

The Quality Assurance Sub-group, has a lead role in respect of the performance of all areas of the Boards work. The group will advise the Board of any changes, improvements of other areas to ensure that best practice is followed at all times.

The board will use the information we gather through monitoring to inform service delivery, where adequate equality information is not presented board members will request this data to enable them to fully consider their equality duties.

## **Clear structures and lines of responsibility for ensuring the delivery of equality and diversity**

The board will ensure that this policy is delivered. In the event of a complaint the Board will follow its complaint policy in line with national guidelines.

## **Action Plan – Our Equality Objectives**

1. Develop a resource, possibly within the NSSCB web site, for front line professionals to get advice on a wide range of equality issues, by signposting national organisations such as Stonewall, Care UK by March 2018.
2. Include acknowledgement of responsibilities under Equality Act and an equality statement within all Terms of Reference for the Board and its subgroups by March 2017.
3. Each sub-group to identify 2 actions to promote equality and diversity within the work of the group as part of the work plan for the 2016-17 financial year, to be reviewed thereafter in line with the policy on a three yearly basis.