OBS Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Inclusivity Statement

Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support (OBS) is committed to supporting all families, inclusive of age, physical or mental ability, neurotype, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, family structure, ethnicity, nationality, ancestry, religion, cultural or political belief, socio-economic status, pregnancy and maternity status or any other protected characteristic. We are opposed to all forms of discrimination. As part of our organisational values, we proactively work to address barriers to and inequities in accessing feeding support.

We are committed to equity, fairness and respect in the services we provide, in the work opportunities we offer volunteers, contractors, team members and trustees, and in the projects we deliver in collaboration with partner organisations. We want everyone to feel welcome and valued.

We believe that diversity among volunteers, contractors, team members and trustees brings essential perspective to our organisation and helps us provide better services to families.

We are committed to safeguarding, and recognise the particular vulnerability of babies, young children and new parents, and that the characteristics listed above, along with past trauma, frequently compound those vulnerabilities.

Scope of this policy

This policy applies to volunteers, contractors, team members and trustees, and as well as service users where appropriate.

OBS is committed to:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all team members are recognised and valued.
- Maintaining a working environment in which everyone feels respected and safe to be themselves.

- Not tolerating any form of discrimination, intimidation, bullying or harassment, including by service users, and addressing such behaviour in line with OBS Policies including:
    - OBS Team Code of Conduct
    - OBS Volunteer Code of Conduct
    - OBS Complaints and Allegations Policy and Procedure
    - OBS Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy
- Encouraging anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns so that we can apply corrective measures, and to provide mechanisms for whistleblowing and escalating complaints if they are not satisfied.
- Recruiting volunteers, contractors, team members and trustees from diverse backgrounds to better reflect the communities that we serve (see the Recruitment section below).
- Regularly reviewing recruitment practices and procedures to make them as accessible and equitable as possible.
- Educating ourselves and providing training, development and progression opportunities within our organisation to provide respectful and responsive services to all families seeking our support.
- Tailoring communication to be culturally sensitive and accessible.
- Tailoring services and resources to the different needs within our community.
- Responding to feedback, holding ourselves accountable, addressing any harm and when we get something wrong and building in learning for the future.

OBS's trustees have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. However, all volunteers, contractors, team members and trustees have a duty to become familiar with this policy as part of their induction, and to implement it while carrying out their roles. Suggestions as to how to improve policy and practice are always welcome and can be addressed to the Operations Manager.

Policy Implementation

As a provider of services to Oxfordshire's communities, OBS seeks to promote equitable opportunities and access to those in need of our services, and to challenge discrimination wherever it occurs.

We regularly review our services and activities to ensure that we are able to serve the needs of all families in Oxfordshire wishing to use our services.

It is the responsibility of all involved in the organisation to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of difference, including gender identity and family structure.

We will encourage any other organisation working with us to take positive steps to ensure that the needs of racially minoritised communities and marginalised groups are met.

We will ask and listen carefully to what service users tell us they need from OBS and endeavor to meet their needs as far as reasonably practicable.

If you would like to offer feedback about any of our services, please contact our Operations Manager.

Accessibility

We will work to reduce barriers to accessing our services, including:

- Regularly reviewing facilities and access at our in-person venues
- Providing one-to-one online services
- Using interpretation services
- Asking service users about their particular access needs when they book and as we support them, and do our best to meet their needs
- Letting service users know what to expect when accessing our services
- Inviting feedback

Recruitment Practices

It is vitally important that OBS volunteers, contractors, team members and trustees understand the range of diversity of families in our community.

When recruiting new volunteers, team members and trustees we aim to make the process accessible and equitable. Our Team Recruitment Policy and Trustee Recruitment Policy and volunteer recruitment materials and application forms are regularly reviewed with a view to attracting a diverse selection of candidates that reflects the diversity in our community. Candidates will be chosen to join OBS on the basis of interest, aptitude, ability and experience.

While our team is not likely to ever be large enough to fully reflect our community, as part of our work we aim to foster feeding support skills amongst our volunteers, facilitators, organisational partners, local health professionals and students.

Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support
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