



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Including provision for young people with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs

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Introduction

At Cameron and Cooper Limited, we are committed to creating and maintaining a workplace that respects and values the diversity of all individuals. We recognise that a diverse workforce and inclusive environment is essential to achieving our mission and goals. As such, we have adopted a policy on Equality and Diversity to ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, and that discrimination, harassment, and retaliation are not tolerated.

This policy applies to all members of our organisation, including employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. It covers all aspects of employment, including recruitment, selection, promotion, training, and working conditions. We also expect our partners, suppliers, and other external organisations to comply with this policy when working with our organisation.

Cameron and Cooper Limited works hard to recognise each young person's individual needs and works within the legislation and guidelines set out in [The Equality Act 2010](#)

We are committed to providing equal opportunities for all young people and employees regardless of their

- age,
- disability,
- gender reassignment,
- marriage and civil partnership,
- pregnancy and maternity,
- race,
- religion or belief,
- sex, or sexual orientation.

We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation and will take appropriate action to prevent and address any incidents that may occur.

We will ensure that all employees receive regular training on Equality and Diversity to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and to help them to create and maintain a positive, inclusive working environment.

We encourage all employees to report any incidents or concerns related to Equality and Diversity and we will take appropriate action to address them.

Our organisation is committed to fostering a culture of respect and inclusivity. We believe that by valuing and embracing diversity, we can create a more innovative and productive workplace and better serve our young people, employees, and communities.

Safeguarding and Equality

Equality ensures that individuals are treated fairly and not subjected to discrimination, but it should not be used as an excuse for child abuse or neglect. Professionals must take action when there are concerns that a child is suffering or is at risk of harm, regardless of any perceived cultural or societal factors. It is important for professionals to recognise and utilise the strengths and support systems within families, ethnic groups, and communities to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

All staff should refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for further information around safeguarding. This policy is informed by and should be read in conjunction with ['Keeping Children Safe in Education \(September 2022\)](#)

Equality for Young People: Race and Cultural / Background

It is important for staff to be mindful of the diverse family patterns and lifestyles that exist across different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, in order to properly meet the care needs of young people from these groups. Staff must also be aware of the broader social factors that contribute to discrimination against minority ethnic individuals. All children and young people, regardless of their race or cultural background, are entitled to receive the same care and safeguards regarding abuse and neglect.

However, it is important for staff to understand that not all cultural needs, beliefs, and values are immediately visible or easily recognisable. Good childcare for any child or young person involves making an effort to understand them as individuals. In alignment with the organisation's philosophy, all staff and young people should be encouraged to understand and embrace diversity, including cultural and religious expression.

It should also be acknowledged that young people from any ethnic group may experience racism and that this should be understood and addressed from their perspective.

Geographical Area

Cameron and Cooper Limited's services are located in Molesey, Surrey and Farnham, Hampshire, where a large percentage of the population is white. This should be taken into account when young people are in the community with staff members or unsupervised, as they may experience feelings of isolation. Staff should be aware of this and take appropriate measures to support young people in these situations.

Language

Staff should be aware that young people and their families who do not speak English as their first language may require additional support. Additionally, young people may have regional accents or be accustomed to certain dialects, which can make it difficult for them to understand other dialects/accents. In both cases, staff should ensure that

the young people receive support and should not discriminate against them based on their linguistic background. Care should be taken to avoid implying that one dialect or accent is superior or inferior to others. Staff should make necessary accommodations to support young people in communicating effectively and understanding those around them.

All staff and young people should be aware or made aware, that any language used either consciously or unconsciously may be offensive to others. In all cases, we believe in awareness and education.

Stereotyping

It is crucial for staff members to avoid assuming that all young people from minority ethnic groups are identical and should strive to understand the diversity within those groupings. Staff should make an effort to understand these differences.

Cultural Beliefs

Staff should be knowledgeable of cultural beliefs that may lead to discrimination and be equipped to address these issues with both young people and their parents/carers. It is important to educate young people on the importance of respecting and valuing diversity, while also emphasising that discriminatory behaviour based on cultural beliefs is not acceptable.

Basic Care

Young people from minority ethnic groups may have specific individual needs; this may include needing special, additional hair or skin care which can be facilitated by the home.

Equality for Young People: Religious Beliefs

Young people are encouraged to practice their chosen religion and their parents/carers will be consulted on this during the child's planning meeting or beforehand. Staff should consider the preferences of both the young person and their parents/carers when it comes to religious observances, as there may be discrepancies. Efforts should be made to reach a compromise and document it as part of the child's internal placement plan.

Staff should be aware of important religious dates for young people and provide opportunities for them to observe these events. This may include adjusting the schedule for the young person or accommodating leave for them to attend local religious ceremonies/events if requested by their parents/carers.

Diet

Young people may have dietary restrictions and staff should identify and provide necessary foods for them during their time at the home. Early communication with parents/carers is crucial to understanding and accommodating individual dietary needs. Special equipment such as separate utensils may be necessary to meet these requirements.

Dress

Recognition should be given to a young person's religious and cultural needs in relation to their dress. Staff should look to facilitate and support this.

Stereotyping

Staff should be mindful of the stereotypes and prejudices associated with different religious beliefs and make sure they do not let them influence their actions. Additionally, staff should work with young people to help them overcome any stereotypes or prejudices they may hold.

Gender Awareness

It is important to consider the cultural and religious beliefs of young people when making staffing arrangements and planning activities. For example, some young people may not be comfortable spending time alone with individuals of the opposite gender or participating in certain activities with them. These issues should be discussed with the young person and their parents/carers early on in their placement, and appropriate accommodations should be made where possible. Efforts should be made to ensure that these arrangements do not limit the young person's opportunities, but in some cases, alternative arrangements may not be possible. If such situations arise, they should be discussed with the young person and their parents/carers and social worker.

Equality for Young People: Gender

All young people should be treated fairly and equitably, regardless of their gender. Opportunities and activities offered to them should not be restricted or stereotyped based on gender. For example, boys and girls should have equal access to a range of activities, such as sports and the arts, without any gender-based biases or assumptions.

Staffing and gender

It is important for staff to have a thorough understanding of the social history and potential risk factors of each child and young person, particularly with regard to gender. This information should be taken into account when developing the child's or young person's Risk Assessments and Individual Behaviour Support Plan. Whenever possible, children and young people should be given the choice of which staff member accompanies them and the gender of the medical practitioner they wish to see when visiting a GP or hospital. Additionally, when it becomes necessary to physically

intervene with a young person, care should be taken to consider the gender balance of the staff managing the situation, whenever practical and possible.

Education

Young people should be encouraged to take advantage of all educational opportunities available to them. They should have equal access to extracurricular activities, regardless of their gender. Additionally, when providing information and education, it is important to take into account young people's comfort level, especially when discussing sensitive topics such as sex education. For example, some young people may prefer to discuss these topics with individuals of the same gender, so this should be considered when planning lessons.

Facilities

Young people have access to individual toilets and washing facilities in the home and all young people are allocated separate bedrooms.

Equality for Young People: Pregnancy/ Maternity

Young people should not be subject to discrimination because they are pregnant or have a partner who is pregnant. Necessary accommodations should be made to enable these young people to continue their placement and education as much as possible. A risk assessment should be conducted for each individual young person to ensure their safety and well-being.

Equality and Diversity for Young People: Special

Educational Needs

The young people supported by Cameron and Cooper Limited have diverse needs, some of which may be reflected in an Education, Health, and Care Plan. Their needs may vary greatly, from a specific diagnosis to a range of complex needs that make it difficult for them to access traditional mainstream education. Regardless of their specific needs, we ensure that each young person is treated as an individual and that their individual special educational needs are met through our programs. This is achieved through the development of Personal Education Plans, Individual Risk Assessments, and Individual Behaviour Support Plans.

All young people should be treated equitably and with respect, regardless of their additional needs. They should have access to the same opportunities and choices in their care and education. Discrimination on the basis of their academic or physical ability is also unacceptable. Young people should be offered the same opportunities and choices in both their education and extracurricular activities. Lessons should be differentiated to meet the needs of young people with different abilities, to ensure that they can achieve success. Setting realistic goals for each young person is important to build their sense of accomplishment, and to avoid setting them up for failure. Many

young people who are supported by Cameron and Cooper Limited have previously felt that they have "failed" in other settings, so extra encouragement may be needed to help them succeed socially and academically.

Equality for Young People: Disability

The young people we support are unique individuals and should not be discriminated against due to any disabilities they may have. All young people should be treated with fairness and respect, regardless of their abilities. At Cameron and Cooper Limited, we strive to eliminate any barriers that may limit the opportunities available to those with disabilities. This may include providing specific support or utilising assistive technology solutions.

All young people should be given equal opportunities and choices in their social lives and education. Staff will make any necessary reasonable adjustments to ensure that young people with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as their peers. Careful consideration should be given during the admission process to ensure that the service is able to meet the unique needs of each young person, in line with its statement of purpose and admission criteria.

All of the residential units and provisions have some level of accessibility for visitors, however, there are certain areas that may be difficult to access for those with mobility issues. As a result, these services may not be appropriate for young people with severe long-term physical mobility limitations. Staff will make necessary and reasonable adjustments for young people who have temporary mobility issues due to an injury. For more information on this topic, please refer to the "Care of young people who are unwell/Supporting young people with medical conditions" policy.

Equality and Diversity for Young People: Sexual

Orientation

All young people should be treated with fairness and respect, regardless of their sexual orientation. Homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic behaviours will not be tolerated and will be addressed through the organisation's disciplinary procedures. (Refer to the policies on "Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships," "Countering Bullying," and "Staff Disciplinary, Grievance, and Harassment" for more information.) While staff will establish appropriate boundaries and guidelines, young people may still experience bullying. In such cases, the organization's "Countering Bullying" policy will be implemented.

Education

Young people will be educated about sexuality through PSHE lessons, as well as through work during individual keyworking sessions and group activities. For more details on this topic, please refer to the "Relationships and Sex Education" policy.

Support

If young people have questions or are uncertain about their sexuality, staff should ensure that they have access to someone with whom they feel comfortable discussing their concerns. This may be a staff member within the service or an external professional or organization. A list of available resources and contact information can be found in the "Young People's Access to Persons Independent of the Cameron and Cooper Limited Staff Team" policy.

Young people should be provided with support and resources to help them understand and explore their sexuality, and staff should create a safe and open environment where young people can ask questions and express themselves freely. Staff should also be available to provide guidance and resources, such as access to external organisations or professionals if needed.

Stereotyping

Staff should ensure that they do not perpetuate stereotypes or prejudices based on sexual orientation and that they treat all young people equally. They should also work with young people to help them challenge and overcome any biases they may have.

This means that staff should ensure that they do not make assumptions about a young person's sexual orientation or behaviour based on stereotypes or preconceived notions. They should also not make any discriminatory or harmful comments or actions towards a young person based on their sexual orientation. Additionally, staff should provide equal opportunities and resources to all young people regardless of their sexual orientation.

In addition to treating all young people equally, staff should also actively work to challenge any biases or stereotypes that young people may have. This includes educating young people about different sexual orientations and the importance of acceptance and inclusivity. Staff should also provide resources and support to young people who may be questioning their own sexuality or experiencing discrimination based on their sexual orientation. This can include providing access to counselling or connecting them with external organisations that specialise in supporting LGBTQ+ youth.

Overall, it is important for staff to maintain a non-judgmental and inclusive attitude towards all young people and to actively work to challenge any stereotypes or prejudices related to sexual orientation. This will create a safe and accepting environment for all young people, regardless of their sexual orientation.

Equality for Young People: Gender Identity

Young people may question or doubt their gender identity and staff should ensure that they are provided with support and resources to help them understand and navigate these feelings. Staff should also ensure that young people are not discriminated against because of their gender identity and that they are treated with respect and understanding. Adolescence and puberty can be a difficult time for young people as they go through physical and emotional changes, and it is important that staff are sensitive to this and provide appropriate support.

Young people should be respected and supported in their gender identity, including the name and pronoun they choose to go by. The decision to change their name or pronoun should not be taken lightly and should be a determined and sustained change. Staff should make sure that young people are aware of this and are not discriminated against due to their gender identity. Within the organisation, it is preferred that parents, carers and social workers are informed of the young person's choice, and staff will work to facilitate communication and discussion around the change. However, in certain official situations, such as exams, the legal name must be used, and this should be explained to the young person.

Equality for Young People: Dietary Needs

The young people whom we support may have various different dietary needs. Therefore, it is important that we take these needs into consideration when planning meals and that staff are aware of any specific dietary requirements for the young people in our care. We will work with each young person and their family/carers to ensure that their dietary needs are met and that they have access to a varied and nutritious diet. Special accommodations will be made to ensure that the young person's health and safety is not compromised and that they are able to fully participate in all aspects of their care and education. We will also ensure that any necessary medical and dietary information is kept up-to-date, and that staff are trained on how to safely prepare and serve food for young people with specific dietary needs.

Staff should be aware of young people's dietary needs and make sure that they are incorporated into their placement plan. This information should be shared with all relevant staff and any necessary medical interventions or training should be provided. It is important that young people are not disadvantaged due to their dietary needs, so alternative provisions should be made to ensure that they are able to participate fully.

Additionally, staff should take note of any challenges that young people may have with mealtimes, such as sensory needs or past experiences, and document this information in their placement plans and risk assessments. They should also put in place appropriate measures to support the young people during mealtimes.

Equality and Diversity for Young People: Gypsy,

Roma, and Traveller Heritage

Staff should be aware of the unique cultural and linguistic backgrounds of Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller young people and make appropriate accommodations to support their needs. They should also be aware that these young people may have had disruptions in their education due to their nomadic lifestyle and may be hesitant in a formal education setting. Staff should work to reduce any anxiety and provide support to ensure their success.

Gender awareness

It is important for staff to understand the cultural norms and values of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, particularly when it comes to gender roles and relationships. Young people from these communities may have different expectations and experiences than their peers, and staff should be sensitive to this. They should be aware that young people from these communities may be uncomfortable spending time alone with members of the opposite sex and take steps to respect this. This may involve involving parents and carers in planning activities or outings, and ensuring that young people have appropriate chaperones. Additionally, staff should be aware of the need for privacy and dignity for young people from these communities, particularly when it comes to issues related to gender and sexuality. Staff should be aware of the importance of discussing any concerns with young people, their parents and carers, and external professionals if necessary.

Equality and Diversity for Young People:

Refugees/Asylum Seekers

The children of asylum seekers are entitled to and required to receive care and full-time education, and this is the responsibility of the Local Authority to organise. Any young person who is referred to Cameron and Cooper Limited as the child of an asylum seeker is entitled to the same experience as any other child and should not be discriminated against because of this. Children of asylum seekers may need time off to attend appointments/interviews etc pertaining to the asylum application and appropriate arrangements should be made to facilitate this. If the young person themselves are seeking asylum, then they will be supported by either social care and/or family members and may need additional time to attend meetings relating to their asylum application.

Children and young people who have been granted refugee status may not have permanent residency and staff should be aware of their status. These individuals are usually given leave to remain in the UK for five years, after which they must apply for permanent residency if they wish to stay permanently. However, those with special needs may be granted longer leave to remain in order to complete their application and receive the necessary support. Regardless of their refugee or residency status, no young

person should be discriminated against, and they are entitled to the same education and experience as any other child.

Children and young people who have been granted refugee status may need to undertake additional applications to gain permanent residency, and they should be given appropriate support and accommodations. Depending on their age and whether they are applying with their parents, they may need to take Life in the UK and English language tests as part of their residency application process.

Children and young people who have entered the UK as asylum seekers or refugees may have experienced traumatic events in their home countries and may require additional support and counselling to address any difficulties stemming from these experiences. Staff should also be aware of the guidance on working with individuals from diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds when working with these young people.

Children and young people seeking asylum or who have been granted refugee status may face the possibility of having to return to their home countries, which can cause great emotional distress for them and their families. Staff should be aware of this possibility and its potential impact on the young people, and work to provide support and assistance in these difficult circumstances.

More information on asylum and refugee status can be found on the UK Home Office website [UK Visas and Immigration](#).

Equality and Diversity for Young People: Children

With Parents in the Armed Forces

Children with parents in the armed forces may face unique challenges, which can affect their achievement levels in school. The Department of Education and Ofsted have recognised this risk and staff should be aware of any potential issues and work to prevent any disadvantage to the child. Staff may have personal views on the armed forces and conflicts, but it is important that these views do not negatively impact their interactions with the young person.

Young people with parents in the armed forces may face challenges both in their education and social care. Due to frequent relocations, they may experience disruptions in their education, which can make it harder for them to keep up with their studies and exacerbate any existing difficulties they may have. Some may become anxious or introverted in new environments as a result, while others may be more adaptable. Staff should be aware of this background and take appropriate measures to support these young people. They should also keep in mind that young people with specific needs such as dyslexia or ADHD may not have been diagnosed in previous schools due to their short stays, and provide necessary support and accommodations. Additionally, social care staff should be aware of any potential emotional and mental health issues that may arise from the unique experience of having a parent in the armed forces and work to support them accordingly.

Young people with parents in the armed forces may face challenges in their education and social well-being due to frequent relocations and the absence of a parent. Staff should be aware of the parents' postings and tours and take into account the potential impact on the young person's behaviour and mood. This information should be recorded in the young person's placement plan for other staff to be aware of. These young people may feel pressure to take on the responsibilities of the absent parent and may struggle to cope with it. They may also be upset or anxious about the safety of their parents in areas of conflict, and staff should provide appropriate support through keyworking and counselling.

Staff can also access [Directorate Children and Young People](#) (SCE) website for advice and support on how to work with young people whose parents are in the armed forces.

Young people whose parent/s are in the armed forces are entitled to support and accommodations through the Armed Forces Covenant, which aims to ensure that they do not face disadvantages compared to other citizens in accessing public and commercial services. This Covenant is legally recognised under the Armed Forces Act 2011. Additionally, funding is available through the Pupil Premium to support their education, and they may also be eligible for the [Residential Support Scheme](#) when transitioning from school to college, to help with financial assistance for courses that are not located in the area where their parent/s are posted.

Equality and Diversity for Young People: Children of Prisoners

Young people who are supported by Cameron and Cooper Limited should be treated without discrimination, regardless of their parent's actions. Research has shown that children with a parent who has been or is currently in prison may face additional challenges, and staff should be aware of this and provide appropriate support. More information on this topic can be found in the relevant literature <https://www.nicco.org.uk/>.

It is important for the staff at Cameron and Cooper Limited to recognise that having a parent in prison can cause emotional stress for young people. They should take this into account in the young person's individual risk assessment and individual behaviour support plans. The potential changes to a parent's sentence or release can also cause anxiety for the young person and their family. It may be that the parent was incarcerated due to violent behaviour and the young person may be concerned about the possibility of that behaviour recurring. Alternatively, the family dynamic may change significantly with a parent returning home, causing the young person to behave differently. Staff should communicate with parents, careers, and other professionals to understand the specific issues surrounding the parent in prison and work to support the young person in a way that minimises negative impact.

Radicalisation

It is crucial for staff to be aware of the potential risks of radicalisation among young people and to monitor any signs of radicalisation. This may include changes in behaviour, beliefs, or associations with certain groups. Staff should approach any concerns with sensitivity and without making assumptions based on the young person's background or beliefs. If staff are concerned that a young person is at risk of radicalisation or may already be radicalised, they should report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for appropriate assessment and referral under the Prevent duty. It is important to remember that not all young people with different beliefs or backgrounds are at risk of radicalisation, and staff should work to understand the specific factors that may be contributing to the individual's beliefs.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Senior Management Team (SMT) will oversee the implementation of this policy by conducting annual reviews and sharing them with relevant governors. The Lead Teacher will ensure compliance within the school and incorporate it into the education of students as appropriate. The Homes Managers will also ensure adherence to the policy in care settings.