

Equality and Diversity Policy

SENDiass4BCP does not give priority to any particular impairment, disability, or special educational need over another.

Where a service user has an identified need, every effort will be made to ensure everyone who requires SENDiass support can access the service. SENDiass4BCP monitors the service reach by **recording the background** of its client on the database.

Due to Covid-19, SENDiass4BCP staff are not office based, but if a meeting in person is arranged in a Covid – secure manner, it will be done in a building with accessible facilities and meeting spaces.

All our leaflets have been produced in consultation with children and young people with SEND and their parent/carers. Our leaflets can be made available in a range of formats or languages on request.



Sector Duties in the Equalities Act 2010

Equality

Equality is concerned with breaking down the barriers that block opportunities for certain groups of people in society, in the workplace, in education, and so on.

Equality policies aim to identify and minimise the barriers that exclude people. They aim to ensure that everyone has **equal access** to all aspects of life and work.

Eliminating unfair discrimination is important in achieving equality. It is not just physical environment or poor policies that create barriers. It is also ways of working, attitudes, and stereotypes about different groups of people.

Diversity

Everybody is different, with different needs and potential. Treating everybody in the same way fails to recognise the differences between people and can cause unfairness and inequality.

By recognising diversity and meeting different needs effectively, every individual has a better chance of being able to live and work in the way that is best for them.

Britain is made up of increasingly diverse communities. The borough of Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole has a leadership role to play to ensure that people from different backgrounds get on well and value one another, as well as encouraging the celebration of diversity in our local community.



Our Fairness For All Commitment

We are committed to taking action to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct for those protected by the Equality Act 2010, by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Advance equal opportunities by taking steps to meet needs of these groups where these differ from the needs of others
- Foster good relations by encouraging people from groups to participate in sharing their views and influencing service developments, where this is disproportionately low

SENDiass4BCP promotes equality and celebrates diversity on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex, race, religion and/or belief, and sexual orientation as described in the Equality Act 2010. These are collectively known as the nine protected characteristics.



We also recognise that people on very low incomes, or those who live in relative poverty, may also experience inequality and reduced life chances.



Other groups also need additional support or specialist services to achieve their aspirations. These include children looked after by BCP Council, and carers.

Access to Information

We aim to provide our information in an accessible way. This means we will:

- Use plain English
- Follow our guidance on making printed information accessible and/or provide other formats, such as large print, Easy Read, audio
- Provide access to services via Big Word written and telephone translation services and the 'Text Relay' service for contacting deaf and speech-impaired customers by telephone
- Make arrangements for a British Sign Language interpreter and other face to face language interpreters when necessary
- Use positive images
- Meet web-accessibility standards

Enabling people to influence decisions that affect their lives Making a Complaint

We take complaints seriously. It is an opportunity to listen to those who use SENDiass4BCP to see how our services can be improved.

We have a complaints process to encourage people to tell us what we are doing wrong so that we can try to put it right.

We aim to deal with complaints within 15 working days of receiving one. A review of the complaint outcome can be requested. We aim to deliver this



within 20 working days of its referral. Reviews are carried out by a Strategic Director, who is **independent** of the service.

Complainants also have the right to refer the issue to [The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#), whose job it is to investigate complaints in a fair and independent way without taking sides.