

Pony Partnerships CIC



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy 2026-2027

Name of Organisation: Pony Partnerships CIC

Venue/Address: All venues

Date of Review: 1 September 2026

Date of Next Review: 31 August 2027

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1. Policy Statement

Pony Partnerships CIC is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

We value diversity and recognise that people bring different experiences, identities, strengths, and needs. We are committed to creating inclusive services that promote belonging, participation, and positive outcomes for all.

We recognise that equality does not always mean treating everyone in the same way. Some individuals may require different levels of support, flexibility, or reasonable adjustment to access opportunities safely and successfully.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying, and victimisation will not be tolerated.

2. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- promote equality, diversity, and inclusion across all areas of our work;
- ensure fair access to services, opportunities, and support;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- foster a culture of respect, kindness and belonging;
- support participation by individuals with differing needs and backgrounds;
- promote inclusive practice and continuous improvement.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- children and young people;
- adult participants;
- parents and carers;
- staff;
- associates;
- volunteers;
- trustees and directors;

- contractors;
- visitors;
- commissioning organisations and partner agencies.

It applies across all Pony Partnerships CIC activities, services, and decision-making processes.

4. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed with regard to relevant UK equality legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice.

This includes the Equality Act 2010, together with relevant human rights, safeguarding and SEND legislation and guidance.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of a protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics are:

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

Some allergies or related medical conditions may amount to a disability under the Equality Act 2010 where they have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Where safeguarding, equality, privacy, or dignity considerations overlap, Pony Partnerships CIC will consider the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, safeguarding guidance and the best interests, safety and dignity of all children and young people affected.

Pony Partnerships CIC is committed to creating an inclusive environment in which everyone is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness, and where diversity is valued and celebrated.

This policy will be reviewed to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, and organisational practice.

5. Our Commitment

Pony Partnerships CIC is committed to:

- treating everyone fairly and with respect;
- providing services that are inclusive and accessible;
- making reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- recognising and valuing individual differences;
- promoting participation and belonging;
- responding appropriately to discrimination, bullying, or harassment;
- creating a culture where individuals feel safe to express concerns;
- continuously improving accessibility and inclusion.

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We recognise that barriers to participation can arise from disability, neurodivergence, communication differences, mental health needs, financial circumstances, culture, language, geography, caring responsibilities, and other factors.

Where reasonably possible, we will seek to reduce or remove those barriers.

We recognise that people may describe their identities, experiences, and backgrounds in different ways. While this policy uses the statutory terminology set out in the Equality Act 2010 when referring to protected characteristics, Pony Partnerships CIC is committed to treating all individuals with dignity, respect, and compassion, including people of all gender identities, gender expressions, and backgrounds.

6. Inclusion and Accessibility

Pony Partnerships CIC aims to make services as accessible as reasonably possible.

This may include:

- adapting communication methods;
- providing information in alternative formats;
- making reasonable adjustments to activities;
- adapting environments where practicable;
- considering sensory, emotional, and physical needs;
- considering allergy, dietary, environmental allergen, and emergency medication needs;
- working collaboratively with families and professionals;
- adapting participation expectations where appropriate.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered on an individual basis and balanced with safeguarding, health and safety, animal welfare, and operational requirements.

Where a child or young person requests support relating to gender, identity, privacy or facilities, Pony Partnerships CIC will consider the request carefully, case by case, with appropriate involvement from parents or carers unless doing so would increase risk. Decisions will be recorded and will take account of safeguarding, equality, dignity, privacy, clinical or professional information where available, and the safety and wellbeing of all children affected.

7. Neurodiversity and Individual Needs

Pony Partnerships CIC recognises and values neurodiversity and neurodivergence.

We understand that individuals may experience, communicate, learn, and engage in different ways.

Where appropriate, support may include:

- predictable routines;
- visual supports;
- sensory considerations;
- flexible approaches to participation;
- communication adaptations;
- additional preparation and transition support.

Our aim is not to require individuals to fit a particular model of participation, but to support meaningful engagement in a way that is safe and achievable.

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8. Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

Pony Partnerships CIC will not tolerate:

- discrimination;
- harassment;
- victimisation;
- bullying;
- hate incidents;
- exclusionary behaviour based on protected characteristics or other personal differences.

Pony Partnerships CIC will take a strong and proactive approach to bullying or harassment linked to sex, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, gender questioning, neurodivergence, medical needs or any other personal characteristic.

Any concerns will be taken seriously and addressed promptly.

Allergy-related bullying, teasing, exclusion, deliberate exposure to allergens, unsafe food sharing or singling someone out unnecessarily will be taken seriously and addressed under this policy and, where relevant, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Adults Policy or Behaviour, Engagement and Attendance Policy.

Where concerns involve children or adults at risk, safeguarding procedures will also be followed.

9. Recruitment, Employment and Volunteering

Pony Partnerships CIC is committed to fair and inclusive recruitment, employment, and volunteering practices.

Decisions relating to recruitment, promotion, training, supervision, and professional opportunities will be based on suitability, competence, experience, and organisational need.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered throughout recruitment and employment processes where appropriate.

10. Service Delivery and Commissioning

Pony Partnerships CIC seeks to ensure that services are delivered fairly and inclusively.

Decisions regarding referrals, placements, participation, and support will be based on:

- individual needs;
- safety;
- suitability of provision;
- available resources;
- safeguarding considerations;
- known allergy, dietary, medical, or emergency medication needs and any reasonable adjustments required to support safe participation.

We will not unfairly discriminate in the provision of services.

Where a service is not suitable for an individual's needs, we will seek to explain the reasons clearly and, where possible, signpost to alternative support.

Where commissioned provision involves privacy, toileting, changing, overnight accommodation, sport or

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sex-separated arrangements, Pony Partnerships CIC will clarify responsibilities with the commissioning organisation and will not agree arrangements that compromise safeguarding, privacy, dignity, or safety.

11. Responsibilities

- Board of Directors: Responsible for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation and ensuring compliance with legal obligations.
- CEO and Leadership Team: Responsible for implementing this policy, promoting inclusive practice, and responding to concerns appropriately.
- Staff, Associates and Volunteers: Responsible for treating others with dignity and respect, promoting inclusion, challenging discrimination where appropriate, reporting concerns, considering reasonable adjustments, and contributing to an inclusive culture.
- Participants, Families and Visitors: Expected to treat others respectfully and contribute to a safe and inclusive environment.

12. Concerns and Complaints

Anyone who experiences or witnesses discrimination, harassment, bullying, or exclusionary behaviour is encouraged to raise their concern.

Concerns may be addressed through:

- discussion with a member of staff;
- safeguarding procedures where appropriate;
- the Complaints and Feedback Policy;
- organisational grievance or disciplinary procedures where applicable.

All concerns will be taken seriously and considered fairly.

13. Monitoring and Review

Pony Partnerships CIC will seek to review its practices regularly to ensure services remain accessible, inclusive, and responsive to community needs.

Feedback from participants, families, staff, volunteers, and commissioners will be used to inform improvements.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- legislation changes;
- guidance changes;
- organisational practice changes;
- learning from complaints, incidents or feedback identifies a need for review.

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