



Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out School Food Matters' commitment to creating and maintaining a workplace where all can feel welcome and have equal opportunities. We aim to promote a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people with different identities, backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff (including freelancers), trustees and volunteers working for School Food Matters. It covers all activity carried out by, and on behalf of, School Food Matters.

Our principles

Our principles and approach have been developed with guidance and gratitude from the organisation Charity So White a campaign group led by people of colour seeking to tackle institutional racism in the charity sector.

We live in a society where not everyone has the same ability to set the agenda, and this disparity in power and privilege underpins all forms of discrimination. We acknowledge that the types of discrimination limiting the third sector, be they racism, ablism, sexism, classism, homophobia, transphobia or ageism, are endemic in the society within which we all live, grow and operate. They are mutually reinforcing and intersecting. They are also structural.

At School Food Matters we seek to identify *how* these forces operate in our organisation, rather than whether they operate at all, and to focus our energy on creating positive change.

Our approach:

- **Honesty** in our choices to date, and what is preventing us from achieving change, framed in a public discussion that allows for real accountability
 - **Humility** in our understanding and acknowledgement that none of us know for certain the perfect approach, but that this will not prevent us from seeking answers and working with others to create a better world
 - **Hope** in our ability to make a difference
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Statement of Intent

Recruitment

We want to ensure nobody is prevented from joining SFM because of their identity or background. We will:

- ensure staff (including freelancers) and applicants are treated fairly and judged solely on the basis of their merit and potential
- ensure all opportunities are made available to a wide variety of eligible candidates and take action to remove bias from the recruitment process
- collect voluntary DEI data and monitor recruitment processes to determine the diversity of applicants and recruits
- evaluate data collected to identify potential barriers and biases against applicants, and work to address them
- require all new starters to read this policy and complete the Declaration (Appendix 1)

Projects

We want DEI to be a core part of how we understand our current and future projects. We will:

- give due consideration to DEI every time we plan new policies, procedures or strands of work
- proactively design new programmes that allow us to express our commitment to DEI
- regularly review projects and programmes to ensure they reflect our commitment to DEI

Communications

Language and imagery matter. We will:

- communicate in a way that reflects our commitment to DEI
- ensure all communications, policies and procedures use inclusive, non-stereotypical content and language

Governance

We want a work environment where we treat all SFM staff (including freelancers), volunteers and trustees as individuals, fairly and in a consistent way. We will:

- work within the spirit and the practice of the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation by nurturing a constructive and challenging working environment, which is based on mutual respect and encourages individuals to develop to the best of their ability
- ensure all staff (including freelancers), trustees and volunteers have read this policy, and make it available on our website
- deal with any unacceptable behaviour, harassment, discrimination or bullying in a timely and appropriate manner, in line with our policies
- make sure that all employees have equitable access to facilities and opportunities and that reasonable adjustments are made to working environments, schedules and practices, as appropriate, in order to accommodate a more diverse workforce
- actively seek feedback from staff (including freelancers), volunteers and trustees on their experiences of working with School Food Matters and take action as necessary to continue making our workplace as inclusive and comfortable as possible
- annually review this policy in our DEI working group which is open to all staff (including freelancers) and trustees
- publish a [DEI Action Plan](#), which will be reviewed quarterly against measurable targets

Relevant Legislation

- The Equality Act 2010
 - The Equal Pay Act 1970
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Work and Families Act 2006
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Definitions

School Food Matters uses the Social Justice Collective¹ definitions of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion:

Diversity means having differences within an organisation or setting. Diversity recognises we are all different in many ways. People with differing identities, backgrounds and experiences should all have equitable access to resources and decision-making.

Equality means ensuring every individual has equal opportunities. By being conscious of and actively challenging bias or prejudice, we make sure no-one is treated less favourably because of who they are or what makes them different from other people. This requires a proactive approach to make reasonable adjustments that address the visible and invisible barriers people face.

Inclusion means being proactive to make sure people of different backgrounds, experiences and identities feel welcomed, respected and fully able to participate. It is not only about creating a diverse environment, but also ensuring a culture exists where individuals can be their full selves.

¹ <https://socialjusticecollective.co.uk/definitions>

Appendix 1: Declaration

Policy in practice

School Food Matters' Diversity, Equality and Inclusion policy ("the policy") applies to all conduct in the workplace and also to conduct outside of the workplace that is related to your work (e.g. at meetings, social events and social interactions with colleagues) or which may impact on the reputation of School Food Matters (e.g. the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy, that could be linked to School Food Matters.)

You will be required to participate in training and development activities from time to time, to encourage the promotion of the principles of the policy.

Zero Tolerance

At School Food Matters, all staff (including freelancers), trustees and volunteers have a responsibility to help create an environment that is inclusive, supportive and promotes respect for all others. Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality and respect for all. School Food Matters has zero tolerance of any unlawful or unfair discrimination (including harassment) committed against another person because of a protected characteristic:

- sex
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin)
- disability
- sexual orientation
- religion and or belief
- age

Discrimination on the basis of work pattern (part-time working, fixed term contract, flexible working) which is unjustifiable will also not be tolerated.

All staff (including freelancers), trustees and volunteers are personally responsible for their own conduct. This includes being sensitive in their use of language. School Food Matters defines behaviour as being unacceptable if:

- it is unwanted by the recipient
- it has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity and/or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment
- having regard to all the circumstances, including the recipient's perception, it was reasonable for the behaviour to have that effect

Unacceptable behaviour may take many forms, whether face-to-face, written, over the phone or online.

Reporting a breach of the policy

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If you believe that you may have suffered discrimination, or witnessed discriminatory behaviour, you can in the first instance approach your line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority. If the issue relates to the Chief Executive Officer, you may contact the Chair of Trustees. You may alternatively decide to raise the matter formally through School Food Matters' Grievance Policy.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of the policy will be treated in confidence. The Chief Executive Officer and line managers are responsible for ensuring that any incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with in a timely and proportionate manner, in line with the relevant policies.

School Food Matters will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result.

Declaration

I have read and understood School Food Matters' Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy and agree to work to the expected standards. I agree to treat all colleagues and visitors with respect and dignity while carrying out the duties and responsibilities of my role at School Food Matters.

I understand that I should approach my line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority if I have experienced or witnessed discrimination or harassment at work, and where to find the relevant policies in the staff handbook.

Signature:	
Date:	
Print name:	

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy for School Food Matters: Created November 2021