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Relevant to:	All Staff & Stakeholders
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Signed -

Equal Opportunity Policy
Building SEND Castles Ltd

1. Policy Statement

Building SEND Castles Ltd is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of our work. We aim to provide an environment where every child, family, staff member, and stakeholder is treated fairly, respectfully, and without discrimination.

This policy aligns with:

- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023, updated 2024)
- Suffolk County Council expectations for inclusive practice and safeguarding in education and SEND provision

2. Scope

This policy applies to all:

- Directors
- Staff (including part-time and temporary staff)
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Anyone working with or on behalf of Building SEND Castles Ltd

3. Principles

Building SEND Castles Ltd will:

- Ensure all children, families, staff, and stakeholders are treated equitably regardless of race, gender, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, or background
- Promote inclusion, respect, and dignity for all
- Take active steps to identify and remove barriers to equality
- Ensure recruitment, training, and progression opportunities are fair and non-discriminatory
- Monitor and review practices to maintain compliance with legal requirements and Suffolk County Council guidance

3a. Protected Characteristics and Types of Discrimination

In accordance with the **Equality Act 2010**, Building SEND Castles Ltd recognises and protects the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We are committed to preventing all forms of discrimination, including:

- **Direct discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination:** Applying a policy or practice that disadvantages people with a protected characteristic.
- **Perceived discrimination:** Treating someone unfairly because you believe they have a protected characteristic, even if they do not.
- **Associative discrimination:** Treating someone unfairly because they are associated with someone with a protected characteristic.
- **Harassment:** Unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- **Victimisation:** Treating someone unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination.

All practices, teaching, recruitment, and pastoral support are designed to comply with Suffolk County Council expectations for inclusive practice and safeguarding in education and SEND

provision. This includes ensuring equality and diversity are actively promoted through the curriculum, staff conduct, and daily interactions with pupils and families.

Staff receive ongoing training on equality, diversity, and inclusion to ensure understanding and compliance with these principles.

4. Responsibilities

The Directors and CEO have overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion throughout Building SEND Castles Ltd.

All directors, staff, volunteers and contractors are responsible for:

- Treating colleagues, children, and families fairly and respectfully
- Reporting any discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment promptly
- Acting in accordance with this policy and participating in equality and inclusion training
- Supporting children with SEND in line with inclusive practice standards expected by Suffolk County Council
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- Building SEND Castles Ltd will make reasonable adjustments where required for staff, children and visitors in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

5. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or Suffolk County Council expectations. All staff will be made aware of updates to ensure ongoing compliance.

6. Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to equality, diversity or discrimination should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Kim Webster-Marsh, or in her absence to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), Jane Sparrow.

- Kim: buildingsendcastles@gmail.com
- Jane: officebuildingsendcastles@gmail.com
- Phone: 07879793763