



AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT

**for parents/carers of children with
ADHD and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorder**

Angels Equalities Policy

Policy Statement

Angels Support Group recognises that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal treatment. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we will ensure that no job applicant, trustee, staff member, volunteer, member or individual to whom we provide services is discriminated against on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:¹

- age
- disability including mental health
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership status
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Additional employment legislation will also be taken into account when employing staff, eg responsibility for dependents and part-time working.

We are committed to ensuring that we treat all people with dignity and respect and will not tolerate any form of harassment, victimisation or discriminatory behaviour. Staff and volunteers will be supported to challenge unwanted behaviours, through training and referral to the Parent Support Manager and/or Trustees. This policy statement will feature in appropriate Angels Support Group publications, be made available to all new staff and volunteers, displayed at our premises and on the charity's website. Angels Support Group will keep this policy under review and will implement changes in a timely manner.

Inclusion and Diversity

Angels Support Group aims to support families of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and/or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). We are an experience-led charity, which provides individualised, professional expertise and advice. We work alongside parents to build understanding and to empower them to hear their child's voice. Our key aim is to maximise the individual potential of each child and young person. We are inclusive, impartial, non-judgemental and caring.

In accordance with the objects set out in our Constitution (see Appendix A) we aim to achieve equality of access to our sites and activities and will take action to ensure that we do not discriminate against people from all sectors of the community that we serve.

¹ For guidance on protected characteristics see Equality and Human Rights Commission www.equalityhumanrights.com

Charities Exception

Angels Support Group is aware of, and has considered, the Charity Commission's guidance on The Charities' Exception². Under the Equality Act a charity may limit its benefits to people who share a protected characteristic. Although this may exclude (and therefore discriminates against) people with other protected characteristics, it is allowed if either of the following tests is met:

- a. the charity's governing document only allows people who share a protected characteristic to benefit, and
- b. the restriction can be justified on the basis of disadvantage or achievement of a legitimate aim.

In the case of Angels Support Group, test (a) above applies because:

- the governing document restricts benefits to people with the same disability; (ADHD and ASD) and
- the benefits are provided in order to tackle a particular disadvantage or need linked to that disability.

Policy Implementation

Angels Support Group will endeavour to ensure that the make-up of its Trustee Board and committees have a balanced composition and encompass the diversity of the local community. We will promote an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere to existing and new members. We will take steps to identify the needs of service users in our community and develop services, policies and procedures accordingly.

We will ensure, as far as possible that service users:

- Are able to access our services in ways that suit them.
- Have their needs listened to, and met as far as possible.
- Are given help that is relevant to their problem and situation.
- Are treated fairly, with dignity and respect and without discrimination.
- Trustees, staff, volunteers and visitors adhere to the Equalities Policy and comply with the rules of behaviour outlined below.

Rules of behaviour

The rules of behaviour should be viewed in the light of Angels Support Group's commitment to the elimination of discrimination and harassment against individuals and particular groups set out above.

The following behaviours are unacceptable:

- Attacks on individuals or groups on the basis of a protected characteristic.
- Discriminatory name-calling, insulting remarks, jokes or threats – either verbal or written.
- Encouraging other people to harass or discriminate against another individual or group.

² Equality Act: guidance for charities <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-guidance-for-charities>

The Charity will treat seriously all complaints under this policy made by staff, volunteers, service users or other third parties and will take appropriate action as outlined below.

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the Charity's grievance, complaints or disciplinary procedure, as appropriate and the complainant will be informed of the outcome in line with these procedures. (see also *Angels Complaints Procedure*)

- In a case involving a member of staff, disciplinary action will be taken according to the conditions outlined in the conditions of service.
- In a case involving a member of the committee, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Chair of the committee for consideration of appropriate action
- In a case involving a volunteer, the matter will be brought to the attention of the volunteer's manager for consideration of appropriate action
- In the case of a member, individual or organisation receiving or requesting services, Trustees of Angels Support Group may decide to withdraw services to that organisation or individual.

Angels Support Group recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will operate its recruitment and selection procedures with a view to equality and diversity:

- We endeavour to recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates possible.
- Employment opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities and personal merit.
- Where appropriate, positive action measures are taken to attract applicants from all sections of society and especially from those underrepresented in the workforce.
- Where appropriate and necessary, lawful exemption (genuine occupation requirements) will be used to recruit suitable staff to meet the special needs of particular groups.
- All staff are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Selection for all training and career development opportunities will be purely on the basis of merit and organisational priorities. Supervisions and appraisals will be conducted in line with appropriate HR guidelines.
- Angels Support Group will reimburse appropriate volunteer expenses to ensure that no-one is prevented from volunteering because of low income.

Angels Support Group will take account of this Equalities Policy in the consideration and implementation of all other policies and procedures.

Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for implementing this policy rests with the Trustees. Angels Support Group has appointed a senior person (Leise Cooper) to be responsible for the operation of the policy on a day to day basis. This will include promoting this policy and ensuring it is understood and complied with by all staff and volunteers, dealing with breaches and complaints, and contributing ideas for the advancement of diversity principles within the charity.

Staff and volunteers are expected to have read and understood this policy, to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles and requirements, to encourage the same level of behaviour in colleagues and immediately report any breaches witnessed, whenever it is reasonable for them to do so.

Monitoring

Angels Support Group will monitor and record equality and diversity information about services, service users, staff and volunteers, including trustees. We will store this information as confidential personal data and restrict access to this information. The information will be used exclusively for the purposes of equality monitoring and will have no bearing on opportunities or benefits. At least once a year, we will monitor:

- Anonymised membership demographic information
- Anonymised service usage and activity uptake profiles
- Recruitment and selection processes
- Pay and benefit uptake (eg flexible working)
- Profiles of complaints under the grievance and disciplinary procedures

Monitoring reports will be provided to Trustees and discussed at Angels Strategy meetings to identify any issues, update the Angels Action Plan and/or Risk Register.

Approval and review schedule

This policy and procedures applies to Angels Support Group and covers any activities we run as a group. This policy will be reviewed every three years or more regularly if we identify any non-compliance or problem, or in the light of emerging legislation or best practice that could impact on this policy.

Angels Equalities Policy was adopted as follows:

Date of Angels Support Group Strategy meeting:

Signature of the Chair :

Date Signed :

Signature of Trustees :

Frequency policy to be reviewed : Three years

Date policy to be reviewed : July 2022

History of changes

Version	Date	Summary of changes
V 2	July 2019	<p>Updated links to websites. Added Charity Commission advice on The Charities Exemption. 'Responsibility' and 'Monitoring' areas clarified. Restructuring. Reference sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equality Act: guidance for charities www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-guidance-for-charities ▪ Equality and Human Rights Commission www.equalityhumanrights.com ▪ NCVO guidance on equality and diversity https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/hr/equality-and-diversity/equality-and-diversity#

Appendix A: Angels Support Group Constitution

Objects of the Charity:

1. Providing support and guidance to parents/carers/siblings of children who are diagnosed as suffering from Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and/or autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and their associated conditions or who are being assessed for ADHD or ASD.
2. Relief of such children and their parents/carers/siblings by providing facilities in the interest of social welfare and for recreation and other leisure time occupation.
3. Advancing the education of the public and statutory bodies in matters related to ADHD and ASD.

