



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Policy Holder	Phil Cook/SLT	Date of next review	18/06/2026
Last review Date	18/06/2025	Reviewed by	The EDI Group

1. EDI – Statement of Inclusion:

At Resources for Autism, we believe that every individual brings a unique worldview shaped by their experiences, knowledge, and wisdom, but also acknowledge that our worldview can be limited by unconscious bias. We believe that respecting and welcoming diversity in background, perspective, and identity, strengthens our community and deepens our shared understanding, helping us move beyond those limits. By fostering collaboration and actively listening to one another, we create a workplace where everyone feels heard, valued, and respected.

Our commitment to inclusion, equality, and diversity is supported at every level of the organisation, ensuring all employees have opportunities for growth and development. We strive to cultivate a culture of mutual respect, continuous learning, and fairness, where employees can bring their authentic selves to work and contribute to our mission's success. We are dedicated to regularly reviewing our practices to ensure that we remain leaders in fostering an equitable and inclusive environment for all.

The policy applies to all colleagues, volunteers, Trustees. It's the responsibility of everyone at Resources for Autism to uphold this policy.

2. Purpose of Policy

This policy outlines *Resources for Autism's* commitment to promoting equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) across all areas of our organisation. Our aim is to foster a culture that embraces difference, values every individual, and actively works toward equal outcomes — recognising that equity may be needed to achieve this.

We believe that an inclusive environment, where everyone can truly be themselves and feel a sense of belonging, supports wellbeing and enables us all to participate

and feel valued. A diverse and respectful workforce strengthens our organisation and enhances the support we provide to those we serve.

We are committed to maintaining an environment grounded in dignity, trust, and respect — free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, or victimisation.

This policy also ensures our compliance with the *Equality Act 2010* and supports the nine protected characteristics it defines (see Appendix 1). In doing so, we strive to create a workplace where all voices are heard, and everyone is supported and understood.

3. Benefits of EDI policy

The benefits of EDI are wide-ranging including individual wellbeing, recruitment and retention of colleagues, reputation, delivery of our values, enhanced volunteering, improved services, better outcomes, and legal compliance.

Benefits of implementing this policy include:

- Enabling us to become a more inclusive organisation
- Increased diversity of knowledge, enhance creativity and problem solving
- Our staff, volunteers, and people we support will feel valued and safe
- It helps enable a culture of co production
- Increased appreciation and respect for difference
- We can become an organisation of choice
- A representative workforce and service base
- It will encourage contrasting perspectives, which can lead to improved outcomes and success
- Wellbeing will be improved
- It will improve standards of delivery
- Retention of both staff and volunteers will be strengthened, as will everyone's progression
- A vibrant, inclusive, and nurturing environment

4. Embedding EDI across the organisation:

How we will ensure this in practice:

1. **Fostering a Culture of Open and Empathetic Dialogue**
At Resources for Autism, we promote a culture of openness, empathy, and mutual care. We encourage constructive conversations around misunderstandings or microaggressions, while recognising that no one is expected to speak on behalf of a group or take on the role of correcting others. People have the choice to engage in these discussions or seek support, and when they do, we encourage are to be met with empathy and understanding in line with our values. Guidance is available, and formal concerns can be raised in line with our complaints policy. Our approach is rooted in curiosity, respect and a shared commitment to learning.
2. **Through Development of an EDI Policy:** Create a clear and comprehensive EDI policy that outlines our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

This policy should be accessible and communicated to all staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.

3. **Board-Level Commitment:** Ensure that the board of trustees actively supports EDI initiatives. This includes diversifying the board to reflect the communities served and embedding EDI principles in governance practices.
4. **Training and Awareness:** Provide regular training for staff and volunteers on topics such as unconscious bias, inclusive practices, and cultural competency. This helps create a more equitable and inclusive work environment. Resources for Autism will make opportunities for: training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. **Inclusive Recruitment Practices:** Review recruitment processes to ensure they are fair and open. This includes advertising roles in diverse platforms, using inclusive language, and removing barriers that might deter underrepresented groups.
6. **Flexible Policies:** Where possible, implement flexible policies such as gender-neutral parental leave, mental health days, and accommodations for religious practices. These policies signal a commitment to inclusivity and support for staff.
7. **Data Collection and Analysis:** Collect and analyse data on staff, volunteer and service user demographics, staff pay equity, and contract types. Use this data to identify and address disparities within the organisation.
8. **Service Delivery:** in all areas of service delivery, we will strive for inclusive and accessible services that are culturally respectful.
9. **Community Engagement:** Actively engage with the communities served by RfA to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met. This can include focus groups, surveys, coproduction and partnerships with local organisations.
10. **Regular Reviews:** Continuously review and update EDI practices to ensure they remain effective and relevant. This includes seeking feedback from staff and stakeholder
11. **Promoting our values:** Promoting our values internally and externally to other organisations and the wider world in which we operate.

5. Breaches and complaints

We take any breach of this policy very seriously. Some breaches may break the law.

Complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by employees, service users, suppliers, visitors, the public and any other of the organisation's work activities, will be taken seriously.

Breaches and Complaints will follow the procedure set out in our Employee handbook, Complaints Policy or other relevant policy.

- **Employees**

For employees breaches and complaints will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Furthermore, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations.

In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- **Volunteers**

For volunteers, breaching this policy could result in the volunteering agreement ending and them being asked to leave their volunteer position. It may also mean the volunteer is not able to volunteer in future.

- **People we support**

For the people we support breaching this policy could result in access to services being ended or denied

- **Visitors, suppliers and external parties**

Breaches may result in cancellation of contracts or exclusion from Resources for Autism's building and services

- **Trustees**

Breaches of this policy could result in trustees being removed from the board of trustees

6. Recruitment and workforce

Resources for Autism will make decisions concerning staff based on merit including

- promotion
- employment
- training

Aptitude and ability will determine suitability for a role; it will not be affected by any of the protected characteristics (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2010).

Resources for Autism commits to review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, to update them, and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Resources for Autism will monitor the make-up of the staff, volunteers and board of trustees regarding information such as age, sex, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, work in practice. This will be reviewed annually, and action will be taken to address any issues.

7.Roles and Responsibilities:

Board of Trustees

The Board plays a key role in guiding our charity's commitment to EDI, helping to ensure it's part of our strategic direction, championing inclusivity, and supporting ongoing progress at a governance level.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO helps lead the way by weaving EDI into the fabric of the organisation's culture and goals, making sure the right support, resources, and space for inclusive practice are in place for everyone to thrive.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Senior leaders help bring EDI to life across their teams and departments by creating inclusive plans, encouraging good practice, and supporting a workplace where everyone feels valued and heard.

People Team (including HR)

The People team is here to support inclusive and fair policies, help create accessible recruitment and development pathways, provide training, and ensure everyone has the opportunity to grow in a safe and respectful environment.

EDI Group

The EDI Group helps coordinate our shared efforts, offering advice, raising awareness, and encouraging involvement across the charity, while also keeping track of how we're doing and where we can grow.

Managers / Group Leaders

Managers and Group leaders support EDI day to day by fostering inclusive team cultures, being there for their colleagues, encouraging learning and discussion, and helping to create spaces where everyone feels they belong.

All Staff and Volunteers

Every person at RfA plays a part in building a welcoming and respectful environment—by staying curious, being open to learning, treating others with kindness, and speaking up when something doesn't feel right.

People we support

We value the voices of the people we support and aim to shape inclusive services by listening to feedback, involving them in conversations, and making sure our work reflects the diverse needs of our communities.

8. Appendices**Appendix 1: Equality Act: 2010: Protected Characteristics**

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

Appendix 2: Glossary of EDI Terms and Concepts

A collected glossary of EDI terms and concepts is available here: [Glossary of EDI Terms.docx](#). This is given simply to demonstrate and recognising the terms can be complex and hold a lot of nuances that would go beyond the scope of a collected glossary.