



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

A place where everyone belongs

Assisting Parents with Children Affected by Mental Health
Registered Charity Number 1186256

Version	1.0
Adopted	March 2026
Approved by	The Board of Trustees, signed on its behalf by Lauren Ridley, Chair of Trustees
Policy owner	CEO
Next review	March 2027, or sooner if legislation or guidance changes
Applies to	All trustees, staff, volunteers, placement students, contractors, service users and partners

At a Glance

Our commitment: APCAM is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in everything we do. We will treat everyone with dignity and respect, challenge discrimination wherever we see it, and make our services accessible to every family who needs them.

- **Zero tolerance** of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation.
- **Anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice:** we actively identify and challenge bias, not just avoid it.
- **Accessible services:** we remove barriers for disabled, neurodivergent and marginalised families.
- **Everyone has a role:** challenge, report and learn.

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1. Purpose

The families APCAM supports often face disadvantage and discrimination, because of disability, SEND, mental health, poverty, rural isolation, race, or other parts of their identity. This policy sets out how APCAM promotes equality, values diversity and builds an inclusive culture for the people we support, our people and our community.

2. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Equality	Making sure everyone has equal opportunities and is not treated unfairly because of who they are.
Equity	Recognising that people start from different places and may need different support to reach the same outcome.
Diversity	Recognising and valuing the differences between people.
Inclusion	Creating an environment where everyone feels welcome, respected and able to take part fully.

3. Protected Characteristics and Beyond

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination because of nine protected characteristics:

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

APCAM also recognises that people can face disadvantage because of other circumstances, and will not discriminate on the basis of:

- socio-economic background, poverty or housing status;
- being a carer, a young carer or a parent of a child with SEND;
- mental health, whether or not it meets the definition of disability;
- neurodivergence;
- care experience;
- being part of an Armed Forces family;
- past offending or involvement with the justice system, subject to safeguarding law;
- rural isolation or access to transport;
- language, literacy or digital access.

4. Types of Discrimination

- **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination:** a rule or practice that applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular group without good reason.
- **Discrimination arising from disability:** treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability.
- **Failure to make reasonable adjustments:** see the Reasonable Adjustments Policy.
- **Harassment:** unwanted conduct that violates dignity or creates a hostile environment, including sexual harassment.
- **Victimisation:** treating someone badly because they have made or supported a complaint.

5. Our Services

APCAM will:

- make our services accessible, including choosing accessible venues, offering home and online support, and providing information in plain English, easy read and other formats on request;
- use interpreters where needed, rather than relying on children or family members;
- actively reach families who may find it harder to access support, including rural families, Armed Forces families and those from minoritised communities;
- listen to families about barriers they face and act on what we hear;
- make sure that WeGame and youth activities are inclusive of disabled and neurodivergent young people;
- recognise how discrimination, racism and disadvantage can affect mental health, education and safeguarding, and take this into account in our work;
- advocate for children's rights to an inclusive education.

6. Our People

- Recruitment, selection, pay, training, promotion and supervision will be fair, transparent and based on merit, in line with the Safer Recruitment Policy.
- We will value lived experience and diversity of background, in line with the Lived Experience Policy.
- We will make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff and volunteers.
- We will support flexible working and family-friendly arrangements where possible.
- We aim for our Board, staff and volunteers to reflect the communities we serve.

7. Anti-Racist and Anti-Discriminatory Practice

In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, APCAM recognises that it is not enough to avoid discrimination. We will build an inclusive culture through our leadership, policies, training and practice, and expect everyone to actively identify and challenge racism, discrimination and bias, including in other services we work with.

This includes challenging unconscious bias, adultification of children from minoritised groups, assumptions about families, and disproportionate outcomes in education, exclusion and safeguarding.

8. Raising Concerns

Anyone who experiences or witnesses discrimination, harassment or bullying should raise it with their line manager, the CEO or the Chair of Trustees. Service users can use APCAM's complaints procedure. All concerns will be taken seriously, investigated fairly, and acted on. Discrimination by staff or volunteers is a disciplinary matter. Anyone who raises a concern in good faith will be protected from victimisation.

9. Training and Monitoring

- Everyone receives equality, diversity and inclusion training at induction and regularly after that.
- APCAM will collect anonymous equality monitoring data from applicants, staff, volunteers and service users, on a voluntary basis, and use it to identify gaps and improve access.
- The Board will receive an annual report on equality, diversity and inclusion.

10. Monitoring and Review

The Board of Trustees will monitor how this policy is working through regular reports from the CEO, feedback from staff, volunteers and service users, and learning from any incidents or complaints. This policy will be reviewed annually by the policy owner, or sooner if legislation, statutory guidance or APCAM's services change.

11. Related Policies and Legal Framework

11.1 Related APCAM policies

- Reasonable Adjustments Policy 2026
- Lived Experience Policy 2026
- Sexual Harassment Policy 2026
- Safer Recruitment Policy 2026
- Trauma Informed Working Policy 2026
- Safeguarding Policy 2026 (including WeGame)
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2026
- Complaints Policy

11.2 Legislation and guidance

- APCAM Constitution (Foundation model CIO constitution, last amended 20 September 2019)
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Armed Forces Covenant
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Approval

Approved by	The Board of Trustees, by resolution in line with clause 13 of the APCAM Constitution
Signed on behalf of the Board	Lauren Ridley, Chair of Trustees
Signature	
Date adopted	March 2026
Next review	March 2027
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