

# Leamington Spa Orthodontics: Equality and Diversity Policy

## POLICY STATEMENT

At Leamington Spa Orthodontics we are committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality and diversity in all of our activities and we endeavour to establish an inclusive culture, free from discrimination and based upon the values of dignity, courtesy and respect.

LSO is committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.

This commitment supports the organisational principles of the Practice and upholds the ethos of establishing a culture based on dignity, courtesy and respect.

This policy is based on equality legislation and anti-discrimination guidance. LSO strives to comply with legal requirements and aims to achieve best practice.

LSO values diversity and recognises that the Practice, its staff, students, patients and service users benefit from a range of backgrounds, experiences, views, beliefs and cultures as represented within its staff, students, patients and service users populace.

Equality and Diversity is integral to the ethos of LSO and we believe it is integral to the success of the Practice.

This policy is designed to outline the principles of the Practice's commitment to equality and diversity.

The policy applies to:

- students, patients and service users
- to all applicants for posts within the Practice,
- to all staff employed on a full time or part-time basis,
- to all staff on permanent or temporary contracts,
- to agency staff,
- to honorary title/contract holders and visitors undertaking duties in the name of the Practice, and
- to sub-contractors undertaking work on the Practice site and all visitors to the Practice.

## LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Under Equality legislation it is unlawful to:

1. Discriminate directly against anyone and treat him/her less favourably than others on the grounds of the protected characteristics of: age (unless this can be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim), disability (including discrimination arising from a disability and failure to make reasonable adjustments), gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. This also includes discrimination based on perception of the person e.g. a belief that someone is gay or a belief that someone is disabled even if this is not actually true.

2. Discriminate against someone for reasons relating to their association with a person on the grounds of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation e.g. discriminating against an employee/student/patient/service user because they have a disabled dependent.

3. Discriminate indirectly against anyone by applying a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people with a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation) unless the person applying the provision can justify it as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

4. Subject someone to harassment for reasons relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. This includes behaviour that an individual finds offensive on these grounds even if the behaviour is not directed at the individual. It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because they either submit to, or reject, sexual harassment or harassment related to their sex. An employer also has responsibilities relating to harassment of employees by third parties as outlined in the Dignity at Work and Study Policy.

5. Victimise someone because s/he has made, or intends to make, a complaint or allegation or has given or intends to give evidence in relation to a complaint of discrimination in line with the Equality Act.

## OBJECTIVES:

- The aim of this policy is to ensure that in carrying out its activities the Practice will have due regard to:
- eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advancing equality of opportunity, across all the activities of the Practice between different groups
- fostering good relations between people of a diverse background.

In the implementation of this policy the Practice will aim to:

- develop and promote a culture of equality and diversity throughout the Practice;
- develop and promote a culture of dignity, courtesy and respect;
- support all staff, students, patients and service users, including provision of relevant support relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.
- work to prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination;
- deal with all forms of discrimination consistently and effectively;
- ensure that the Equality and Diversity policy influences and informs the culture of the Practice.

## DEFINITIONS

**Equal opportunities** refers to the elimination of unlawful and unfair direct and indirect discrimination of particular groups and promoting equal access, treatment and outcomes that take into account specific needs of individuals.

**Diversity** encompasses visible and non-visible individual differences that includes, but is not limited to, differences protected by anti-discrimination legislation. Appreciating diversity is about valuing differences and recognising that everyone through their unique mixture of skills and experience has their own valuable contribution to make.

It is the aim of Devon Square Orthodontics that individuals and groups within the Practice are not only treated on the basis of equality, but that their diverse contributions to the professional and cultural life of the Practice are recognised and developed.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Leamington Spa Orthodontics expects everyone linked to the Practice (staff and students) to behave with dignity, courtesy and respect and to act in a manner that does not unlawfully discriminate at all times

### **Role of Staff**

- To actively encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidences of behaviour that fail to comply with this policy;
- To support the aims of the Practice Equality and Diversity policy;
- To undertake appropriate equality and diversity training.

### **Role of Students**

- Actively to encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidences of behaviour that fail to comply with this policy;
- To support the aims of the Practice Equality and Diversity policy;
- To be aware of equality and diversity issues.

### **Role of Human Resources**

- To provide appropriate equality and diversity awareness and training for all staff;
- To support leadership in implementing the policy;
- To ensure that recruitment advertising, selection and appointment procedures, performance management processes and disciplinary grievance processes are fair and transparent and are consistently applied;
- To monitor employment equality data and to publish the findings of monitoring activity, as appropriate.

### **Role of Directors**

- To ensure that all members of staff receive the appropriate equality and diversity training;
- To investigate all matters of alleged discrimination, harassment and inappropriate behaviour promptly and thoroughly;
- To ensure that selection and appointment procedures, performance management processes, staff development opportunities and disciplinary and grievance processes are fairly and consistently applied to all staff;
- To ensure that selection and admissions procedures, assessment processes, disciplinary and complaints procedures are fairly and consistently applied to all students attached to the Practice;
- To ensure that equality and diversity issues are considered as part of the Practice planning processes.

### **Role of Quality Assurance Manager**

- To advise the Directors on legal compliance and best practice in all matters relating to equality and diversity;
- To devise and recommend policies, procedures and action plans to ensure that all legislative requirements are met and best practice adopted;
- To collect and review data relevant to diversity and equality matters relating to learners or employees on a regular basis and recommend changes to policies and procedures as appropriate;
- To advise on the provision of appropriate training and awareness raising in relation to all equal opportunities and diversity matters.

## **TRAINING**

Equality and Diversity training will be mandatory for all staff on an annual basis. Information will be provided to all learners in order to raise awareness of equality and diversity and the contents of this policy.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will normally be available on the Practice's website at [www.learmingtonspaorthodontics.com](http://www.learmingtonspaorthodontics.com) It will also be available in printed form on request and, if requested, will be made available in different formats (e.g. large print, audio). Anyone requiring a copy of the policy in another language should contact the Practice's Quality Assurance Manager to discuss their requirements at [care@learmingtonspaorthodontics.co.uk](mailto:care@learmingtonspaorthodontics.co.uk)

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information disclosed to the Practice in relation equality and diversity issues will be kept strictly confidential in accordance with legislative requirements.

## BREACH OF POLICY

Contravention of the Equality and Diversity policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter and offenders will be dealt with under the Practice's staff disciplinary policy.

## REVISION

This policy will be revised on an annual basis or when relevant new legislation comes into place.

### Sources of Further Guidance:

Equality Act 2010

Human Rights Act 1998

Equality & Human Rights Commission: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service): <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1461>