



## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY, SYSTEMS, PROCEDURES AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Equality and Diversity are core values to B Sharp. We build an inclusive culture through delivery of our artistic programme and our employment and governance practices. Our young participants are at the centre of everything we do – our focus is to encourage, support and celebrate their diverse voices. We aim to fully represent the many different cultures, backgrounds and viewpoints of our participants and their communities.

1. B Sharp recognises that discrimination and victimisation are unacceptable and that it is in the interests of everyone to treat each other fairly, with equality and respect.
2. We aim to ensure that no one receives less favourable consideration or treatment (either directly or indirectly) on the grounds of:
  - age
  - gender reassignment
  - being married or in a civil partnership
  - being pregnant or on maternity leave
  - disability
  - race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
  - religion or belief
  - sex
  - sexual orientation
3. This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements (Equality Act 2010), any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Government Departments and any other statutory bodies.
4. Ultimate responsibility rests with the Chair and Director who will take all reasonable steps to ensure the effective operation of this policy. However, day-to-day responsibility for its implementation also lies with our staff by which term we include: our board of trustees, paid staff and volunteers, contracted and sessional workers and professional guests.

The purpose of this policy and accompanying notes is to promote good practice and equip our staff (especially our music leaders and young music leaders) to ensure there is no discrimination and behave in ways that are compliant with the law and compatible with B Sharp's values and ethos.

### **Designated Officer**

The B Sharp designated officer responsible for Equality and Diversity is the Director Ruth Cohen - T: 07947 334138 E: ruthcohen@bsharp.uk.com

## **2. SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES**

### **a. EMPLOYMENT**

#### **Recruitment, Selection and Promotion**

- Recruitment, selection for employment and promotion is based on appropriateness, aptitude and ability of the individual. Best practice, anonymised recruitment is carried out. All staff will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and make best use of their talents.
- Paid internships, apprenticeships, volunteering or work placements are created to support new entrants to the workforce.
- Employment practices are inclusive and nurture progression.
- Our employment policies enable us to support individual needs (e.g. flexible working)
- In-work mentoring, coaching and networking is available and widely offered
- All staff are paid the real living wage

#### **Induction**

New staff, volunteers and learners receive a full induction, with an individual induction plan designed to enable them to play a full role

- The job requirements and responsibilities are clarified.
- Equality and Diversity policy is explained, and training needs identified.
- Staff receive a copy of B Sharp's Code of Conduct (Staff Handbook).

#### **Training**

Training on Equality and Diversity is provided (either in house or through a third party) at regular intervals. This involves:

- Ways of behaving in day-to-day activities that are not discriminatory or intimidating.
- Ensuring that no form of discrimination, intimidation or harassment from others towards individuals or groups who have, or are perceived to have, one of the protected characteristics is tolerated (even in jest).
- Ensuring no individual is discriminated against because of their association with an individual who has a protected characteristic.
- Ensuring that where selection is required there is clarity about the criteria (i.e., this project/section is for *competent and confident singers*) and select on that basis only using clearly state measures.
- How to report concerns about discriminatory practice witnessed at a B Sharp activity or event.

#### **Supervision**

Staff have regular line management meetings and an annual review meeting. Line Management meetings help us to develop individual development plans with our staff, who can access external

opportunities to support their professional development. Staff receive regular support and supervision, which includes support for wellbeing.

**b. CONTRACTED STAFF, GUEST MUSICIANS AND SESSIONAL WORKERS**

Contracted staff, guest musicians and sessional workers are given a copy of our Equality and Diversity Policy Statement with their contract or agreement. They are required to sign receipt of this document, state they have read and understood it and agree to abide by the detail of the policy.

**c. ACCESSIBILITY**

We aim to make all B Sharp activities or event genuinely accessible to all interested young people. We therefore have several strategies to help us reach a wide range of potential participants and audience members.

**d. MARKETING AND PUBLICITY**

Our marketing and publicity methods are varied and reach all ages from early years to adults; various interest groups; from traditional printed methods to website and social media.

**e. REACHING UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS**

B Sharp is active in its efforts to reach under-represented groups, and works proactively with partners to reach new young people, especially those that are vulnerable.

**f. FEES AND CONCESSIONS**

We operate a sliding scale of fees and charges for our workshops, events and activities. We offer concessions and free places to those on lower incomes (i.e. part-time workers, the unemployed and students etc ...) so that no one is excluded from a B Sharp activity on the basis of financial hardship. This is activated on trust and no proof of a claim is needed.

**g. ACCESSIBILITY**

Opportunities (e.g. sessions, performances, ensembles) are openly and widely advertised and promoted. Access audits are undertaken in key venues and used to inform when and where we hold activities. Support is offered to participants to attend as needed (eg. Transport is provided where appropriate).

**h. YOUNG PEOPLE CENTRED**

B Sharp is a young person-centred organisation, with participants involved in decision-making at all levels. Children and young people are at the centre of the creation process in sessions, leading to diverse and representative musical programme.

Trainee music leaders co-lead sessions, and co-produce events, so young people have agency in B Sharp's programme. They also give feedback/input on future direction to Trustees and are therefore able to have strategic influence.

**i. SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES**

We respond positively to the special needs and disabilities of our participants, their families and the wider public who form our audiences. We will always act to enable young people with physical, sensory or learning disabilities or SEMH difficulties to participate. B Sharp employs Learning and

Support Assistants in our sessions to ensure all young people who want to take part have the support available for them to access and enjoy sessions.

#### **j. SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION**

We have programmes of activities for children from early years to young adulthood. We have a robust *Safeguarding and Child Protection* policy in place which extends our duty of care to all children, young people and vulnerable adults and allows for a wider inclusivity.

### **3. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

#### **a. REPORTING BREACHES OF CONDUCT**

We take appropriate and immediate action in the event of incidents or concerns of discrimination or other breaches of this policy. We take every report or disclosure seriously and give support to the individual who raises or discloses their concern.

The following procedure is to be used in all cases, i.e. involving participants, their families, contracted workers or professional guests and members of an audience - as well as B Sharp colleagues.

1. Make a written note at the first opportunity, keeping a copy for our own reference, and include:

- Date, time and place of the incident and/or the disclosure,
- The names of those involved,
- A description of the incident including the actual words or gestures used,
- A counter signature if appropriate (in a school setting this would be the head or another teacher),
- Your name, date and time.

#### **b. COMPLAINTS**

B Sharp encourages all its staff and participants to be open about their thoughts and feelings and often asks for genuine feedback, warts and all. In this way, we aim to avoid the necessity for our participants and their families or a member of the wider public to make a complaint. However, should there be cause for complaint, the following procedure is in place and is published on our website.

1. Contact Ruth in the first instance for an initial conversation - Ruth Cohen - T: 07947 334138 E: [ruthcohen@bsharp.org.uk](mailto:ruthcohen@bsharp.org.uk)
2. If you would prefer to talk to Ruth directly, you can always be accompanied by a friend or a parent/guardian.
3. If you are not happy with the response you receive from Ruth, contact the Chair of the

Board of Trustees, Julie Sheppard.

**c. CONFIDENTIALITY**

1. All information given to us by individuals or members of their family are treated as confidential and securely stored.
2. All records of equality and diversity concerns are detailed and accurate and securely stored.

**4. POLICY REVIEW**

Reviewed: 23rd January 2025

Next Review: January 2026