



Preston Neighbourhood House Inc.

“Leading our community towards greater independence and quality of life.

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MANAGING DIVERSITY 09

1. AUTHORISATION

The Preston Neighbourhood House Committee of Management adopted this policy for 2009.

2. REVIEW DATE

This policy shall be reviewed on or before December 2011

3. SCOPE

To whom does this policy apply and when?

- *Participants, staff, tutors and community groups engaged in the daily business of Preston Neighbourhood House.*

This policy is explained through:

- Disability Action Plan
- Enrolment Policy
- Pathways Plan
- Curriculum Policy

In addition, reference should be made to:

- Statement on Human Rights

4. DEFINITIONS

Words or phrases that are special to this policy or procedure, which might be unfamiliar or misinterpreted.

- This policy refers to the Rights and Responsibilities of all stakeholders engaged in the daily operations of Preston Neighbourhood House.
- It encourages tolerance and acceptance of diversity within our House community.
- It supports the Equal Opportunity and Non-discrimination policies of Preston Neighbourhood House.
- It acknowledges the role of Preston Neighbourhood House in supporting our learners and participants broaden their experiences.

5. POLICY

VALUES

MISSION STATEMENT:

“Preston Neighbourhood House will encourage and support the local community to increase independence and quality of life by providing high quality, accessible programs and services promoting social interaction, mutual support and skill development”

Included in the values underpinning decision making at Preston Neighbourhood House are the following:

- **We respect the dignity and recognise the merit of each member of our community. We strive to ensure the house is free from discrimination on the ground of race, religion, disability or gender.**
- **We respect and value cultural diversity.**
- **We are committed to the principles contained within the Charter of Human Rights**

PURPOSE

To adopt practices which will create access to Preston Neighbourhood House services for all sections of the community.

Our fundamental beliefs are:

- ◆ We are driven by the desire to achieve quality in all our services.
- ◆ We respect the dignity and recognise the merit of each member of our community and will ensure the house is free from discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender or disability.
- ◆ We respect and welcome diversity.
- ◆ Participants will be able to negotiate learning goals with their tutors.
- ◆ Tutors, staff, administration and Committee of Management are all available to discuss issues or concerns.
- ◆ Participants should be considerate of the learning goals of others.
- ◆ We each share a responsibility for the safety of staff, volunteers and participants.
- ◆ We will each contribute to the positive learning environment of the House by refraining from use of offensive language, threatening behaviour or physical violence towards each other.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

Preston Neighbourhood House will at all times put into effect its commitment to principles of valuing diversity with regard to staff, volunteers, students and other stakeholders.

- To provide individuals with equal opportunity to participate effectively in programs whatever their age, gender, indigenous culture, ethnic origin, disability, economic circumstances, religious or political affiliation, or whatever their language, literacy or numeracy skills.
- To reflect the diversity of our community in our management and participation.
- To provide high quality, programs relevant to the needs of our diverse community.
- To provide the support needed for effective participation by all sections of the community.

Preston Neighbourhood House will abide by the Victorian Charter of Human Rights

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities is a law that sets out our freedoms, rights and responsibilities.

The Public Sector will be bound by the Charter from 1 January 2008.

The Charter protects that group of rights referred to as civil and political rights. These can be grouped under four key principles of Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity.

The formal recognition of our human rights protects people from injustice and allows everyone to participate in and contribute to society.

- Human Rights are the basic rights that belong to all of us just because we are human beings.
- Human Rights are the foundation for freedom, justice, peace and respect, and are an essential part of any democratic and inclusive society that respects the rule of law, human dignity and equality.

Our Human Rights include:

- civil and political rights
- economic and social rights,
- environmental and cultural rights.

6. PROCEDURES

- Develop “in house” **English pathway options** as second language provision.
- Develop and implement new programs targeting the needs of older adults.
- Continue to research activities, identifying barriers to participation by under represented groups.
- Liaise / network with relevant agencies and community groups
- Provide professional development opportunities for management committee members, tutors, child care workers, staff and volunteers to extend their skills in addressing the learning needs of members of the community with special needs
- Encourage and support members of the community who have a disability, are from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CALD), are socially isolated, parents of young children or are older adults to participate in the committee of management.
- Monitor enrollments identifying individuals with special needs, tracking and supporting participant’s progress.
- Seek resources needed to support programs for the integration of students with a disability into Adult education programs.
- Work to ensure facilities are appropriate to the needs of our diverse community.
- Continue to seek appropriate resources to enable fees to be kept to a minimum.
- Provide low cost quality child care.
- Continue to implement Preston Neighbourhood House’s marketing plan.
- Ensure relevant legislative requirements eg: Disability Act, Equal Opportunity Act, inform decision-making practices.
- Implement the Preston Neighbourhood House Enrolment policy

Tips for Communicating with a person with a disability

- Remember that a person with a disability is a person like everyone else.
- If the person is accompanied , don't address the person through their companion. Speak directly to them.
- Don't shout or raise your voice. Even if the person has a hearing impairment, shouting will not help. Speak to them just as you would speak to anyone else.
- People with impaired speech know they can be difficult to understand. This gives you an opportunity to try to find a new approach. Be willing to communicate in different ways and to learn how to use new tools for communication.
- If you don't know what to do or say , relax and allow the person with a disability to speak/communicate.
- Take time to listen to their response- this is very important. If need be, tell them you are having trouble understanding them and they will try again. Be honest, don't pretend that you have understood them, ask the person to try again using a different term or ask someone else who knows the person to help out.
- Try to get to know the person by exploring mutual interests in a friendly way, don't expect the reply to come back in the same way/speed-give the person time to reply.
- Remember as in any conversation; maintain eye contact as you normally would.
- Remember the person is not sick, so the person should be interviewed as healthy.
- Offer assistance when it's asked for or if the need seems obvious, don't overdo or insists on it. Respect the persons right to indicate the type of help they need.
- Always talk to the person directly, not through someone else.
- Always talk to the person in an age appropriate manner and especially not as a child.
- Find out the person's abilities and the things they like to do as a way of getting to know the person better.

7. IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

7.1 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

It is the responsibility of the Committee of Management to ensure that all staff and users are aware of this policy and that it is implemented within the centre.

7.2 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES

* The Manager will be responsible to work with staff to ensure this policy is implemented within the centre.

- * The policy may be viewed in the centre's Policy Book.
- * The Committee of Management must formally approve any alterations to this policy and set due dates for review.

8. EVALUATION

- * Is the policy being successfully implemented?
- * Have any implementation issues occurred which need to be referred to C.O.M.

