

## Staffing Policy

### 1. Purpose

This policy is designed to ensure good practice and provide information to any interested party about how our services are staffed. It outlines the framework we use to make decisions on staffing. It aims to assess and address the risks associated with inadequate staffing at programmes or projects, and the benefits associated with having the right staffing in place.

### 2. Principles

Purple Patch Arts is committed to ensuring compliance with legal requirements using them as a minimum standard and seeking to exceed those standards in order to protect staff and participants. Purple Patch Arts is also committed to ensuring a healthy and safe place in which to work and receive support.

Purple Patch Arts aims to provide a staffing team and structure which supports the smooth running of programmes and projects and ensures that all participants are given the support they need.

### 3. Definition

Our staffing policy applies to any programmes or projects that involve groups of learning-disabled and/or autistic adults.

### 4. Recruitment and Selection

We are committed to creating a diverse environment and are proud to be an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to our Equality and Diversity policy at every selection stage, and we aim for a well-planned and discrimination-free recruitment process, through which all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment.

This policy applies to all employees who are involved in recruitment for our company and refers to all potential job candidates.

For details of our volunteer recruitment and appointment policy, please refer to our separate 'Volunteering Policy'.

Below are the steps that we take when recruiting to a position within Purple Patch Arts:

1. Identify the need for an opening
2. Decide whether to hire externally or internally

3. Review the job description and prepare a job advert and user-friendly application document which places emphasis on values.
4. Select appropriate sources (external and/or internal) for advertising the role
5. Decide on the selection stages and timeframe
6. Advertise the role with clearly defined instructions on how to apply and deadlines
7. Review and shortlist applications using a values-led approach
8. Proceed through all selection stages, including an observed teaching session where appropriate
9. Select the most suitable candidate
10. Complete an Enhanced with Adult and Child Barred Lists DBS check
11. Receive two satisfactory references from former employers, one of which must be from a current or most recent employer where possible
12. Receive evidence of the right to work in the UK
13. Make an official offer

## Equality and Diversity

As the recruitment market becomes more competitive, Purple Patch Arts recognises the benefits of drawing on the skills of creative and talented individuals from a wide range of backgrounds that will play their part in making the organisation successful.

- All recruitment material and processes, including advertisements will be available, or be offered, in a variety of media that reflects the basic requirements of the post. Use shall be made of local media, job centres and newsletters.
- All recruitment advertisements shall draw attention to Purple Patch Arts' Equality and Diversity Policy and that any applicant for a post who wishes to declare that they have a disability and who satisfies the job description and person specification will be offered an interview.
- Potential applicants shall be given clear and accurate information about posts through a job description and person specification that includes only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance for the job.
- Application forms and other supporting material shall be free of personal questions or requests for information from which inferences could be drawn as to the status of an individual that are irrelevant to the job description.
- We will include an equal opportunities monitoring form with our job application packs so we know if we are reaching a wide range of people from different backgrounds.
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- Selection criteria shall be kept under review to ensure that they are justifiable for the effective execution of the job.
- Questions shall relate to the requirements of the job.
- Timing, location and facilities of interviews will not unfairly disadvantage individuals who have restrictions or responsibilities arising from their membership of a particular group (i.e someone with caring responsibilities)
- All applications shall be subject to confidential monitoring system using a standardised form.
- Reasons for selection or rejection of applicants shall be recorded.
- More than one person shall be involved in short listing, selection for interview and interviewing, and all involved shall have received training in equality and diversity.
- Staff involved in management, selection and dealing with the public shall receive guidance in the law, best practice and organisational policy, their own personal responsibilities and liability under the law and the nature and effect of both reasonable and unreasonable discrimination.
- We will meet requests by applicants with communication needs for alternative formats of application and/or interview documents. See our Accessible Information Policy for more details. Disclosure of communication needs will not prejudice any recruitment decisions made.

### **Staff Suitability**

As a value-led employer our priority is to recruit people who share our outlook and vision. All staff will be able to demonstrate a strong commitment to Purple Patch Arts' values and an aptitude for the tasks that are required within the relevant job description.

### **Application and Interview Feedback**

Purple Patch Arts understands the importance of providing constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates. We will always inform candidates if they have not been selected for interview, and provide brief feedback on the reasons for this, and will provide more detailed feedback to unsuccessful interviewed candidates on request.

### **Revoked offers**

Should a formal offer have to be revoked, the CEO should draft and sign an official document. This document should include a legitimate reason for revoking the offer. Legitimate reasons include:

- Candidate is proved to not be legally allowed to work for our company
- Candidate has falsified references or otherwise lied about a serious issue
- Candidate doesn't accept the offer within the deadline specified in the offer letter.

Candidates will be notified formally as soon as possible.

## 5. Training

All staff members and volunteers who take part in the delivery of activities will have an induction which covers an introduction to the following as a minimum:

- Safeguarding
- Principles of person-centred care
- Disability Awareness
- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Safety
- Behaviour that Challenges
- Communication
- Complaints
- Epilepsy Awareness
- GDPR in practice

All Programme Leaders undertaking regular legal responsibilities at Programmes or Projects will receive training in the following:

- Safeguarding Adults at Risk
- First Aid at Work
- Positive Behaviour Management Training

All senior staff members who undertake ad-hoc delivery of workshops will receive training in the following:

- Safeguarding Adults at Risk
- First Aid at Work

All staff members and volunteers who take part in the delivery of activities will complete regular online training which includes courses on:

- Safeguarding Adults at Risk
- First Aid Skills
- Equality & Diversity
- Positive Behaviour Support

- Fire Safety Awareness
- Mental Health, Dementia and Learning Disabilities Essentials
- Stress & Resilience
- Autism Awareness
- Epilepsy Awareness
- Buccal Administration training where necessary

## 6. Supervision and Support

Purple Patch Arts operates a supervision and appraisal system that ensures that we maintain a high standard throughout the organisation, while giving staff the opportunity develop their own practice. We offer a wide range of supplementary training to all staff in response to their individual needs.

Purple Patch Arts is a Mindful Employer, with a commitment to supporting wellbeing at work, and are part of Mindful Employer Plus, which gives all staff access to a free and confidential telephone helpline, and we promote the Able Futures programme of wellbeing support to our staff.

## 7. Staffing Principles

### Staffing Ratios

Purple Patch Arts will ensure a minimum 1:5 staffing ratio across programmes and projects to ensure that participants have access to appropriate support when required (so for example in a group where 5 - 10 participants with learning disabilities are attending, 2 members of staff would be required, in a group of 11 - 15 people 3 members of staff would be required).

This ratio does not usually include external staff members who attend as a 1:1 support for people with complex needs.

In programmes or projects being delivered in partnership with another organisation a member of staff from another organisation can be included within this ratio providing prior agreement is sought.

In emergency situations, it may be acceptable for a competent volunteer to undertake staffing duties on an ad hoc basis. This will be agreed with the volunteers and staff and implemented at the discretion of the Head of Programmes or Projects Manager as per the 'emergency cover plan' in place.

### Legal Responsibilities

Within every group there will be a member of staff with the designated responsibilities of First Aid, Health and Safety, Administration, and Safeguarding.

This will usually be the Programme Leader however in emergency situations another member of staff who has undertaken the relevant 'emergency cover' induction may be used.

In some situations, the designated responsibilities may be undertaken by a remote member of staff who is 'on call'.

In programmes or projects being delivered in partnership with another organisation a member of staff from another organisation can take in these responsibilities providing prior agreement is sought.

### **Artistic / Education Responsibilities**

Staff members delivering workshops will not usually be expected to deliver more than 3 hours worth of activity in any one day, in order to ensure the activity is diverse and of an excellent quality.

Where possible Purple Patch will try to programme 2 team members within any one activity who have capacity to lead creative sessions, again to support quality of learning.

In special circumstances and upon agreement staff members can deliver up to 6 hours of activity in any one day.

### **Consistency of Staffing**

Where possible the same staff team will be contracted to work for the entirety of a project or across an academic year as we recognise that some of the people engaged with Purple Patch activity struggle with change.

### **Last-Minute Changes to Staffing**

On occasion there will arise emergency situations where staff are unable to attend workshops. It is the Programmes Manager and Projects Manager's responsibility to respond to this effectively.

The Programmes Manager and Projects Manager will have an 'emergency cover plan' in place for each location which can be used as a guideline, either by themselves, or another senior manager should the need for cover arise.

Any last-minute changes to staffing must comply with the agreed staffing ratios wherever possible.

In situations where it is deemed that legal responsibilities cannot be met safely (either on-site or remotely) or appropriate staffing ratios are not possible activity should not go ahead or could move to Zoom where appropriate.

## **8. Lone Working**

Some Programmes or Projects will require Lone Working. When this is the case the Head of Programmes or Projects Manager will undertake a separate risk assessment and put additional procedures in place to support staff. Please refer to our separate Lone Working Policy for more information.

## **9. Organisational Responsibilities**

Overall responsibility for the discharge of this policy lies with the CEO, Head of Programmes and Projects Manager. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring consistent application of the policy
- Monitoring effectiveness
- Reporting any breaches of the policy to the CEO immediately where relevant

All staff must:

- Ensure they have read the policy and are aware of its terms
- Report any breaches of the policy to the CEO, Programmes Manager or Projects Manager immediately
- Report any ongoing incidents concerning staffing to enable systems to be reviewed and revised.

## 10. Risk Assessment

Purple Patch Arts understand and acknowledge the risk of having unsuitable staffing arrangements. These risks might include:

- A poor quality of delivered activities
- Participants absconding, feeling upset or confused and presenting behaviours that challenge
- Participants leaving, thereby undermining the sustainability of the company
- Staff members feeling pressured, stressed or unsupported

By having the following measures in place and set out in this policy these risks are managed:

- Appropriate ratios of staffing minimise risk to participants
- Appropriately skilled / qualified staff minimises risk of poor quality
- Appropriate levels of responsibility determined for each role minimises risk to staff

## 11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.