



*VALLANCE COMMUNITY SPORTS ASSOCIATION*

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## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

### **STATEMENT:**

**VCSA aims to empower young people in our community, regardless of race, culture, religion, gender, disability and sexual orientation. We are also open to Any interested parties geographically outside our community. We believe that sport should celebrate inclusion, diversity and multi culture and demonstrate best practice in these. We are also committed to helping disadvantaged young people between the ages of 8-25 to have the opportunity to develop their innate skills and reach their potential in their chosen sport(s) in order that they can aspire to compete on a National and International level. All our players will be encouraged to play and given every opportunity in training and building confidence to reach their optimum level of achievement. They will, however, be expected to work and train as required if they are to play in their team.**

**VCSA believes that our members, many of whom are also our service users, should join with us in all stages of service design and delivery. Older members of our organisation act as volunteers, to qualify as coaches and to serve on our Board of Directors. Older players and members represent as role models and mentors for the younger players and as voting members of the organisation are committed to represent their interests. We younger players will attend some of our meetings as we value their ideas and contribution.**

**VCSA recognises that we must ensure that our services and support are targeted at those who most need them; through outreach work with and recruitment of disaffected young people who tend to socialise on the streets and are vulnerable to drug use and gang violence. We have found that this also encourages parents to support not only their children, but also VCSA. They are proud supporters and also helpful volunteers, which gives them a shared interest and investment, together with the young players.**

**VCSA is also reaching out to work in partnership with schools, to encourage sports training, healthy living and positive attitudes. We are encouraged by the enthusiasm for sports and healthy competition demonstrated by young women, both in school groups and within our Women's Group. We continue to be committed to developing ways that are appropriate and effective and are hopeful of setting up sports for young disabled men and women in the foreseeable future.**

**VCSA is committed to employing the people most able to deliver our services effectively and to that end we will ensure that prejudice and stereotyping do lead to the exclusion of potential candidates for jobs or to hindering employees in doing their jobs to the best of their ability.**

### **Service Users:**

- **VCSA's** services must be designed to ensure they are demonstrably accessible to all in need or desirous of them.
- All **VCSA's** workers and volunteers are required to ensure that all services provided take into account issues such as language requirements, cultural and religious norms, gender, disabilities, sexual orientation and age.
- **VCSA** will encourage all their users to become members to ensure that everybody has a direct voice.
- **VCSA** include our supporters and particularly the parents of our players in this section. We are committed to canvassing their opinions in order to inform our decision making.
- **VCSA** will ensure that monitoring procedures are in place in order that all those involved in delivering our services demonstrate sensitivity, respect for inclusion and diversity, maintain confidentiality and consistently operate within our Equal Opportunities policy.
- **VCSA** will ensure that all our users are fully aware of and have easy access to our Complaints Procedures. We will actively encourage feedback from our users by regularly canvassing feedback and suggestions. Forms will always be available on request.

### **Board of Directors:**

- Anyone who has been a member of **VCSA** one year, as laid out in the Articles of Memorandum, is able to apply to become a Director of the Company, by standing for election at the next Annual General Meeting.
- **VCSA's** Board of Directors aim to reflect inclusivity and diversity. The Board will therefore be expected to work to ensure that all members' and users' views are represented, including those who are too young to be voting members.
- **VCSA's** Directors will be expected to undertake Induction Training within a month of being voted onto the Board. The training will include Powers and Responsibilities of the individual Director and of the Board as a body, a proper understanding of the Constitution, relevant employment legislation, Financial Regulations, EOP, Complaints Procedure, Recruitment Policy and regulations, Child Protection Policy, Health & Safety and overall Quality Assurance. We will continue a relevant rolling programme and training for the members of the Board, both new and current.
- **VCSA** Board members will be expected to attend meetings regularly and to contribute fully.

## **Recruitment:**

- **VCSA** will ensure that no job applicant receives less or more favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, culture, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, religious beliefs and political opinion.
- **VCSA** will endeavour to promote maximum access to anyone who may be interested in any of our vacancies. We will not confine any information. We will also ensure that applicants will have an overall understanding of our organisation. We will also ensure that both our Job Description and Person Specification are comprehensive and easily understood.
- **VCSA** will advertise vacancies in local, independent and free papers. We will also circulate all local voluntary and community organisations and relevant organisations, nationally.
- **VCSA** will ensure that our application form is simple and straightforward. We will not ask for irrelevant information. Short lists will comprise of those applicants who have satisfied the requirements laid down in the Job Description & Person Specification. It will be agreed through the independent marking of the Interview Panel, recruited from the Personnel sub-committee. The Panel may be made up of not less than three and not more than five members. The Panel will be attended by the VCSA Sports Co-ordinator, who is there to advise and support the process. After the application forms have been scrutinised independently by each member of the interview panel, the marks will be discussed and added together the applicants with sufficient marks will be short-listed. A similar marking procedure will apply to those interviewed.
- **VCSA** will ensure that the same members who drew up the short list will make up the panel. Questions will be decided the day before the interview. Each member of the panel will be given dedicated questions and will mark each candidate on their responses to each of these questions. No questions of discriminatory or personal nature will be asked. No panel member will ask any question, which has not been already agreed by the panel. Applicants will be encouraged to ask questions and to make their own statements to the Panel.
- **VCSA** will ensure that throughout the Recruitment Procedure applicants will receive fair and equal treatment and their ability and willingness to do the job will be the sole consideration.
- **VCSA** agrees that scrutinisers/advisors, in particular the VCSA Sports Coordinator, may be present as observers during the interview and will advise the panel as requested during the deliberations leading to the final decision.

Two referees, including the last employer will be required to submit written references with the aid of a Job & Person Specifications.

*\*All unsuccessful candidates must be informed by letter a.s.a.p.*

### **Employees & Sessional Workers:**

- All employees will be subject to a period of induction when they commence employment. The induction programme will be tailored to their requirements and will be relevant to their employment. They will be made familiar with the Employees' Handbook.
- Every employee and Sessional worker must have a designated Supervisor, who will be expected to prioritise the supervision of workers and make themselves accessible to the needs and support of the individual staff member. Formal individual supervision meeting will be recorded, signed and copies kept by both Supervisor and Supervisee. These sessions should take place at least once a month by both Sessional workers and full time employees.
- Weekly Team Meetings will be held, where all paid workers and volunteers will be encouraged to air their views, ideas and concerns. The Board, through managers, will undertake to use this forum for full consultation and elected representatives should attend Board Meetings. All Team Meetings will be minuted. These minutes should be circulated in order to be read and agreed by all employees and volunteers. A record should be kept on a file accessible to all employees, volunteers and Board members.
- Comprehensive staff records must be kept up to date. These records will be monitored periodically to ensure the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- The Organisation recognises the importance of relevant training being made available to employees to ensure that their skills are developed and honed; to maximise their efficacy through learning about new approaches; to refresh and refocus on ways to work and to support career development. Every effort will be made to raise funds for training.
- By encouraging and supporting diversity the organisation will ensure that the working environment is one in which no worker feels intimidated, undermined or discriminated against because of his/her race, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or individual idiosyncrasies.
- A comprehensive Employees Handbook will be given to every worker on the commencement of his/her employment. This clearly outlines both rights and duties of the employee and rules, duties and expectations of the organisation relating to discrimination. A copy of this handbook will always be readily available to all Employees and Board Members.

### **Employees & Sessional Workers (cont'd)**

- The Grievance Procedure will be included in the Employees' Handbook and will be fully explained to every employee during their induction period. Any employee who feels that they have been discriminated against or been the object of racial or sexual or any form of harassment will in the first instance be given support assistance and advice by his/her line manager or, if inappropriate, by a designated member of the Board of Directors, to follow the Grievance Procedure as outlined in the Employees Handbook.
- Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to have committed an act of unlawful discrimination. Discriminate behaviour and racial or sexual harassment or bullying of any kind will be treated as Gross Misconduct and will be liable to instant dismissal.
- All employees have a personal responsibility for the practical application of this policy.

### **Volunteers & Parent/Supporters:**

- **VCSA** is committed to attracting and using volunteers to enhance service delivery. We recognise that those who seek to volunteer have their varied reasons and offer different levels of skills. All we ask is for a commitment to our aims and objectives.
- **VCSA** will recruit volunteers using posters and flyers, advertising in youth and community centres, colleges and through networking with other relevant organisations. We will use a proper recruitment procedure, mirroring that's of employees and design contracts, specifically for volunteers.
- **VCSA** will do everything to ensure that our volunteers are not exploited. We believe that volunteers are essential to the success of our service delivery and along with our employees they will be properly consulted, offered support and mentoring, formal supervision and appropriate training where necessary. We will aim to raise dedicated funds to offer reasonable payments for expenses, travel and refreshments. We aim to offer volunteers occupation, interest and experience. We acknowledge that many volunteers will be seeking paid employment and will assist them as far as we are able to achieve this end.
- **VCSA** enjoys a growing number of loyal supporters, in the main parents of our younger players. We are keen to involve them all of our activities. We encourage those who are available to become Board Member and also to become active in sporting activities and in the running of the organisation. We encourage them to become involved both in giving us ideas and suggestions and in using our complaints procedure, when they feel we could do better. We value their support and will continue to work on developing their role and giving them enjoyment in our activities.