**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

The commitment to equal opportunities is applicable to the children/young people in care as well as staff and management that support them

**EMPLOYEES**

Shekinah Support is an Equal Opportunities Employer, committed to ensuring that the talents and resources of all our employees are utilised to the full potential. As such, the organisation is committed to adopting, implementing and monitoring a Policy of Equal Opportunities for all employees to ensure and achieve zero discrimination in the workplace. Also, to ensure that equal opportunities is put in practice on a daily basis, from front level staff to management with no exceptions. The organisation aims to provide a high standard of care to our service users and standard employment conditions for our staff, which are relevant, responsive, sensitive and compliant with the *Equality Act 2010.* The area manager is the individual responsible for monitoring the process and making sure corrective measures are taken in line with existing policies.

The primary objective of this Policy aims to manage a place of work where there shall be no discrimination towards employees on the grounds of any of the following characteristics. Many of which are regarded as ‘protected characteristics’ listed in Section 4 of the *Equality Act 2010*:

* + - Nationality
    - Race or ethnicity
    - Gender
    - Heritage
    - Creed, religion or belief
    - Age
    - Marital status
    - Social class
    - Colour
    - Political affiliations or beliefs
    - Disability or impairments
    - Parenthood
    - Sexual orientation
    - Employment status
    - HIV status

**RESPONSIBILITIES TO DEPENDANTS**

In this respect, employees with disabilities will only be prohibited from positions where the job

duties involve activities that would make it impossible or inherently hazardous to perform. This will be achieved in full compliance with the *Equality Act 2010*.

The *Equality Act 2010* protects job applicants prior to employment, during and after employment has ceased. Therefore, regarding the employee recruitment and selection process, employment application forms do not include questions concerning; race or ethnic origin, creed, colour, religion, political affiliation, parenthood or sexual orientation, to eliminate possibilities of discrimination or prejudice prior to interview. Thereafter selection criteria will proceed purely according to the merits and abilities of the candidate to perform the tasks and duties listed in the relevant Job Description. Employee recruitment and selection procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure that the elements of this Policy are maintained.

Shekinah Support provides for any employee who believes that he or she has been treated unfairly within the scope of this Policy to address the matter through a documented and established Grievance Procedure.

No employee profile of Shekinah Support will be withheld in a reference on the basis of their   
race /ethnic origin, creed, colour, religion, political affiliation, parenthood /sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010 either during or after employment with Shekinah Support has ceased.

**THE CHILDREN/YOUNG PERSON**

Shekinah Support welcomes any child/young person and does not discriminate in any way in areas such as gender, race or ethnic origin, creed, colour, religion and disabilities or impairments. Staff will treat every child as an individual with the same rights and access to high standards of care that best fits their individual needs.

Shekinah Support’ planned activities and daily routines are designed to discourage segregation or non-inclusion. Staff and management practices and procedures are constantly reviewed in order to challenge and eliminate discriminatory practices relating to issues mentioned earlier.

Shekinah Support’ activities and daily routines are planned to ensure equal opportunities for all

of our residents are maintained. Management recognises and accommodates customs, festivals

and practices from different religions and ethnic backgrounds. Staff expected to promote an ethos

of equality and encourages each child to develop a non-judgmental approach to life.

Shekinah Support recognises and respects special catering requirements with respect to planning menus, and staff training includes an awareness of food that may be prohibited by religion, faith or culture. Where appropriate and taking into account a service user’s feelings, staff are trained to take an interest in the service users cultural or religious background and engage if invited to do so. Staff maintain an attitude of sharing identity by creating an atmosphere of mutual and equal interest amongst residents.