



Equality, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Anti-Ableism Policy

1. Policy Statement

Arts In Action CIC is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all areas of our work. We strive to create environments where all people—staff, freelancers, volunteers, participants and partners—are respected, valued, and able to thrive. We aim to eliminate unlawful discrimination and ensure that our services and opportunities are accessible, inclusive and welcoming to all.

As a community arts organisation, we recognise our responsibility to champion equity and challenge discrimination in all forms.

Arts in Action CIC is a disability-affirming, anti-ableist community arts organisation. We are committed to creating environments where all people & participants, families, staff, freelancers, volunteers, and partners are respected, valued, represented, and able to thrive without discrimination or barriers.

We work explicitly from the Social Model of Disability, recognising that people are disabled by structures, environments, attitudes, and systems, not by their impairment or neurotype. We actively challenge these barriers through inclusive design, accessible practice, and continual learning led by lived experience.

We strive to eliminate unlawful discrimination and inequity, and to champion inclusion across all aspects of our organisation. We recognise that marginalised communities, including Disabled people, the Global Majority, LGBTQIA+ individuals, refugees, care-experienced young people, and those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds face intersecting inequalities. Our work aims to reduce these inequalities and advocate for equitable access to creative and cultural participation.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure Arts in Action CIC:

- Promotes equality, equity, accessibility, and anti-discriminatory practice across all programmes.
- Embeds anti-ableism, intersectionality, and the Social Model of Disability at the heart of all decisions.
- Provides inclusive, safe, welcoming spaces for Disabled and neurodivergent children, young people, and adults.

- Co-designs opportunities alongside the people most affected by inequality.
- Removes barriers to creative participation in line with Youth Music's Shift the Scene principles.

We ensure no person is discriminated against based on protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

3. Our Commitments (IDEA & Anti-Ableist Practice)

3.1 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access

We commit to:

- Designing programmes with access at the start, never as an afterthought.
- Embedding co-design with Disabled young people and families into planning, delivery, and evaluation.
- Ensuring representation of Disabled people in our staffing, volunteers, leadership, and decision-making wherever possible.
- Creating psychologically safe spaces where communication differences (non-verbal, AAC, selective mutism, behavioural communication, sensory communication) are respected and understood.
- Removing financial, sensory, attitudinal, and physical barriers to participation.

3.2 Anti-Ableist Culture

Arts in Action CIC actively opposes ableism in all forms. We:

- Challenge practices that marginalise or exclude Disabled people.
- Reject behaviour-based exclusion, punitive responses, or compliance-driven expectations.
- Prioritise flexibility, sensory safety, trauma-informed practice, and wellbeing.
- Recognise and validate stimming, movement, "wiggle time," rest, alternative participation, and communication differences.
- Amplify Disabled voices and expertise throughout the organisation.

3.3 Representation

We commit to:

- Increasing Disabled practitioners and leaders across all projects.
- Offering supported work experience and progression opportunities to Disabled young people.

- Ensuring that lived experience informs our recruitment and training.

3.4 Training and Awareness

We provide:

- IDEA, anti-ableism, and inclusive arts training and reading for staff, volunteers, and freelancers.
- SEND, neurodiversity, and trauma-informed practice training and reading for project leads.
- Ongoing reflective supervision and opportunities to learn from Disabled practitioners .

3.5 Safe and Respectful Environments

We uphold:

- Zero tolerance for harassment, discrimination, bullying, or victimisation.
- Commitment to positive behaviour support, sensory regulation, and accessibility.
- Safer spaces that welcome parents/carers where needed, with clear safeguarding procedures.

3.6 Co-design and Participation

We aim to involve Disabled young people and families through:

- A standing Child & Youth Voice Panel.
- Termly feedback cycles.
- Accessible communication formats (visuals, symbols, AAC, writing, audio, movement).
- Adapted opportunities for decision-making and leadership.

4. Inclusive Practice & Accessibility

Arts in Action CIC will:

- Deliver accessible, sensory-safe, and inclusive programmes.
- Provide reasonable adjustments for all staff, participants, and visitors.
- Offer multiple communication options.
- Provide quiet spaces, rest zones, sensory supports, and predictable routines.
- Ensure instructions, policies, and communications are available in accessible formats where possible.
- Ensure venues meet access requirements (physical, sensory, acoustic, social, emotional).

5. Opportunities, Fairness & Progression

We ensure:

- Recruitment decisions are based on merit, values, and inclusive practice—not traditional qualifications alone.
- Disabled staff, volunteers, and young people are supported with adjustments and flexibility.
- Training and creative progression opportunities are accessible and equitable.
- Participants can choose their level of involvement and have control over how their work is shared.

6. Concerns and Complaints

All concerns relating to discrimination, exclusion, or inequity will be taken seriously. This includes:

- Ableism
- Racism
- Homophobia, transphobia
- Sexism
- Harassment
- Bullying
- Victimisation

Actions may include coaching, mediation, disciplinary procedures, contract termination, or referral to external authorities.

Concerns can be raised with:

- The Project Manager
- Directors of Arts in Action CIC
- Designated Safeguarding Lead

All matters are handled sensitively and promptly.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Directors:

- Ensure compliance with equality legislation.
- Embed anti-ableism, IDEA, and the Social Model of Disability across the organisation.
- Ensure co-design with Disabled young people is standard practice.

Staff, Freelancers & Volunteers:

- Treat all individuals with dignity and respect.
- Uphold inclusive, anti-ableist practice at all times.
- Report discrimination or exclusion.
- Adapt delivery and communication to diverse needs.

8. Monitoring & Review

Arts in Action CIC will:

- Review this policy annually or after significant legal/policy changes.
- Monitor workforce and participation data where appropriate.
- Seek regular feedback from Disabled young people, parents, and practitioners.
- Use evaluation to improve access, inclusion, and representation.

9. Legal & Policy Framework

This policy is shaped by:

- Equality Act 2010

- Human Rights Act 1998
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Youth Music Shift the Scene Principles
- Social Model of Disability

10. Agreement & Review

This policy is endorsed by the Directors of Arts in Action CIC and applies to all staff, freelancers, volunteers, participants, and partners.

Review: Annually, or sooner if significant changes occur.

For accessible versions or alternative formats, please contact:

Arts In Action CIC

www.artsinaction.co.uk

Last Updated August 2025.