



Position Statement Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

All Wales People First recognises that everyone is different. We all have different identities, experiences and backgrounds. Our relationships, sexuality, culture, religion, race, disability and the labels we identify with can all be part of who we are.

We believe everyone should be valued, respected and treated fairly.

This statement sets out All Wales People First's position on equality, diversity and inclusion.

Our position

Everyone has the right to identify as they want.

The law recognises nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. We believe everyone should be treated fairly and equally across every one of these.

We should have equal opportunities and be treated fairly, whatever our sex. We should not be treated worse because we are married or in a civil partnership, or because we are pregnant or have recently had a child, and we should not be treated differently because of our age.

We support everyone with a learning disability. This includes people with a learning disability who are also part of other groups. For example, people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or trans, and people of different cultures, religions and races. Everyone should

feel able to be who they are, and no one should be told who they can or cannot be.

We want our work to be as inclusive and welcoming as possible for everyone. This will help increase the diversity of people who get involved with All Wales People First.

Family and culture

Family and culture are important parts of our lives, often shaping how safe we feel showing who we really are. This includes faith and religion, which are often closely tied to family and culture.

Some of us find that our family, community or paid support may find it hard to accept part of who we are, such as our sexuality. This can make it difficult to feel able to share this openly.

“Some cultures won't allow some identities” AWPf member.

We support everyone with a learning disability, whatever their family, culture or background. These situations can be sensitive and personal, so our aim is to build understanding, not conflict, and to work alongside families and communities rather than against them. This statement is not intended to single out or criticise any particular culture or family — we believe most families want the best for their relative, and that understanding can grow through support and open conversation.

Hate crime and the media

Media coverage can shape how people are treated, and can contribute to hate crime. This can affect us because of our race, sexuality, disability, religion or other parts of who we are.

For example, members tell us that people can face backlash and negative assumptions about their race or appearance, linked to the way immigration is portrayed in the media. Members feel that people from ethnic minority backgrounds in particular can be wrongly associated with immigration, and treated with negativity as a result of stereotyping.

"There's a lot of backlash for people of mixed race and the media influence there is massive" AWPf member.

Members also raise concerns about misinformation around immigration more broadly, and feel that some media coverage does not always help public understanding. We are concerned that, if left unaddressed, this kind of misinformation can contribute to hate crime.

"Lots of misinformation, like about immigration, and media make things worse, stir the pot" AWPf member.

We recognise that responsible journalism plays an important role in building public understanding. We would encourage the media to be mindful of the influence it can have on public opinion, and to consider the impact that coverage of race and immigration can have on communities, including people with learning disabilities within those communities.

"Media should look at more positive stories" AWPf member.

Hate crime does not only happen because of race. We can also experience hate crime because of our sexuality, gender, disability or other parts of who we are. We want to see better understanding and support from the police for everyone who experiences hate crime, whatever the reason.

Education

Building understanding needs to start early, and support needs to be right wherever people live.

Schools have an important part to play in teaching young people about equality, diversity and inclusion.

"Educate young people with training delivered by people with learning disabilities" AWPf member.

This need for education does not stop with young people. Housing providers also need training to understand the needs of people with learning disabilities who live in culturally diverse settings, so that the support we receive reflects both our culture and our disability.

Calls to Action

1. We call on Welsh Government to fund community champions, including people with learning disabilities, to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in local communities across Wales.
2. We call on the police to improve engagement with people with learning disabilities:
 - Hate crime officers should build better engagement with people with learning disabilities.
 - Every force needs better learning disability awareness and engagement skills, with training delivered by people with learning disabilities.
 - This training should include role-play practice of real situations.
3. We ask the media to be mindful of the influence it holds:
 - Consider the impact that coverage of race and immigration can have on public attitudes and on community relations.
 - Look for and report more positive stories about people with learning disabilities and about diversity.
4. We call on schools and education bodies to include learning disability and equality, diversity and inclusion in the curriculum, and to make sure this is delivered by people with lived experience, including people with learning disabilities. Educating young people this way is the best way to build understanding early.
5. We call on housing providers to make sure staff supporting people with learning disabilities in mixed cultural settings have adequate training in both multicultural awareness and learning disability.
6. We call on community leaders and cultural organisations to:
 - Talk with us and keep an open door.
 - Offer tours and share their knowledge and values with us.

- Help us reach and welcome people with learning disabilities from all cultures and backgrounds.
7. We call on all organisations and services to apply the Social Model of Disability, removing barriers and making reasonable adjustments, so that people with learning disabilities from all backgrounds can access support and take part in community life.

'Nothing about us without us!'

Lucy Hinksman, Chair of the National Council
In consultation with the All Wales People First National Council and members.

All Wales People First

