

1. Equality & Diversity Policy

Statement of Intent

In all its activities with regard to employees, performers, audiences and participants, the Theatre Royal is committed to equality and diversity.

In particular, the Theatre Royal is committed to:

- Providing an environment in which all staff and participants are treated with respect and dignity.
- The elimination of discrimination, including any sort of harassment.
- Cultural diversity in programming and accessibility to the product.
- Employment and customer policies that aim to ensure that people receive treatment that is fair, equitable and consistent.
- Equal employment and participation opportunities regardless of part time or fixed term status, age, gender, sexual orientation, colour, race, religion or belief, ethnic origin, marital or parental status, disability, social or economic class. (Exceptions to this policy are permitted for actors, entertainers, artists and models)

Norwich Theatre Royal strives continually to provide facilities and services that are accessible to the whole community and to increase awareness of equality and fairness issues.

This policy covers Trustees, staff, and volunteers at Norwich Theatre Royal and as far as possible, all visitors, customers and performers. The policy is implemented by the staff and volunteers as they carry out their work with audiences, other staff, volunteers, visitors, customers and stakeholders.

This policy is monitored and updated by Jane Claridge, General Manager.

Implementation

The Trustees, staff and volunteers at Norwich Theatre Royal, are committed to a programme of action to make this policy fully effective. Everyone is responsible for the success of the policy and must ensure they familiarise themselves with it and act in accordance with its aims.

1. Recruitment and Training for staff and volunteers

No employee is directly or indirectly placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not relevant to any appointment or contract. Each job will have a Job Description, which is not discriminatory in design.

Selection

The suitability of each applicant will be measured against the basic requirements of the Job Description and the Person Specification and appointed on that basis. During the recruitment process, should either the interviewer or the interviewee feel their relationship with each other could lead to either perceived or real split loyalties, they should make this known.

In this circumstance the interviewer will either step aside from the interviews or ask for a more senior person to attend the interviews. As interviewers, Managers will not be prevented from selecting their own staff and are offered support and protection. Equally applicants who have a connection with the interviewer will be offered equal opportunities.

Training

Norwich Theatre Royal places considerable emphasis on staff skills development. Staff training needs are identified through appraisals and as necessary during the year. A budget is available to equip and staff with the skills they need to develop them in their roles.

Awareness of equal opportunities and disabilities is high on the agenda for staff induction and training. Customer facing staff and volunteers will be given training in Customer Service and in so far as it is possible within available resources, Disability and Diversity Awareness training.

Access

Norwich Theatre Royal provides a comfortable, accessible, and appropriately equipped theatre. It is a first class venue for theatregoers and provides a good working environment for staff and artistes.

If you are disabled or become disabled in the course of your employment with us, you are encouraged to tell us about your condition to enable us to support you as much as possible. You may also wish to tell your line manager of any reasonable adjustments which would assist you in your job. Your line manager may wish to consult with you and with your medical adviser about possible reasonable adjustments. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where possible and proportionate to the needs of your job. Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it will not be reasonable for us to accommodate the suggested adjustments and we will ensure that we provide you with information as to the basis of our decision not to make any adjustments.

2. Customers and visitors.

Norwich Theatre Royal is committed to making a visit to the theatre as enjoyable and as easy as possible. The programme is varied and diverse. Information on the performances and on the facilities at the theatre is available to all customers in the "What's On" brochure, on the web site, or from the Box Office. For further advice please direct customers to the Marketing Manager for performance information or to the Front of House Office for visitor assistance.

Customers with disabilities

The theatre and its restaurant are fully accessible to disabled customers. Certain seats inside the auditorium are removable to accommodate wheelchairs; others are easily accessible for those with limited mobility. There are lifts to both levels, a number of accessible toilets, automatic doors and low level counters. Throughout the foyers there are seats available for patrons who need to wait and staff on duty to assist at any time. The offices at the theatre are also fully accessible.

There are induction loops for the hard of hearing and some performances are sign language interpreted or captioned. Hearing dogs are welcome in the theatre.

Talking notes are produced by the theatre for blind or partially sighted people and some performances are Audio Described. The "What's On" brochure is available on audio tape, in large print and in Braille and guide dogs are welcome in the theatre.

Detailed access information is made available to customers and to all staff and volunteers.

Children

Norwich Theatre Royal has a range of facilities for customers with young children including:

- Baby changing facilities in the ladies, gents and accessible toilets.
- Children's choices on the restaurant menu.
- High chairs in the restaurant
- Booster seats for the auditorium.
- Family friendly accessible toilets.

Whenever possible, an indication of the suitability of the performance for particular ages will be identified in the "What's On" brochure, on the website and on printed material.

Customer Complaints Procedure

Norwich Theatre Royal aims to maintain the highest standards of Customer Service.

If patrons have a complaint during a visit, the Front of House Duty Manager and front of house staff will do their best to resolve the situation as quickly as possible.

Any patrons wishing to make a written complaint are asked to address their letter to the Chief Executive or the General Manager. Patrons can also make their complaint via email to j.claridge@theatreroyalnorwich.co.uk. All complaints are investigated and the customer will receive a reply within 7 working days of receipt of the complaint.

Meetings are held with managers across the company to discuss specific letters of complaints and ways in which we can improve our level of service. We keep a log of all correspondence and are able to identify any patterns where they emerge. These patterns assist us with training plans, maintenance schedules and the allocation of capital investment in the building and its facilities.

3. Employee Responsibility

All employees should accept responsibility to avoid discrimination in any form; whether to or by others and to practice equal opportunities by observance and encouragement.

In particular each of the employees should:

- Comply with measures which are introduced to make sure that there is equal opportunity and non-discrimination.

- Not discriminate, as persons responsible, either against other members of staff or in selection decisions in recruitment, promotion, transfer or training.
- Not induce or attempt to induce other employees or management to practice discrimination, for example by refusing to work with employees from any racial groups, or a person with disabilities, or express attitudes or words which would offend or reflect on any group or individual.
- Not victimise others who have made complaints or provided information about discrimination or harassment.
- Not harass, abuse or intimidate other employees, on any grounds, nor support others who seek to do so.
- Understand that employees who in the course of their employment are found not to have adhered to this Policy and the Codes of Practice, or have been involved in any discriminatory practice, will be considered by the Norwich Theatre Royal to be in serious breach of the terms of their employment which will render the employee liable for disciplinary action including dismissal.

4. Harassment at Work

In order to provide a productive and pleasant environment, it is important that we endeavour to maintain a theatre characterised by mutual respect. Accordingly harassment in the workplace is not tolerated.

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct related to age or gender; or any behaviour which either violates the dignity of another or subjects another to an environment which is intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive.

Harassment, victimisation and bullying may include:

- derogatory name-calling
- derisory remarks, verbal abuse, insults and threats
- ridicule or belittling of an individual
- repeated gibes in reference to personal traits or appearance
- offensive verbal or practical jokes
- exclusion from normal workplace conversation or social events
- unfair allocation of work and responsibilities
- offensive graffiti or insignia
- display or electronic transmission of offensive pictures or magazines
- unwanted physical contact
- physical attack
- continual expression of sexual or social interest
- verbal or written sexually suggestive or obscene jokes
- incitement of others to commit any of the above

Harassment by non-employees

Norwich Theatre Royal will endeavour to protect employees, to the extent possible, from reported harassment by non-employees such as from visitors and other parties who have workplace contact with our employees.

We also need to be aware that as we work with a large number of young people through our Education and Youth Theatre activities, that there is a possibility that the young people may develop emotional attachments to staff which unless handled appropriately may give off the wrong signals. Further guidance on this is contained within our Child Protection Policy, but if in doubt please speak to a member of the Education department.

Employee Complaint Procedure

Any employee who feels that he or she has been harassed is strongly urged to bring the subject to the attention of their line manager immediately. If you believe that you may have been disadvantaged on any of the grounds listed under this policy you should raise a grievance through the theatre's grievance procedure. Allegations regarding breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. False allegations made in bad faith will however be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

Inquiries and/or complaints will be investigated as quickly as possible. Any investigation will be conducted in as confidential manner as is compatible with a thorough investigation of the complaint.