

# Equal Opportunities Policy

## Pateley Bridge Dramatic Society (PBDS)

### 1. Policy Statement

Pateley Bridge Dramatic Society (PBDS) is committed to providing equal opportunities for all members, volunteers, performers, and patrons. We aim to create an inclusive environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their background.

The Society recognizes that the arts are enriched by diversity. We are dedicated to ensuring that no individual is excluded from participation in our productions, social events, or governance on the grounds of protected characteristics.

### 2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all aspects of the Society's operations, including:

- Membership applications and renewals.
- Casting processes and production team selections.
- Backstage, technical, and front-of-house volunteering.
- The election and conduct of the PBDS Committee.
- The provision of services to audience members and the local community.

### 3. Legal Framework

PBDS adheres to the **Equality Act 2010**. We prohibit any form of direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, or victimisation based on the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 4.1 The Responsible Body: PBDS Committee

The **PBDS Committee** holds ultimate responsibility for the implementation and enforcement of this policy. The Committee shall:

- Review the policy biennially to ensure it remains fit for purpose.
- Ensure that all Society activities are planned with inclusivity in mind.

- Act as a secondary point of contact for any grievances that cannot be resolved through informal means.
- Foster a culture where discriminatory behaviour is challenged and addressed immediately.

#### **4.2 The Responsible Person: Honorary Secretary, PBDS**

The **Honorary Secretary** is designated as the primary officer responsible for the administration of this policy. Their duties include:

- Maintaining records of any equality-related issues or complaints.
- Providing guidance to members on the Society's equal opportunity standards.
- Ensuring that new members and production leads are made aware of this policy.
- Acting as the first point of contact for anyone wishing to report a breach of this policy.

### **5. Practical Commitments**

To uphold these principles, PBDS will:

- **Casting:** Use "open casting" wherever possible, ensuring roles are cast based on ability and suitability for the production, while remaining mindful of the need for diverse representation.
- **Accessibility:** Strive to ensure that our performance venues and rehearsal spaces are as accessible as possible to those with physical disabilities.
- **Communication:** Use inclusive language in all Society newsletters, social media, and promotional materials.
- **Harassment:** Maintain a zero-tolerance approach to bullying or harassment. Any member found to be in breach of these standards may face disciplinary action as outlined in the Society's Constitution.

### **6. Complaints Procedure**

If any individual feels they have been treated unfairly or have witnessed discrimination within the Society:

1. They should initially raise the matter with the **Honorary Secretary**.
2. If the matter involves the Honorary Secretary, or remains unresolved, it should be escalated to the **PBDS Committee Chair**.
3. All complaints will be handled in confidence and investigated thoroughly and fairly.

### **7. Approval and Review**

This policy was approved by the PBDS Committee and will be reviewed every two years.

Last Updated: December 2025

Next Review Date: December 2027

Approved by: PBDS Committee March 2026