



## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### Purpose of the Policy

St Michael's Parochial Church Council (PCC) (the Employer) aims to be an equal opportunities employer and undertakes to apply objective criteria to assess merit. It aims to ensure that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or worker receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origins, sex, sexual orientation or perceived sexuality, marital status, disability, membership or non-membership of trade union, "spent convictions" of ex-offenders, class, age, politics, religion or belief. Selection criteria for employment or voluntary roles will be reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

### Definitions

- Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others in similar circumstances on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origins, sex, sexual orientation or perceived sexuality, marital status, disability, membership or non-membership of trade union, "spent convictions" of ex-offenders, class, age, politics, religion or belief.
- Indirect Discrimination occurs when a condition or requirement is imposed which adversely affects one particular group considerably more than another and cannot be strictly justified in terms of requirements for performing the job.
- Harassment is defined as unwanted, unreciprocated and/or uninvited comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact that is found objectionable and offensive and that might threaten an employee's job security, or create an intimidating working environment. Harassment is particularly liable to occur as part of sexual or racial discrimination.
- Victimisation is defined as the singling out of an individual for harsh treatment, or unfair action/sanction.
- Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

It is the responsibility of all staff to actively promote equality of opportunity within their own ministry areas and spheres of responsibility. It should not be overlooked that harassment can take many forms, e.g. age, religion, belief, skin colour, sexual orientation or perception of, disability – even dialect or accent – can all form the basis of unwanted aggression and attention.

The Employer will inform its employees of their responsibilities and opportunities under the Equal Rights Legislation; will make sure that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is known to all staff. The Employer will take disciplinary action against employees who are found to infringe its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

**Expectations**

While the main responsibility for providing equal opportunities lies with the Employer, individual employees and volunteers at all levels have responsibilities too. Eradicating discrimination depends on everyone's collaboration. Employees and volunteers should not harass, abuse or intimidate other employees or volunteers on any grounds. Employees and volunteers should co-operate with measures introduced by the Employer to make sure there is equal opportunity and non-discrimination. Employees and volunteers must not victimise individuals on the grounds that they have made complaints or provided information about discrimination or harassment.

**Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination**

The Employer will not tolerate bullying, harassment or discrimination in any form. Bullying or harassment is any unwanted behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated or offended. It is not necessarily always obvious and may happen without anyone else being aware. Examples of bullying/ harassing behaviour could include:

- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Exclusion or victimisation
- Unfair treatment
- Deliberately undermining a competent worker with constant criticism

Under the Equality Act 2010, discrimination is unwanted conduct which is related to one of the following protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and is therefore unlawful. Should you either witness or be at the receiving end of such behaviour, please raise the issue with your line manager or ministry lead. If this is inappropriate or causes too much distress, please follow the Grievance Procedure.

Approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf:



Date: January 2024