

## Christ Church and St John's, Radlett

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (EMPLOYEES) POLICY**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

1. The PCC of Christ Church and St John's recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the Church and its employees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the Church to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment, access to membership of councils, committees or other groups, access to benefits, facilities, and services we provide, on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, political affiliation, lay or ordained status or any other respect which cannot be shown to be a necessary requirement of the job or office concerned (**the protected characteristics**).
2. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.
3. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment.
4. All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Our staff will not discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass Church employees, members, volunteers or any other person because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the ministry of the Church.
6. This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

## **OUR COMMITMENT**

- ) To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- ) Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- ) Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- ) To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- ) We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- ) Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- ) This policy is fully supported by the PCC, The Vicar and churchwardens.
- ) The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT**

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the PCC. The Vicar and Churchwardens will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each manager will ensure that:

- ) all their staff are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
- ) grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- ) proper records are maintained

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF**

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- ) comply with the policy and arrangements;
- ) not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- ) not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ) ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- ) inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

## **THIRD PARTIES**

Third-party harassment occurs where a Church employee or volunteer is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties. The PCC will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform their manager / supervisor at once that this has occurred. The Vicar and/or Churchwardens will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again. False accusations are a serious matter the behavior of anyone who is found to have made an unfounded, deliberately malicious complaint or allegation, will be regarded with the utmost seriousness and where possible formal action taken.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND ARRANGEMENTS**

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. The PCC policies will be reviewed regularly and any discriminatory elements removed.

## **RIGHTS OF DISABLED PEOPLE**

The PCC attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, managers are required to:

- ) make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment);
- ) include disabled people in training/development programmes;
- ) give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job..

## **GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINE**

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via their line manager, the Vicar or the Churchwardens.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with accordingly. These matters will be treated with absolute confidentiality and no action will be taken without the willing consent of the person who feels he or she has been a target.

## **REVIEW**

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Churchwardens. The Policy will be reviewed by the PCC every three years.

## Change Record

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Change Description</b>	<b>Author</b>
January 2016	1.0	Initial Policy approved by PCC	Denys Barrett
September 2017	1.1	PCC Review and approval	Helen Warne
March 2021	1.2	PCC Review and approval PCC unanimously approved as policy stands with the following caveats – to seek to explore with the Diocese updating and improving the policy; and to look at a “Culture Code” (as suggested by DICE) with a view to bringing the policy back to PCC not later than 3 years’ time (2024). Jeremy Newton to explore.	Helen Warne
Due March 2024			