

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

The Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy reflects both the mission, vision and values of St. John's PCC and intentions of legislation that outlaws discrimination. St. John's PCC recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and skills. It values diversity and welcomes interest from all sections of the community. It is committed to build and reinforce a culture where people value each other and treat each other with dignity and respect.

St. John's PCC will not discriminate or treat any individual less favourably on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age or sexual orientation.

As an employer and an organisation that has Trustees (members of the PCC) and volunteers, St. John's PCC aims to ensure that no individual receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age or sexual orientation.

St. John's PCC aims to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal opportunity to enter employment or to become Trustees or volunteers. In so doing, it will fully consider making reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises to ensure that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability. In addition, when someone becomes disabled, every effort will be made through reasonable adjustment, retraining or deployment to enable him or her to remain in the service of St. John's PCC.

St. John's PCC recognises that people often experience discrimination and barriers to employment on grounds of their age. A large proportion of St. John's church work is with young people and we want to recognise the valued contribution that they make. We also wish to recognise the skills and experience that older people bring to the organisation. St. John's PCC wishes to promote an age diverse workforce and create a culture that values the contribution of all age groups.

As a responsible employer we will ensure that age will not be a determining factor in our selection process or in any other employment practice and St. John's PCC will ensure that employees have access to training and development opportunities, regardless of age.

Where employees reach the age of 65 (our normal retirement age – see Employment Handbook section on Retirement) and wish to continue working, St. John's PCC will consider such requests to continue to work.

Entry to employment and promotion or change in post for employees, or the equivalent for Trustees and volunteers, within St. John's PCC is determined by

personal merit and ability relevant to the mission, vision and values of St. John's PCC.

The mission and vision of St. John's PCC commit the church to reaching people for Jesus Christ and engaging them in effective Christian living. Accordingly, as church, all employees in posts that are central to the fulfilment of St. John's PCC mission and vision are required to demonstrate a clear commitment to the Christian faith. In roles where there is a genuine occupational requirement for the person to be a committed Christian the organisation may consider the person's religion or belief.

It is the responsibility of every individual, both employee and volunteer, to eliminate discrimination by ensuring the practical application of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy and reporting incidents of discrimination to an appropriate senior person.

All allegations of discrimination will be treated seriously. Any discrimination is totally unacceptable to St. John's PCC, and anyone found to be discriminating would face disciplinary action.

Age, sexual and racial harassment are forms of discrimination on the grounds of a person's age, sex or race. This and any other harassment is totally unacceptable to St. John's PCC and any such behaviour is considered a disciplinary offence. All allegations or harassment are treated seriously and all practicable steps are taken to prevent the behaviour continuing.

Policy Implementation

The success of an Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy depends on the commitment of those who have responsibility for employees and of employees themselves. As expressed in the policy statement, it is the responsibility of every individual to eliminate discrimination and to ensure the practical application of this policy.

It is one of the prime tasks of the Trustees, to promote and encourage effective and ongoing implementation of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy.

Implementation is principally about two things: making the policy known and understood and ensuring that the principles are applied to all areas of work.

To this end St. John's PCC recognises that successful implementation means adherence to the following:

- The designation of responsibility for the oversight of the policy.
- The communication of the policy to make it known and understood: the provision of training for all.
- The implementation of procedures to ensure that discrimination, however slight, does not occur – for example, harassment

- The implementation of a procedure for handling complaints of discrimination, including harassment and ensuring that people are aware of it, how it works and how to use it. (Harassment and Bullying Procedure and Disciplinary Procedure).