

The Archdiocese of Orthodox Churches of Russian Tradition in Western Europe, Deanery of Great Britain and Ireland

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy 2022

St Anne's Orthodox Christian parish is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our community of volunteers and workers; and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

As a worshipping Orthodox Christian community, we are committed to treating all people with love, dignity, and respect. In the collective life of the church, we will seek to promote equal opportunity and look to create an environment in which all can flourish, where everyone is treated with respect, and where diversity is encouraged and all are made welcome.

We uphold the belief that every human being is valued as part of God's creation made in the image of God. Every person in the world is loved by God who is the God of Love. God so loved the world that his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, became man to break down all the barriers that divide us from that love and our love for each other. So love is the key to our understanding of how we relate and behave towards one another.

The aim is for our community to be truly representative of all sections of society and for each person to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

In the light of the Archdiocese's Christian purpose and ethos we reserve the right to exercise legal exemption where it is declared that Christian faith is integral to the individual in a specific work role and consequently requires membership of the Orthodox Christian Church or another recognised Christian church.

Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to all volunteers and employees engaged in activities supporting and delivering the objectives of the Archdiocese in Great Britain and Ireland, and its members parishes and communities.

Our policy's purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the UK Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Our commitments

The organisation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in our places of worship and work as they are good practice; and it is the right thing to do
2. Create a praying and working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all our community members are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training clergy and all other volunteers and employees about their rights and responsibilities under this equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include all volunteers and employees conducting themselves to help us provide equal opportunities in the work of our communities, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff, volunteers and community members should understand they, as well as their employer (in the case of parish property trusts), can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their work, against fellow employees volunteers, visitors, suppliers and the public

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, volunteers, visitors, suppliers and the public and any

others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under our grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all employees and volunteers, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the outcomes of our work together.

5. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

7. Monitor the make-up of our employees and volunteers regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Our disciplinary and grievance procedures

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found at <https://archdiocese.uk> This includes with whom an employee or volunteer should raise a grievance – usually the parish priest or the dean.

Use of the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Equality principles

8 There should be no discrimination, whether direct or indirect, because of any of the characteristics set out above.

Discrimination may occur in the following ways:

direct discrimination—this is treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic. An example of this is not allowing someone access to a service because of their sex or because they belong to a particular racial group. 'Because of' is very wide and includes less favourable treatment based on a perception of another person, for example that the person is gay, or is disabled, whether or not this perception is correct and even if the volunteer knows that their perception is, in fact, wrong. It also includes less favourable treatment because someone is associated with another person who has a protected characteristic.

indirect discrimination—this is ostensibly treating people in the same way but in a way which actually adversely affects those with a protected characteristic. An example of this could be consistently to expect people to attend meetings in the evenings which could exclude those with child-care responsibilities.

victimisation—this is treating someone less favourably because they have asserted their right not to be discriminated against because of a protected characteristic. An example of this would be treating a volunteer colleague differently because they had previously made a claim of discrimination.

harassment—this is unwanted conduct, related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone or violating their dignity. Harassment may also be of a sexual nature or may occur because someone has harassed the victim and the victim either rejects or submits to it and, because of that rejection or submission, that person treats the victim less favourably.

Approved 18 March 2022

Very Reverend Dr Timothy Curtis, rector