

11.3 Equal opportunities policy

Theological Basis

TRINITY Church (TRINITY) recognises that whilst there is differentiation in creation and that people are not all the same, all human beings share the same nature and origin, are created in the image of God and are of equal value in the sight of God.

TRINITY also seeks to uphold the dignity of all human beings and to enable every person to flourish and to reach their God given potential.

Statement of Commitment

TRINITY supports the principle of inclusiveness and equality of opportunity in the workplace. In relation to recruitment, remuneration, training, consideration for promotion, resolution of grievances and disciplinary matters and other treatment at work of its paid employees, office holders and voluntary workers (including where relevant applicants for such positions)

TRINITY aims to ensure that it acts without bias and that no-one is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable. It is, however, recognised that some posts may give rise to a genuine occupational requirement, in particular that the post-holder has a commitment to the Christian faith. TRINITY will, therefore, work to prevent any direct or indirect discrimination (as defined below), or discrimination on any other grounds, in relation to its paid employees, officers and volunteer workers in the workplace which cannot be shown to be a necessary requirement of the job or office concerned.

TRINITY will also not tolerate victimisation.

Responsibility

The PCC is responsible for establishing and reviewing this policy.

This policy applies to all employees, voluntary workers, TRINITY office holders and appointees to diocesan bodies, each of whom have personal responsibility for up-holding the principles of inclusiveness and equal opportunity. They are expected to comply with this policy and help others to achieve its aims

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, pregnancy, maternity, “spent convictions” of ex-offenders, age, religion or belief or any other grounds prohibited by law.

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.

Victimisation is defined as singling out an individual for harsh treatment, or unfair action/sanction.

Bullying and Harassment: All those involved in church life, whether clergy, officers, employees or voluntary workers are entitled to an environment free from hostility. Intimidating behaviour also prevents other people from working effectively and denies them job satisfaction. Harassment, including sexual and racial harassment, bullying and victimisation are all therefore unacceptable and are disciplinary offences (such behaviour may also in some cases be illegal). TRINITY has a separate Anti-Harassment policy.

People with Disabilities

If a paid employee, office holder or voluntary worker (including where relevant an applicant for such positions) is disabled within the meaning of disability legislation, TRINITY will discuss with that person whether they are able to fulfil their proposed duties and whether there are any adjustments that could reasonably be made to the job responsibilities or working environment to enable such person to carry out their proposed duties effectively. TRINITY may also ask a medical practitioner appointed by it to advise on these matters.

Communication and Training

This policy will be made widely available within TRINITY.

Dealing with Breaches of this Policy

Whenever any paid employee, office holder or voluntary worker considers that they are the target of action or behaviour that is in breach of this policy, they should first raise the matter on an informal basis with the Rector or other appropriate person with a view to a swift and effective resolution of the situation. If such an approach is not successful, action under other TRINITY policies and/or the grievance or disciplinary procedure will be appropriate.

Confidentiality

Any matter raised in relation to an alleged breach of this policy 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.

False Accusation

False accusations are a serious matter. Making an unfounded, malicious or vexatious complaint or allegation will be regarded with the utmost seriousness and may result in disciplinary or other formal action being taken within TRINITY, dismissal or removal from office and could even result in the complainant being sued. Incidents that involve a complaint against a member of the clergy may involve other procedures outside of TRINITY.