

THE DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION POLICY STATEMENT

***There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female,
for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28)***

THE DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH is committed to ensuring that all individuals and groups are treated fairly and valued equally. The Diocese will be governed by this commitment in its dealings with its own clergy, licensed lay-workers, employees, volunteers, worshippers and all with whom it has contacts or dealings.

Good Practice

The Diocese will, in its implementation of this policy, do its best to follow good professional practice as laid down in legislation, the associated Codes of Practice, and advice offered by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (which took over from the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission as a result of the Equality Act 2006).

Fair and Equal Treatment

The Diocese will oppose all unlawful or unjust direct and indirect discrimination against individuals and groups. In the recruitment of lay and ordained office-holders, employees and volunteers, and in the provision of training and ministry, it will act fairly and objectively without imposing irrelevant conditions.

Fair and Equal Regard

The Diocese will treat all individuals and groups with equal respect for their human rights, dignity and the proper consideration of their needs. The Diocese will take all reasonable, practical measures that may be needed to provide individuals or groups with equal opportunities to gain access to its worship, its ministry and to its services. Selection criteria and procedures for employment, both paid and voluntary, will be relevant, open, objective and applied equally and fairly to all.

Conditions and Genuine Occupational Requirements

The Diocese serves and represents the Church of England. When the Diocese's legal, moral and spiritual obligations make it necessary, a particular condition or genuine occupational requirement may need to be imposed. When this is done, any condition or requirement will be clearly stated, explained and applied fairly and equally to all concerned.

Implementation and Review

The Diocese will ensure that its Equality and Inclusion Policy is being implemented, monitored and regularly reviewed. It will issue procedures and advice to support equality and inclusion in all that it does; to improve access to services, employment, office-holding, ministry, training and voluntary. This policy statement will be reviewed every three years.

Diocesan Policy for Preventing bullying and harassment

This document is a single page outline of the full policy which can be obtained from the Diocesan website or office.

Statement of commitment

The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Abuse, harassment and bullying will not be tolerated in the Diocese. All complaints of abuse, harassment and bullying will be taken seriously and investigated.

What is bullying and harassment?

Any behaviour that could potentially undermine someone's dignity and respect should be regarded as unacceptable. Bullying may manifest itself in a variety of different ways. It is usually persistent, and often unpredictable, and can amount to severe psychological intimidation. Harassment, in general terms, is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of the target. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religious belief (including theology or churchmanship), nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual. The point is that the actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient.

Standards of behaviour

Bishops, Senior Staff, Rural/Area Deans, clergy and laity in this diocese recognise the importance of setting a good example. They undertake to participate in training provided in support of this policy.

It is diocesan policy that these matters are to be treated with confidentiality and that no action will be taken without the willing consent of the person who feels he or she has been a target.

Fair procedures

When both the perpetrator and the target is a clergy person or a licensed lay minister, complaints may be brought under the Grievance Procedure for Licensed Ministers. When the perpetrator is a clergy person, the target, or an archdeacon with the target's consent, might make a complaint under the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003. Where the perpetrator is an employee of the DBF, the DBF's grievance procedure may be followed.

When the perpetrator is a layperson who is on the electoral roll of the church, and the target is either ordained or lay, complaints may, with the target's consent, be dealt with in one of a number of ways according to the circumstances. These may include mediation or legal action.

Specially trained Harassment Advisers will be available to offer, in confidence, advice and information to a person being targeted. They may also channel complaints, or negotiate/mediate between parties concerned. Other useful sources of support are available.

False accusation

False accusations are a serious matter. The behaviour 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 will be taken.

Implementation

The Diocesan Secretary is responsible for encouraging and monitoring the implementation of the policy. The full policy will be reviewed every three years.

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