

**ST PAUL'S, HARLOW TOWN CENTRE
with ST MARY'S , LITTLE PARNDON**

Equal Opportunities Policy

The Parish of St Paul's, Harlow Town Centre with St Mary's, Little Parndon ("The Parish") believes and proclaims that all people are equally made in the image of God and loved by him. We are therefore committed to proactive equal opportunities and welcome all people, with a positive view of age, caring responsibilities, gender, disability, racial/ethnic origin, religion, HIV status or other health-related reason, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, as Employees, Committee Members and Volunteers.

However where there is a genuine occupational reason for a specific post it may require the postholder to be a practising Christian of a recognised denomination.

All staff must understand and express sympathy with the Christian ethos of the Parish and do nothing that would be seen to undermine it.

1. The Parish will not tolerate any breaches of this Policy and will endeavour to ensure that all its ministries, activities and other policies are in accordance with this policy.
2. The Parish recognises and accepts its obligations under current discrimination legislation.
3. The Parish accepts that there is a need to understand what discrimination is, admit it exists and be able to recognise it in all its forms. It accepts that it is possible for individuals, policies and structures to be unintentionally discriminatory or offensive and accepts that such attitudes and structures must be challenged.
- 4 The Parish will proactively promote an environment that treats all people with dignity and respect and provides equality of opportunity to people of any gender, age, religious beliefs, caring responsibilities, racial/ethnic origins, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic status. The Parish expects its employees and volunteers to be sensitive to its Christian basis.
5. The Parish aims to nurture an environment of equality of opportunity in employment. Interviews for employment and voluntary work will take place in accordance with Equal Opportunities. Internal and external job applications and appointments and staff retention will be monitored.
6. In order to make physical environments and services accessible to all, the Parish will strive to make relevant adaptations and provide appropriate resources.
7. The Parish aims to ensure that all its staff and volunteers understand and are committed to the promotion of Equal Opportunities from the time of appointment. The Parish will ensure employees understand their responsibilities under legislation and government guidelines, by providing on going training and development opportunities.
8. The Parish will undertake Equal Opportunities monitoring. This will assist in measuring the effectiveness of the Policy as well as identify training needs, gaps in service and review of practices.
9. The Parish recognises the need to have support mechanisms for those who have been or may be subjected to discrimination or harassment and will endeavour to provide such services.

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10. The Parish will avoid entering into contracts, partnerships or agreements with individuals, groups or organisations when it is aware that any of their policies or practices contravenes this Equal Opportunities policy.
11. The Parish accepts responsibility under legislation for the actions of employees and responsibility for any practices, policies or procedures that may be found to be unintentionally discriminatory and will strive to ensure that this is eradicated. It welcomes the input of staff, volunteers, committee members and users to bring this to its attention.
12. Any member of staff or volunteer who acts, or instructs others to act, in a manner contrary to this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.
13. Any member of staff or volunteer who considers they have been treated in a manner contrary to this policy should report this in the first instance to the ordained staff or churchwardens. If no satisfaction is received, or if these persons are the object of the grievance, then a report should be sent to the Area Dean of Harlow (or, if the Area Dean is one of the above) to the Archdeacon of Harlow.
14. This policy will be reviewed by the PCC at least every three years.

Approved at the PCC on 2nd February 2023.....

Signed (Chair).....