



## **DIOCESE OF SODOR AND MAN**

### **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY**

This policy supersedes any previous policy of this nature. It will be reviewed as appropriate, and amended where any clarification or actions are needed, and at a minimum 2 yearly.

Date of Approval	September 2024
Date Due for review	September 2026

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

### **1. Statement of commitment**

The Diocese is made up of people with a wide variety of theologies and understandings. This policy sets out our commitment to work within what is currently permitted by the Church of England to be an organisation that is as diverse, equal and inclusive as we can make it.

We are committed to being an equal opportunities employer and to creating a supportive and inclusive environment where each person in all their unique differences feels a sense of belonging and can flourish, irrespective of physical appearance, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic background, academic ability, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Diocese of Sodor and Man believes that a church is the community of God's people and recognises that all people are of equal importance in the eyes of God. We are committed to the principles and practices of equality – fairly and consistently treating each person according to their diverse needs and valuing our differences.

The Diocese of Sodor and Man will not discriminate or treat any individual less favourably on the grounds of sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. We will challenge discrimination in accordance with the Equality Act 2017.

### **2. Actions and Responsibilities**

The Diocese celebrates and welcomes diversity in our parishes and in society as a whole. We are committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our employees, volunteers and those we encounter on a daily basis, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

We welcome all people, with a positive view of age, gender, disability, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment (Equality Act 2017).

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

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

We will proactively promote an environment that provides equality, fairness, dignity and respect as well as equality of opportunity to all within the parish, staff, volunteers and/or members of the public. We expect our employees and volunteers to be sensitive to our Christian basis.

We recognise and accept our obligations under current discrimination legislation and will not tolerate any breaches of this Policy. We will endeavour to ensure that all our activities and other policies are in accordance with this policy.

We aim to ensure that all our staff and volunteers understand and are committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion from the time of appointment. We aim to create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. We will ensure employees understand their responsibilities under legislation and government guidelines, by providing ongoing training and development opportunities. Anyone can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination against fellow employees, other volunteers or the public in the course of their employment or volunteering.

We will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. (Please refer to the Diocese Bullying and Harassment Policy and Complaints Policy ) Any such acts will be investigated and dealt with under our grievance and disciplinary procedures and could amount to dismissal or removal from a volunteer role. We are committed to support those who have been or may be subjected to discrimination, bullying, victimisation or harassment.

Decisions concerning staff and volunteers will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2017)

In order to make physical environments and services accessible to all, we will strive to make relevant adaptations and provide appropriate resources.

### **3. Monitoring and Review**

We will review practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

We will monitor the make-up of our employed and volunteer workforce. This will assist in measuring the effectiveness of the Policy as well as identify training needs, gaps in service and review of practices.

We 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 policy.

### **4. Compliance**

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure. The Diocese of Sodor and Man will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. However, false allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under the relevant Disciplinary Procedure.

Any person found to have committed an act of discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action under the applicable policy/measure (Disciplinary Policy/Clergy Discipline Measure).