



CHESTER ROAD

Baptist Church

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

Chester Road Baptist Church (CRBC) is fully committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity, valuing and embracing diversity, and ensuring a holistic and inclusive approach in church life and all its activity.

As a minimum, CRBC aims to comply with all relevant legislation which recognises the following specific protected characteristics: gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage & civil partnership, and pregnancy & maternity.

We believe that equality is about creating a fair society, where everyone can participate, and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential, and be free from discrimination, harassment bullying. We will strive to be proactive in taking steps to ensure inclusion and engagement for all people and to promote a culture that is diverse and inclusive and that recognises and develops the potential of all our service users, volunteers, partners, trustees and staff, and members.

Aim

The overall aim of this policy is to eliminate unlawful and inappropriate discrimination, to ensure that we treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect. This includes promoting equality and diversity for all irrespective of:

- age*
- disability*
- ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality)*
- gender*
- gender reassignment*
- religion or belief*
- sexual orientation*
- marriage and civil partnership*
- pregnancy and maternity*
- refugees and asylum seekers
- people with diverse communication needs
- ex-offenders

**under the Equality Act (2010) these are known as "protected characteristics"*

We aim to ensure all people (service users, volunteers, partners, trustees, staff members and the public) are treated fairly and consistently. We will uphold equality law, seek to provide and promote a culture which acts inclusively and provide the best outcomes for the diverse society in which and for whom we work.

Our commitment to Equality, diversity and inclusion is consistent with our agreed Values Statement, which includes:

2. Inclusive

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- We strive to be as welcoming, generous and life-changing as Jesus Christ.
- Because God is Love, we welcome all those we meet, whatever their story, beliefs or lifestyle (without undermining safeguarding responsibilities).
- We champion all regardless of ability, age, ethnicity, gender, religion, or sexual orientation.

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework of equality, diversity and inclusion in the living out of CRBC's values, by:

- Ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion are fully reflected in CRBC employment practices and procedures and those relating to volunteers.
- Ensuring CRBC and its activities comply with the statutory employment and other duties under the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation.
- Monitoring and reviewing employment and other policies and procedures, so that they do not conflict with this EDI policy.
- Aiming to recruit and retain staff and volunteers who come from a diverse background, through appropriate recruitment and selection methods, except in certain circumstances:
 1. Occupational Requirement – CRBC reserves the right to exercise legal exemptions under the Equality Act 2010 where it is declared that a Christian faith is integral to the work and requires membership of the Baptist Union.
 2. Offending background - in any case where the criminal record history relates to the requirements of the post.

Scope

This policy applies (unless otherwise stated) to all CRBC employees, ministers, as well as volunteers, consultants, suppliers, contractors and agency workers, all of whom have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, creating and maintaining an environment free from discrimination.

Definitions

1. Discrimination:

- a) 'Direct Discrimination' is where a person is treated less favourably than another; not on the merits of the case but on grounds of a protected characteristic (see those listed above).
- b) 'Discrimination by association' occurs where a person is directly discriminated against by association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- c) 'Discrimination by perception' is where a person is directly discriminated against based on a perception that the person has a particular protected characteristic even if the person does not actually possess that protected characteristic.
- d) 'Indirect Discrimination' occurs when a provision, practice or a criterion that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Although equally applicable to all possible applicants for a role, this may nevertheless be discriminatory because:
 - e) The number of persons of the same personal status who can comply with the requirement is considerably smaller than the number who cannot; and
 - f) The requirement cannot be shown to be justifiable.

2. 'Harassment' is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the effect of violating an individual's dignity. There are three types in English law:
 - a) harassment related to a protected characteristic (see above);
 - b) sexual harassment;
 - c) less favourable treatment of a worker because they submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment.
3. 'Victimisation' occurs when an individual is treated badly or has suffered a detriment because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance.

Roles and Responsibilities

All employees and volunteers are responsible for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and conducting themselves in accordance with this policy. Particular responsibility lies with line managers and senior role holders within CRBC.

The CRBC trustees will:

- Ensure that this policy is communicated to all employees and volunteers, including potential employees and volunteers, users of its services, and all those working for, or on behalf of, or providing a service to CRBC and any projects it runs, including consultants, volunteers, interns, agency workers, trainees and those on work experience placements.
- Lead by example, encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion as part of the CRBC values.
- Be responsible for creating a climate where the differences that individuals bring are valued.
- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion in decision making processes.
- Line Managers and leaders of groups and activities will:
- Ensure that those whom they manage are aware of, and agree to abide by, this EDI policy and undertake any appropriate training.

All employees and volunteers will:

- Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is taken into account in undertaking their work to serve within CRBC and its work in the community.
- Be aware of their responsibilities and report inappropriate behaviour and raise any incident that breaches the EDI policy with their line manager or group leader.
- Familiarise themselves with this policy, ensuring that their practices are consistent with its contents.
- Undertake equality, diversity & inclusion training as and when asked to do so.

Recruitment and Selection

The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion underpin CRBC's recruitment and selection procedures.

Breaches of this policy

If any employee or volunteer believes that he/she has been subject to discrimination as set out in this policy, then he/she is encouraged to raise the matter with his/her line manager or group leader or another member of the CRBC leadership, if preferred.

Discrimination, harassment or bullying of any kind and by any person whether staff, trustee, volunteer, partner, or service user (and specifically in the areas covered by the policy) will not be tolerated. Harassment or bullying may involve derogatory and discriminatory remarks, ridicule, unwanted physical contact, demands for favours, or physical assault.

CRBC views breaches of this policy as potentially very serious. All allegations of discrimination, harassment or bullying will be investigated thoroughly and CRBC will follow its procedures for dealing with such allegations as laid out in the Grievance and Disciplinary policy. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will, as far as reasonably possible, be treated in strict confidence (although any allegations involving potential criminal offences or danger to others may require CRBC to inform external agencies or other affected individuals); and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure(s). People who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith may, however, be dealt with under the Disciplinary procedure (employees) or other CRBC procedures for dealing with inappropriate conduct by volunteers.

Any employee who, after investigation, is found to have committed an act of discrimination, harassment or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action.

Employees found to have breached this policy could be liable for dismissal for gross misconduct; and any trustee or volunteer may be asked to resign or may be removed from their role. Service users may be excluded from the use of our services if they are in breach of the policy. Unlawful and inappropriate discrimination, harassment or bullying of any kind is a breach of this policy; and if warranted, the Police may also be contacted.