

SILVERDALE METHODIST CHURCH

Earl Street, Silverdale,
Newcastle, Staffs, ST5 6NF.

Minister – Rev. Christine Legge
Children & Families Worker – Jayne Leighton

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

SILVERDALE METHODIST CHURCH is fully committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity, valuing and embracing diversity, and ensuring a holistic and inclusive approach in all fields of its activity. We adhere to The Equality Act 2010, which recognises the following specific protected characteristics: gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage & civil partnership, and pregnancy & maternity.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion is central to the mission of The Methodist Church.

SCOPE

In accordance with our commitment to issues relating to equality, diversity, and inclusion, all its lay employees and ministers, as well as volunteers, consultants, suppliers, contractors, and agency workers have a duty to act in accordance with this Policy, creating an environment free from discrimination.

AIM

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework of equality, diversity, and inclusion in our values:

- To ensure equality, diversity, and inclusion are fully reflected in our employment practices and procedures.
- To ensure that we are compliant with the statutory employment duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- To ensure employment policies and procedures are monitored and reviewed, so that they do not operate against our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.
- To ensure we attract and retain a diverse workforce through appropriate recruitment and selection methods, except in a matter of:
 1. Occupational Requirement - in the light of The Methodist Church's Christian purpose and ethos, it reserves the right to exercise legal

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exemptions under the Equality Act 2010, where it is declared that a Christian faith is integral to the work, and requires membership of The Methodist Church or another recognised church;

2. Offending background - in any case where the criminal record history relates to the requirements of the post.

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.
- (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, this may nevertheless be discriminatory because:
 - (i) The number of persons of the same personal status who can comply with the requirement is considerably smaller than the number who cannot; and
 - (ii) 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:

- (a) Harassment related to a protected characteristic

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- (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 ministers are responsible for promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and conducting themselves in accordance with this policy.

SILVERDALE METHODIST CHURCH will:

- Ensure that its commitment is communicated to all employees and ministers fairly and responsibly, including all those working for, or on behalf of, or providing a service to, Silverdale Methodist Church.
- Lead by example, encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion internally and externally.
- Be responsible for creating a climate where the differences that individuals bring are valued.
- Embed equality, diversity, and inclusion in decision making processes.

All employees and ministers will:

- Ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion are taken into account when undertaking their work to serve the community.
- Be aware of their responsibilities.
- Familiarise themselves with this policy and procedure, ensuring that their practices are consistent with its contents.

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RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion are embedded within the Church's recruitment and selection procedures.

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

If any employee or minister believes that he/she has been subject to discrimination under this Policy, then he/she is encouraged to raise the matter with his/her line manager or supervisor.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this Policy will be treated in the strictest confidence, and investigated in accordance with the Grievance Procedure. Employees or ministers who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimized, or treated less favourably, as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Any employee who is found to have committed an act of discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. The Church takes a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

This policy was agreed at the Church Council held on **19th February 2024**.

Signed,

Rev. Christine Legge (Chair of the Church Council Meeting)