

Sutton Vineyard

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

Sutton Vineyard 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. Sutton Vineyard adheres to The Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following specific protected characteristics: gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to the values of Sutton Vineyard.

Scope

In accordance with Sutton Vineyard's commitment to issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, all its staff and volunteers (including consultants and agency workers) have a duty to act in accordance with this Policy, by striving to create an environment free from discrimination.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework of equality, diversity and inclusion in Sutton Vineyard's values:

- To strive to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion are fully reflected in all aspects of church life.
- To ensure that Sutton Vineyard is compliant with the statutory employment duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- To ensure Sutton Vineyard attracts and retains a diverse workforce through appropriate recruitment and selection methods except in a matter of:

1. Occupational Requirement - in the light of Sutton Vineyard's Christian purpose and ethos it 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;
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 the basis 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 criterion that applies to everyone particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

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
- 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.

Implementation

1) Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

The Trustees will ensure the commitment of Sutton Vineyard to equality, diversity and inclusion is communicated to all Staff, volunteers and users of its services.

All Staff are responsible for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and conducting themselves in accordance with this Policy.

Trustees and Staff are expected to:

- Lead by example, encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in all situations in accordance with this policy.
- Be responsible for creating an environment where the differences that individuals bring are valued.
- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all decision making processes.
- Report any inappropriate behaviours(s) and raise any incident(s) that breach this policy to their line manager or the Trustees, as appropriate.
- Ensure the church knows about this policy and that staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities for implementing it, regularly offering training in the principles and practices of this policy to employees and volunteers.

In addition, pastoral staff and trustees are asked to accept an ethos statement which outlines the ways they commit to 'modelling' the historic Vineyard values, priorities and practices in order to maintain and preserve the Vineyard ethos.

2) Recruitment of employees and volunteers

In employment, Sutton Vineyard seeks to recruit the right mix of talent, skills and potential, promoting equality for all, and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates. Candidates are selected for interview based on their skills, qualifications, experience and commitment to the vision and purpose of Sutton Vineyard.

As an organisation seeking to deliver services within a Christian context, some posts can only be filled by Christians. The nature of these posts or the context in which they are carried out, and their link to the ethos of Sutton Vineyard, give rise to a Genuine Occupational Requirement for the post holders to be Christians.

Relevant responsibilities include: senior leadership of a Christian organisation; teaching or promoting the Christian faith; evangelism; leading or participating in worship, prayer or bible study.

3) Equality, diversity and inclusion in church life

Sutton Vineyard expects members and visitors to:

- promote respect for others and treat everyone fairly;
- encourage the use of inclusive language and images in conversations, worship, literature and publicity;
- seek to address the inequalities of opportunity faced by people in under-represented groups, identifying and removing barriers to participation in all aspects of church life;
- challenge all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the church and take steps to bring it to an end.

4) Equality, diversity and inclusion in provision of services

In this context, 'services' does not refer solely to meetings of the church on Sundays, but also to the whole range of activities that Sutton Vineyard offers both for members of the church and for the wider community.

Sutton Vineyard is committed to providing such services on a fair and equitable basis, regardless of age, disability, race, religion, marital status, gender, gender reassignment or sexual orientation. No person wishing to use a service that Sutton Vineyard provides will be treated less favourably than any other person on any grounds. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our premises are accessible to those with disabilities in order for them to use the services that Sutton Vineyard provides.

Breaches of the Policy

If any employee believes that they have been subject to discrimination, harassment or victimisation they are encouraged to raise the matter with their line manager.

If any volunteer, member or visitor of Sutton Vineyard believes that they have been subject to discrimination, harassment or victimisation they are encouraged to raise the matter with a member of staff or a Trustee.

Contact details are available at www.suttonvineyard.org/about

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this Policy will be treated in the strictest of confidence and investigated in accordance with the Sutton Vineyard Grievance procedure. Those who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations made by employees which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under the Staff Disciplinary procedure.

Monitoring and Review

Sutton Vineyard will monitor the implementation of this Policy. The Policy will be regularly reviewed by the Trustees.

Policy adopted July 2018

Policy revised December 2019

Policy reviewed November 2020

Policy Updated July 2021