



St Thomas a Becket Church Ramsey

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

1. Introduction

As a worshipping community, St Thomas a Becket Church is committed to treating all people with love, dignity, and respect. In the collective life of the church, we will seek to promote equal opportunity and look to create an environment in which all can flourish, where everyone is treated with respect, and where diversity is encouraged, and all are made welcome.

2. Theological Underpinning

St Thomas a Becket church upholds to the belief that every human being is valued as part of God's creation, made in the image of God. Every person in the world is loved by God who is the God of love. God so loved the world that Jesus was sent to break down all the barriers that divide us from that love and our love for each other. So, love is the key to our understanding of how we relate and behave towards one another. As God loves all people unconditionally so St Thomas a Becket Church will seek to live out that unconditional love in every part of church life.

St Thomas a Becket church will continually seek to find the most loving way in all its operations: Issues of equality, diversity and inclusivity will be critical in the search. The church will seek guidance from the rich resources of scripture, tradition, reason and experience. Not one of these will have sway over the others. The handling of the Bible and the challenges of interpreting scripture will be vital as we are aware that careful interpretation is required.

The church's liturgy and especially the sacraments are special channels where God in Christ meets God's people. St Thomas a Becket church seeks to be a place where all people can experience that love through worship and sacrament and all will be welcomed at God's table.

3. Context

This Policy is written in the context of this theological underpinning, the rules and guidelines of the Church of England, and the current Equality Act, October 2010. The Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Act also prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation of people on the grounds of protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage, civil partnership, single status
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex and sexual orientation



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Every member of our church community matters. As a church we must have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between all people

Notwithstanding the above, it may be a requirement for some paid and volunteer roles within the Church that the applicant be a practising Christian, under the “occupational requirement” regulations of the Equality Act.

4. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a basis for understanding and engagement, and to develop and encourage attitudes and behaviours that support equality, diversity, inclusion, and a Christlike welcome for all people. All will be helped and encouraged to flourish within the Church to their full potential as unique individuals, loved by God.

This policy has been produced to:

- Ensure that the Church welcomes everyone and is open to their involvement, irrespective of gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, sexuality, nationality, national origin, religion or belief*, marital status, and social class. This needs to be clear on communications such as the website.
- Ensure no person using or seeking to use the services and activities of the Church is unfairly discriminated against either directly or indirectly. However, the PCC reserves the right to refuse use of premises by any organisation deliberately opposed to our Christian faith, or would knowingly bring the Church into disrepute
- Create an environment in which all are fully encouraged to flourish and use their gifts and talents for the benefit of others.

5. Aims

As a Church we will demonstrate our commitment to treating all who come to be involved with, attend or visit the church, however infrequently, fairly and with respect by ensuring, as far as possible, that:

- equality, diversity and inclusion are fully reflected in our employment and volunteer practices and procedures.
- the church attracts and retains diverse representation in volunteering and other roles that are reflective of the parish and wider community
- equality is given due regard from the outset in the development of all policies and programmes.
- the principles of equality and inclusion are understood by all and aim to confront and eliminate discrimination in all its activities
- a culture is promoted where:
 - all are treated with respect and dignity
 - the value of a diverse church is recognised
- discrimination of any sort is challenged



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*In the light of the Church’s Christian purpose and ethos it reserves the right to exercise legal exemption where it is declared that Christian faith is integral to the individual in a specific work role and consequently requires membership of the Anglican Church or another recognised church.

6. Responsibilities

The EDI Policy must be upheld by the PCC and those in leadership positions, both ordained and lay to encourage cultural change within the church and to ensure all are welcome. All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, volunteers, church members, beneficiaries, guests, suppliers and the public.

The PCC will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation’s work activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under our grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

7. Related Documents

- Pastoral Principles (Church of England, 2020)
- Living in Love and Faith (Church of England, 2020)
- Safeguarding Policy (St Thomas a Becket church 2023)
- Safer Practice Protocol (2024)
- Acceptable Use Policy (2024)
- Employment Policies of the Diocese of Ely
(Complaints/ Grievance policy: Maternity/ Paternity policy, Whistleblowing policy)

8. Date of Review

The Policy will be reviewed by the PCC on an annual basis to take account of any legislative changes or national policy development.

Approved and Signed by PCC

------(Rector)

------(Date)