**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

**Document Control**

**DOCUMENT OWNERSHIP**

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**REVISION HISTORY**

The document owner or delegate reviews this procedure at least annually and approves changes in accordance with NBC policies and Baptist Union guidelines.

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**General Statement**

We at Northchurch Baptist Church (NBC) are committed to providing equal opportunities to those who attend and access our meetings, services and activities. It is our hope and aim that no person attending these events will be treated less favourably than any other person on any grounds.

We will try to make the church environment welcoming and physically accessible to all users, so that all our services and activities are fully accessible to people with disabilities.

NBC believes that all people are created in God’s image **(Genesis 1:27)** and are loved by God **(John 3:16, 1 John 4:16, Romans 5:8)**. In his ministry Jesus showed God’s love by his openness to all people, including those who were marginalised in his day. NBC affirms its commitment to show the same openness to all in our world. It intends, in spirit and in deed, to promote equality of opportunity and diversity in all spheres of its activity and is committed to behaving as an equal opportunity organisation.

NBC acknowledges that people are called to be diverse and lively, inclusive and flexible through the sharing of the gospel. We aim to:

(a) Nurture inclusive communities where everyone involved will be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

(b) Value the distinctive contribution of diverse cultures in our society generally, and in our worshipping community in particular.

(c) Promote social justice and will resolutely oppose discrimination within our church and in wider society.

**Our Purpose**

NBC exists to bring the largest number of people into the deepest place of love with God. To that end it is our desire to reflect the love that God has for every person.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which we can endeavour to operate as a welcoming church and a caring employer in matters of equality, diversity and inclusion.

We want to provide guidelines on good practice for church members as well as for the church staff team when it comes to these very important areas.

**Our Policy**

The Church Fellowship

NBC recognises that the UK has a rich diversity of cultures from around the world and seeks to bring a Christian witness equally to all cultures and nationalities.

In working within the community and in offering services, activities and facilities

to the community we at NBC will:

* Endeavour to provide services, activities and facilities that are accessible to people who seek our help.
* Make sure that all who attend are treated with dignity and respect, and that we recognise and value people’s differences.
* Make sure that complaints procedures are easy to follow and that we respond to any complaints efficiently and promptly.

Staff

In relation to matters of religion and belief, NBC reserves the right to appoint staff who are sympathetic to our Christian ethos in order to preserve our distinctiveness, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

NBC is a Christian organisation which seeks to operate in and for the name of Christ and those who work in the church must be in sympathy with Biblical Christian beliefs, as accepted by the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) to which we are affiliated.

For some posts within NBC more than a loyalty to the Christian ethos of the church is required. These posts are recognised as having Genuine Occupational Requirements. In particular, this relates to youth work, pastoral care and outreach.

Accordingly, NBC is committed to equal opportunity, and we aim to treat all job applicants, employees, volunteers and suppliers in the same way, seeking to honour the name of Jesus as we do so.

**Implementation**

1) Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The trustees will encourage the commitment of NBC to equality, diversity and inclusion across staff, volunteers and users of its services. Staff are responsible for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and to conducting themselves in a manner that accords with this Policy. Trustees and staff are expected to:

• Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in all situations.

• Be responsible for creating an environment where differences are valued.

• Embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all decision-making processes.

• Report any inappropriate behaviour(s) and raise any incident(s) that breach this policy to their line manager or the Trustees, as appropriate.

• Assist in promoting this policy, encouraging all in the church to understand their responsibilities for implementing it, and making training available where possible.

2) Recruitment of Employees and Volunteers

In employment, NBC seeks to recruit the right mix of talent, skills and potential, promoting equality for all, welcoming 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 NBC.

As an organisation seeking to deliver services within a Christian context, some

posts can only be filled by Christians. The nature of these posts, the context in

which they are carried out and their link to the ethos of NBC, give rise to a Genuine Occupational Requirement for the post holders to be Christians.

Relevant responsibilities will often 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

Northchurch Baptist Church expects members, regular worshippers 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 those in under-represented groups, identifying and removing barriers to participation in church life

• Challenge all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the church and take steps to bring it to an end

**Policy Breaches**

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 to NBC 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 church leader. Contact details are available through the church website (www.northchurch.com).

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this Policy will be treated in the strictest confidence and investigated accordingly. 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.

**Dealing with Complaints**

If anyone feels that they have been, or are being, discriminated against they are entitled to pursue the matter with their line manager in the case of staff. In the case of volunteers or members of the public we would encourage communication through the safeguarding complaints procedure by emailing [safeguarding@northchurch.com](mailto:safeguarding@northchurch.com)

All complaints of discriminatory behaviour, including bullying or harassment, will be treated seriously. Complaints or allegations of an unfounded or malicious nature will also be treated as serious and may involve using the church’s disciplinary procedure. Details of any unfounded or malicious complaints should be passed to the trustees via the church secretary (secretary@northchurch.com).

**Monitoring and Reviewing**

The policy should be reviewed by the NBC Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team and the HR team annually to keep it robust and fit for purpose.

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