



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Policy Statement

SOUL Church UK are committed to ensuring that all are made welcome, have a sense of belonging and can enjoy good fellowship. We achieve this via our vision and mission as a church, registered charity and Christian organisation and our core values and attributes that underpin our ministry in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion.

All staff, volunteers and trustees are expected to support our vision, mission, values, and attributes.

We are committed to ensuring that we meet our moral duties to:
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
Ensure unity between all people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

We will ensure that we do not discriminate on any grounds listed as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010 i.e., age; disability; ethnicity, civil partnership or marital status; gender; gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity; religion or belief (except for staff posts or positions of leadership with a GOR (Genuine Occupational Requirement) or sexual orientation.

We will also not discriminate against any individuals on other grounds not covered by the Act such as physical appearance, class, caring responsibilities etc.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish the context and framework for our standards of delivery of EDI.

Scope and Implementation

This Policy applies to all trustees, staff, volunteers and services users at SOUL Church, and our congregation, partners, and any other organisations with whom we enter into contract or agreement.

Key Principles

SOUL Church will actively work towards offering equality of opportunity to service users, volunteers and staff.

Doc. Ref.	Issue No.	Issue Date	Description	Owner	Approved
SC:P:EDIP	1	04/03/21	Equality Policy	A Cooper	S Knights

SOUL Church will endeavour to develop its sense of belonging and 'Welcome Home' ethos so that all involved understand they are an important part of the community.

SOUL Church believes that all forms of direct, indirect, or institutional discrimination are unacceptable, and will continually seek to address these issues.

SOUL Church will seek to challenge and eradicate stereotyping, inequality, prejudice and discrimination.

Leadership and Management

The trustees, leadership and management team will continue to ensure that SOUL Church is compliant with the legislative requirements on EDI.

The trustees, leadership and management team will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are reflected in its values, key policies and ultimately the culture of the Church.

The trustees, leadership and management team will monitor how well equality of opportunity is promoted, and discrimination tackled, through any complaints and regular consultation with staff, volunteers and congregation especially those with protected characteristics.

The trustees, leadership and management team will regularly review their programmes and delivery to ensure they are designed to consider the specific needs of all people.

The trustees, leadership and management team will monitor the implementation of the policy and will implement necessary changes as required.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion of staff and volunteers

Any representatives of SOUL Church will treat all employees, volunteers and attendees with respect and dignity and will seek to provide a church community free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation.

SOUL Church staff and volunteers will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against its employees or volunteers, either from other employees or volunteers, the congregation, or members of the public. We will regard any language or behaviour which either intentionally or unintentionally is disparaging of, or offensive to, any individual or equality group as a serious breach of this policy. Any such incident will be reported to the leadership, and will be subject to a thorough investigation process.

SOUL Church's leadership will monitor the recruitment process and wherever possible invite applications from diverse groups.

Certain posts or roles within SOUL Church will be required to continue to meet the

Doc. Ref.	Issue No.	Issue Date	Description	Owner	Approved
SC:P:EDIP	1	04/03/21	Equality Policy	A Cooper	S Knights

Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) to be a practicing Christian.

The recruitment process for all other posts will include an assessment of the applicant's commitment to working within our Christian ethos.

The trustees will be informed of any complaints or feedback to identify any trends of differences between equality groups, and/or to review what next steps need to take place.

EDI and our congregation and guests

SOUL Church congregation and guests will treat all people with respect and dignity and will aim to provide a positive environment free from victimisation, harassment, and discrimination.

SOUL Church congregation and guests should not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour, and as such any language or behaviour which either intentionally or unintentionally is disparaging of, or offensive to, any individual or equality group will be regarded as a serious breach of this policy. Any such incident will be reported to the leadership & management team and will be subject to a thorough investigation process.

All members of our congregation will be treated equally and fairly and welcomed into our church community.

All support provided to our congregation will be monitored to ensure that it is equally available to everyone and positive action will be taken if any group does not appear to be able to access any services including but not exclusively SOUL Groups, Courses and fun activities.

All necessary processes relating to negative behaviour or discrimination of any individual(s) will be monitored and action will be taken to seek, understand, and address any incidents or patterns that emerge, and any over-representation or other EDI issues will be addressed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Any data relating to EDI will be held in the strictest confidence in line with GDPR requirements and evaluated by the trustees and leadership and management team.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the leadership and management team bi-annually, and any material changes will be passed to the trustees for review / adoption of the revision(s).

Marketing, Publicity and External Liaison

SOUL Church will continue to identify the needs of the community it serves and continue to take positive action to engage with a diverse spectrum of groups

Doc. Ref.	Issue No.	Issue Date	Description	Owner	Approved
SC:P:EDIP	1	04/03/21	Equality Policy	A Cooper	S Knights

represented within the church's local community.

Publicity material will, where practical, reflect the diversity of the Church community, and will be free from bias.

Publicity material will be available, where possible, in translation into community languages or alternative formats on request.

Consultation

SOUL Church will ensure that staff, volunteers and young people from equality groups are consulted with when identifying any areas for improvement or action.

SOUL Church will consult its staff and congregation from different equality groups on other policies and strategies from time to time to ensure input is received from those with protected characteristics.

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