



KingsGate Equal Opportunities Policy

KingsGate Church believes that valuing diversity and promoting equality is not only a legal obligation but a reflection of our core Christian values. By treating one another with fairness, dignity and respect, we embody the inclusive and loving spirit we seek to share with the world.

Policy Statement

KingsGate Church is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do. We are determined to provide a welcoming and supportive environment that is free from discrimination and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. This commitment applies to our staff, volunteers, job applicants, members of the congregation, clients, suppliers and all those who engage with the church.

We do not tolerate discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

This commitment is embedded in our employment practices, volunteer engagement, service delivery, and all areas of our organisational culture.

Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that KingsGate Church meets its legal responsibilities and moral obligations under the Equality Act 2010. More than this, we aim to foster a culture that values difference, celebrates diversity, and promotes inclusion in both word and action.

By doing so, we hope to create a life-giving and relational working environment, where every person is able to contribute and thrive, free from prejudice or unfair treatment.

Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, trustees, elders, contractors and job applicants at KingsGate Church. It also covers those who interact with us externally, including members of the public, service users, suppliers and other stakeholders.

Everyone has a personal responsibility to uphold and support the values set out in this policy. Leaders, trustees and line managers have an additional duty to ensure that this policy is implemented effectively and to address any concerns that arise.

Key Terms and Concepts

Equal Opportunities refers to fair and inclusive practices that ensure individuals are not disadvantaged because of personal characteristics.

Diversity means recognising and respecting the differences between people, including values, backgrounds, experiences, and identities.

Discrimination is any unjust or prejudicial treatment of individuals, particularly on the basis of protected characteristics as defined in law.

The main forms of discrimination include:

- Direct discrimination, where someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic (e.g. not hiring someone because they are pregnant).

- Indirect discrimination, where a rule or practice applies to everyone but disadvantages certain groups unless it can be justified (e.g. requiring full-time work when flexible hours would suffice).
- Harassment, which involves unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic that creates an intimidating or hostile environment.
- Victimisation, where someone is treated unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint of discrimination.
- Disability discrimination, which includes not making reasonable adjustments or treating someone unfavourably due to their disability.

Recruitment and Employment Practices

We are committed to ensuring that all employment decisions, including recruitment, promotion, training, pay, and dismissal, are made based on individual merit, experience, and suitability for the role. Our processes are designed to be transparent and free from bias.

Job advertisements will use inclusive language and aim to reach a diverse audience. Interview panels will, wherever possible, include more than one person to support fair decision-making.

We do not ask job applicants about health or disability before making an offer, except where allowed by law (e.g. to ensure safety during interview or assess ability to perform essential job functions). Any necessary medical checks will take place after a conditional job offer is made.

Support for Disabled People

We encourage staff and volunteers to inform us if they have a disability or health condition, so that appropriate support or adjustments can be considered.

KingsGate Church is committed to removing barriers that might disadvantage individuals with disabilities. Reasonable adjustments to roles, equipment or working arrangements will be made wherever possible. If a person becomes disabled during their time with us, we will do everything we reasonably can, including making adjustments or offering alternative duties, to support their continued involvement.

Part-Time and Fixed-Term Roles

Those working part-time or on fixed-term contracts will be treated no less favourably than permanent, full-time colleagues, unless there is a clear and lawful justification for different treatment. Wherever possible, benefits and responsibilities will be applied on a pro-rata basis to ensure fairness..

Raising Concerns and Handling Breaches

KingsGate Church takes all breaches of this policy seriously. Discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be addressed in line with our Disciplinary Procedure, and in serious cases, may result in dismissal.

If you believe you have experienced discrimination or harassment, you are encouraged to raise your concern via our Grievance Procedure. Complaints will be handled with sensitivity, and retaliation against anyone who raises or supports a concern will not be tolerated.

However, making false or malicious complaints deliberately and in bad faith may itself be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required by legal changes or organisational developments. Regular monitoring will help ensure that we are meeting our responsibilities and making ongoing progress towards a more inclusive workplace and church community.

Feedback on this policy is welcome and can be directed to the Office Administrator or a member of the Eldership Team.