

Policy Statement on Equal Opportunities Prince's Drive Baptist Church

1. Statement of Equal Opportunities Employment Policy

The Church is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity in all fields of its activity in accordance with this Policy Statement.

2. Definitions

2.1 'Personal Status' refers to sex, colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins, marital status, disability, age or religious belief.

2.2 'Discrimination' is where a person is treated less favourably than another not on the merits of the case but on grounds of 'Personal Status'.

3. The Church's Policy Statement

The Church is an equal opportunities employer and will seek to ensure that:

3.1 every applicant for a job and every employee shall be given equal opportunity whatever their Personal Status except in relation to religious belief where being a Christian or complying with a requirement related to religious belief is a genuine occupational requirement having regard to the ethos of the Church and the nature of the employment or the context in which it is carried out;

3.2 persons already employed will be made aware of the provisions of this policy;

3.3 the application of any recruitment, training and promotion policies will be solely on the basis of job requirements and the individual's ability and fitness for that work;

3.4 all persons responsible for the selection, management and promotion of employees will be given information and/or training to enable them to minimise the risk of discrimination;

3.5 appropriate training will be provided to enable employees to perform their jobs effectively;

3.6 encouragement is given to all employees to take advantage of opportunities for training;

3.7 age limits for entry to training are not such as unnecessarily to exclude certain groups of employees;

3.8 recruitment, literature and advertisements will not imply that there is a preference for one group of applicants as against another unless there is a genuine occupational requirement which will be clearly stated;

3.9 the most effective ways will be employed to bring job vacancies to the attention of potentially disadvantaged groups;

3.10 applicants for posts will be given clear, accurate and sufficient information through advertisement, job descriptions and interviews, to enable them to assess their own suitability for a post;

3.11 employment policies and procedures are kept under review, in appropriate cases by formal monitoring routines, to ensure that they do not operate against the church's Policy Statement;

3.12 where it appears that the church's Policy Statement is not being observed the circumstances will be investigated to see if there are any policies or criteria which exclude or discourage employees and, if so, whether these policies and criteria are justifiable;

3.13 appropriate action is taken where necessary to redress the effects of any action, policy or criteria which are found to have unjustifiably limited the observance of the church's Policy Statement;

3.14 particular care is taken to deal with any complaints of unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex, race or disability, religion/belief or sexual orientation;

3.15 as an organisation using Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, this church undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information received;

3.16 we welcome people to serve the church on the basis of the right mix of talent, skills, character, potential and call of God, including those with criminal records;

3.17 a Disclosure is only requested if it is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned;

3.18 a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to a person serving with children, young people or adults at risk. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences;

3.19 in order to protect the confidentiality of those with criminal records we will access Disclosures through Due Diligence Checking Ltd. We invite the Baptist Union's National Safeguarding Team to advise us in the appointment process when necessary, and we agree to act on their advice for the protection of children, young people and adults at risk.

4. Occupational requirements

4.1 For certain roles within the Church it is important that the individuals recruited for those roles share the beliefs of the Church and live a life consistent with those beliefs.

4.2 To refrain from employing individuals because they do not hold a certain belief would be discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010. However, in some cases a church can justify such discrimination where there is an occupation requirement that the recruited individual be of a certain faith/religion.

4.3 The Church acknowledges that selected posts in the Church will require an occupational requirement for that member of staff to be a Christian and to accept and abide by the BUGB Declaration of Principle, our Church's statement of faith as defined by the Evangelical Alliance, and be aligned to our Ethos Statement. The Church will determine which posts have an occupational requirement to be a Christian on a case by case basis.

4.4 The Church will ensure that an assessment is carried out for each proposed post to consider whether there is an occupational requirement for the member of Staff to be a Christian in each case or alternatively, to sympathise with the BUGB Declaration of Principle our Church's statement of faith as defined by the Evangelical Alliance, and be aligned to our Ethos Statement.

4.5 Whether or not a role is required to carry an occupational requirement will be determined by the Church giving consideration to the nature and/or context of the role and its duties. There will also be an assessment as to whether any identified Christian elements in the role could be carried out by other members of staff. The specific requirements of each post would then be detailed in the job description and person specification.