



# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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## 1. INTRODUCTION BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

“As a Christian children’s charity Spurgeons is fully committed to protecting its workforce and those we work with from discrimination, harm or persecution. We actively seek to promote respect for every individual, celebrate the diversity of our society and organisation, and place inclusion at the heart of who we are and how we work. This policy outlines how Spurgeons Board of Trustees and senior leadership expect that commitment to be realised in every part of Spurgeons. It is a policy we regularly review. It is a policy that we believe is central in shaping Spurgeons as an exceptional organisation. By valuing, respecting, supporting, protecting, training, and promoting a diverse workforce we are better able to serve vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families to give them a better present and more hopeful future.”

**Ian Soars, Chief Executive and Sarah Powley, Chair of Trustees**

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

- i. Spurgeons Core Values include an emphasis on fairness and respect for every member of our workforce and every individual and organisation we work with. Those who work for and with Spurgeons should experience and demonstrate our three Core Values of being Compassionate, Fair and Committed. They reflect the importance placed on tackling discrimination and promoting inclusion and diversity across every part of the charity.
- ii. Spurgeons recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the organisation and its employees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the organisation to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics) and any other consideration such as socio-economic considerations.
- iii. As a Christian Charity our Trustees and Senior Leadership team have a genuine occupational requirement to be Christians. However, our aim is that our workforce will be representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.
- iv. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide protection from harassment and promote equality and fairness for all in our employment.

- v. All of Spurgeons workforce will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- vi. Our staff will not discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass service users or clients because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the organisation's goods and services.
- vii. This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

### **3. OUR COMMITMENT**

- To create an environment where individual differences and the contributions of our entire workforce are recognised and valued.
- Each member of the workforce is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to our entire workforce.
- To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by Spurgeons senior leadership (which includes the Board of Trustees, Chief Executive and his/ her direct line reports).
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed.

#### **4. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP**

The Board of Trustees has committed to and endorsed this policy and will ensure through appropriate governance and monitoring, the effective implementation and monitoring of this policy, through Spurgeons senior leadership team. Trustees will undertake Spurgeons essential Equality and Diversity Training during their term of office, and receive an annual report on the organisation's performance against this policy.

The Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Head of People and Culture, will be responsible for ensuring that all of Spurgeons senior leaders implement the policy in their areas of responsibility and are appropriately resourced and equipped to do so.

While the Chief Executive has overall executive responsibility for this policy, operational responsibility for equality and employment matters is delegated to the Head of People and Culture, with specific duties relating to delivery of services being delegated to the Director of Commissioned Services and Director of Church and School Family Hubs.

It is the responsibility of all levels of management to promote equality of opportunity within their areas of responsibility. Additionally, every employee has an obligation to ensure that this policy is adhered to and applied within their work and how they undertake it. Everyone has a legal duty not to discriminate. In particular, all employees should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

If a member of the workforce is concerned that the organisations commitment to inclusion through this Equality and Diversity policy is not being promoted or realised at an individual, local or corporate level they are encouraged to report their concerns or observations through their line management or to a member of the central HR team.

#### **5. THIRD PARTIES**

Third-party harassment occurs where a member of the Spurgeons workforce is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as service users or clients. Spurgeons will not tolerate such actions against its workforce and the employee / volunteer concerned should inform their manager / supervisor at once that this has occurred. Spurgeons will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

## **6. RELATED POLICIES AND ARRANGEMENTS**

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. Spurgeons policies will be reviewed regularly and any discriminatory elements removed. A full copy of all our employment policies and procedures are found on Spurgeons Intranet.

## **7. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS - FLEXIBILITY**

The Organisation attaches particular importance to the needs of those members of the workforce where reasonable adjustments are required and under the terms of this policy, managers are required to make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee and ensure that all employees are included in training / development programmes necessary for their role.

For example, for those who become disabled, managers will consider the training, provision of special equipment, or reduced working hours the employee / volunteer may require to carry out their work. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from HR to maintain disabled people in employment). Managers will give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

Similar considerations for reasonable adjustments will be made for any member of Spurgeons workforce who declares a protected characteristic.

## **8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY TRAINING**

Essential Equality & Diversity training on Spurgeons Learning Space (SLS) is a requirement for the entire workforce to complete.

Additional training will be provided for managers on E&D. All managers who have an involvement in the recruitment and selection process will receive specialist training via Safer Recruitment training.

Refresher training will be completed annually for employees to ensure all members of the workforce are kept up to date with any changes to the law or Spurgeons Policy/procedure.

## 9. MONITORING

- Spurgeons deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and will consistently work to translate this into sustained practice consistently across the organisation as a whole. Accordingly, a monitoring system is in place that measures the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements.
- The system will involve the routine collection and analysis of information on employees by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion / beliefs, grade and length of service in current grade. Information regarding the number of staff who declare themselves as disabled will also be maintained.
- There will also be regular assessments to measure the extent to which recruitment to first appointment, internal promotion and access to training/development opportunities affect equal opportunities for all groups.
- As part of our monitoring process we will maintain anonymised information on staff who have been involved in certain key policies: Disciplinary, Grievance and Bullying & Harassment. This information is reviewed quarterly by HR, and where appropriate reported to the Standards and Outcomes committee. The Board of trustees will receive an annual report on Equality and Diversity that will also include this information.
- Where appropriate equality impact assessments will be carried out where the results of monitoring highlight a potential issue of discrimination. The assessment will seek to ascertain the effect of the organisations policies and our services / products may have on those who experience them.
- The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose in accordance with our existing policies and arrangements under the Data Protection Act and our Data Security policy.
- If monitoring shows that the organisations, or areas within it, are not representative, or that sections of our workforce are not progressing properly within the organisation, then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, policies and practices as well as consideration of taking legal Positive Action.

## 10. GRIEVANCE/DISCIPLINARY

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the Spurgeons Grievance Policy or Dignity at Work Policy and procedure which is available on Spurgeons intranet site.

Discrimination and victimisation complaints will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

## 11. CONTACT

The policies and procedures referred to in this document will explain who should be contacted in relation to Equality and Diversity matters. If there are any issues raised by or relating to this policy they should be directed to the Head of People and Culture whose contact details are available on Spurgeons intranet site. If this is not appropriate or possible, correspondence should be via email to the CEO - [isoars@spurgeons.org](mailto:isoars@spurgeons.org).

## 12. REVIEW

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Chief Executive. He will carry this out with the support of the Spurgeons HR function and provide an annual report to the Board of Trustees.



## Review control

Version:	Comments/Reviewer	Date:
1	Original version - SLT	May 2013
2	Previous version - CEO	July 2016
3	Ross Hendry, CEO/Board	March 2019
4	Head of People & Culture /Board	Sept/Oct 2022
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