



Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy Statement

The Church at Carrs Lane (TCaCL) and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd (CLCC) are joint employers of staff working for the conference centre and the church. We are committed to being an equal opportunity employer and to ensuring that all employees and volunteers (referred to collectively as “workers”), job applicants, clients and other people with whom we deal are treated fairly and are not subjected to unfair or unlawful discrimination.

The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd value the diversity of our workers, clients, members and visitors. We aim to make our services as accessible and responsive as possible to all existing and potential clients and members and to provide a service to them which recognises and respects their differences. We recognise that our ability to meet the needs of our members and clients is improved by having a diverse workforce which generally reflects our users. We also wish to provide the best opportunities for all our employees based on their abilities and potential.

Regarding church life specifically, The Church at Carrs Lane believes that all people are created in God’s image and are loved by God. In his ministry Jesus showed God’s love by his openness to all people, including those who were marginalised. The Church at Carrs Lane affirms its commitment to show the same openness to all people in today’s world. It intends in spirit and in deed to promote equality of opportunity and diversity in all spheres of its activity. It acknowledges that people are called to be diverse and lively, inclusive and flexible through the sharing of the gospel. The church is committed to:

- nurturing inclusive communities where all will be treated with dignity, respect and fairness;
- valuing the distinctive contribution of diverse cultures in our society generally, and in our worshipping community in particular;
- seeking and promoting social justice and being resolute opponents of discrimination within our church and in wider society.

Scope of the policy

This policy covers all aspects of employment including advertisements, recruitment and selection, induction, pay, conditions of service, change management, promotions, grievance and disciplinary procedures, training and development and performance assessment. It applies also to relationships with suppliers and contractors, as well as to potential workers.

Our policy is designed to ensure that current and potential workers (employees and volunteers) are offered the same opportunities regardless of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, gender identity or any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of the job. We seek to ensure that no one suffers, either directly or indirectly, as a result of unlawful discrimination. This extends beyond the individual's own characteristics, to cover discrimination by association and by perception.

We recognise that an effective Equality and Diversity Policy will help all workers (employees and volunteers) to develop to their full potential, which is clearly in the best interests of workers and our organisation. We aim to ensure that we not only observe the relevant legislation but also do whatever is necessary to provide genuine equality of opportunity.

We further recognise the benefits of engaging individuals from a range of backgrounds, as this creates a workforce where creativity and valuing difference in others thrives. We value the wealth of experience within the community in which we operate and aspire to have a workforce that reflects this.

We expect everyone who works for us to be treated, and to treat, others with respect. Our aim is to provide a working environment free from harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form that may affect the dignity of the individual.

This policy is not contractual, but aims to set out the way in which The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd aim to manage equal opportunity and welcome diversity in church life and the conference centre.

This policy applies to all workers (employees and volunteers), who are required to understand and follow it.

In keeping with this policy and the ethos of The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre, the terms and conditions for room hire include the hirer's commitment to equal opportunities, racial equality, non-violence, non-abusive behaviour and respect and tolerance for all.

Legal considerations

The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd affirm our commitment to the Equality Act 2010. In addition to the Equality Act 2010, the following will be taken into consideration:

- the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- the Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment¹) Regulations 1999

¹ We recognise that the term 'gender reassignment', whilst used in legal documentation, is a matter of contention and not favoured by *Stonewall's* Trans Advisory Group. *Stonewall* explain that the term does not necessarily mean that a person undergoes a medical intervention but can include changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender.

- the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- any Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission

plus any amendments to the above legislation.

The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd recognise that discrimination can be:

- **direct discrimination** - where a person is treated less favourably for a reason unconnected with their ability;
- **indirect discrimination** - when a condition, rule, policy or practice applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular group of people. Indirect discrimination is unlawful whether or not it is intentional;
- **perceptive** - where discrimination occurs against someone because the discriminator thinks the person is of a particular racial group or sexual orientation etc, even if they are not;
- **associative** - This type of discrimination can occur against someone because they have an association with someone who is of a particular sexual orientation or racial group etc.

We recognise that promoting equality of opportunity is not simply a matter of treating everyone the same. In some cases, more favourable treatment for an under-represented group might be necessary in order to redress an inequality of opportunity.

We recognise that discrimination can take different forms, for example:

- treating any individual less favourably than others on grounds of a protected characteristic (sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity or gender reassignment²)
- expecting a person, solely on the grounds stated above, to comply with requirements that are different to the requirements for others, for any reason whatsoever
- imposing requirements on an individual that are in effect more onerous than they are on others. This would include applying a condition (which is not warranted by the requirements of the position) which makes it more difficult for members of a particular group to comply than others not of that group
- harassment i.e. unwanted conduct which has "the purpose, intentionally or unintentionally, of violating dignity, or which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment" for the individual
- victimisation - i.e. treating a person less favourably because he or she has committed a "protected act". "Protected acts" include previous legal proceedings brought against the employer or the perpetrator, or the giving of evidence at a disciplinary or grievance hearing or at tribunal, or making complaints about the perpetrator or the employer or their alleged discriminatory practices
- discrimination by association, i.e. someone is discriminated against because he/she associates with someone who possesses a protected characteristic

² This is the term used in law but we recognise that other terms may be preferable. See footnote no.1

- discrimination by perception, i.e. discrimination on the grounds that the person is perceived as belonging to a particular group, e.g. sexual orientation, religion or belief, irrespective of whether or not this is correct
- any other act or omission of an act, which has the effect of disadvantaging one person against another, purely on the above grounds.

On all occasions where those who manage employees and volunteers are required to make judgements between them, for example disciplinary matters, selection for training, promotion, pay increases, awards etc it is essential that merit, experience, skills and temperament are considered as objectively as possible.

Aims of this policy

The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd accept all of our responsibilities under the legislation outlined above. However, we also aim to go beyond the strict confines of the law to provide equality of opportunity for all. We aim to:

- recognise that everyone has a right to their distinctive and diverse identities;
- have a workforce which generally reflects the clients, members and visitors we support and our wider network;
- understand how diversity can improve our ability to provide better services and an inclusive church community;
- provide services which are responsive to our clients' needs;
- provide all workers with the necessary training and development they need to contribute to our organisation's goals;
- provide a supportive, open environment where all workers (employees and volunteers) may use their talents fully, and where workers, clients and church attendees are treated fairly and with dignity and respect, in an environment free from abuse or offensive behaviour, bullying or harassment, intimidation or prejudice regardless of their race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, gender reassignment³, impairment, responsibility for dependants, social background or any other individual characteristic which may unfairly affect their opportunities in life.

Regarding church life in particular, The Church at Carrs Lane will:

- promote respect for other people and treat everyone fairly;
- encourage the use of inclusive language and images in our conversations, worship, literature and publicity;
- challenge any discriminatory attitudes and actions of members of our congregation and take steps to bring them to an end;
- promote church membership of organisations which actively reflect our commitment to an inclusive and diverse church (e.g. 'One Body, One Faith' and 'Inclusive Church');

³ This is the term used in law but we recognise that other terms may be preferable. See footnote 1 on page 2.

- seek to address the inequalities of opportunity faced by people in under-represented groups;
- identify and remove barriers to participation in all aspects of church life, including employment (both paid and voluntary roles), training, promotion, leadership and representation on church committees;
- challenge all forms of harassment, bullying or victimisation within the church and take steps to bring it to an end.
- ensure that this policy is known by the congregation and that staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities for implementing this policy. To this end, we will regularly offer education and training in the principles and practice of this Equality and Diversity policy.

Furthermore, we recognise the benefits of helping our workers to balance the responsibilities of their work and private life.

Learning to work with people's differences, visible or not, enables us to all work together effectively and helps us to anticipate and meet the needs of all of our service users; recruit, retain and develop the best people; act responsibly in the communities of which we are a part; and also fulfill our legal commitments.

Responsibility for this Policy

The overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of this policy rests with the Carrs Lane Conference Centre Manager and the Trustees/Elders of The Church at Carrs Lane.

As an organisation we are liable for the actions of our workers. Therefore, the directors of the Conference Centre and the trustees (also known as elders) of The Church at Carrs Lane are responsible for this policy's successful implementation. Those with supervision responsibilities should take steps to ensure their team members understand and follow this policy.

All workers (employees and volunteers), irrespective of their job, role or seniority, will be given guidance and instruction, through our induction and other training, as to their responsibility and role in promoting equality of opportunity and challenging any behaviour which is not tolerated by The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd.

Disciplinary action in line with our Disciplinary Procedures, including dismissal from employment or termination of a volunteer agreement, may be taken against any worker found guilty of unfair discrimination or harassment.

The Premises - The Working Environment

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our working environment does not prevent people from taking up positions for which they are suitably qualified. This may include physical adaptations or more flexible ways of working (where appropriate and practical).

Provision of services by Carrs Lane Conference Centre

When booking room hire and the use of the Carrs Lane Conference Centre facilities, we will ask hirers to submit:

- their Equality and Diversity Policy (or to agree to ours);
- a copy of their Safeguarding Policy if they are likely to be hosting vulnerable adults or children and young people (or to agree to ours);
- evidence that they have undertaken a risk assessment for any event they are planning for vulnerable adults or children and young people.

Provision of services by The Church at Carrs Lane

In this context, 'services' does not refer simply to acts of worship, but to the whole range of services a church might offer, including: children's activities; toddler groups; cafés, lunch clubs, or coffee mornings; other events; etc.

We are committed to providing services on a fair and equitable basis, regardless of: age, gender, gender identity, skin colour, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, child or domestic care arrangements, pregnancy and maternity arrangements, marital or civil partnership status. No person requiring services from this church will be treated less favourably than any other person on any grounds.

We will take reasonable steps to alter or remove features of our premises which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for people with a disability to make use of the facilities that the Church provides. Unfortunately, the design of our building, and offices in Dale House, makes access to level three impossible other than by stairs.

Church activity leaders will act in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Policy, Safeguarding Policy and should also undertake a risk assessment for any event/activity they are planning for vulnerable adults or children and young people on the premises.

Employment Policies and Procedures

We will ensure that all our policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to improve, amend or adapt current practices to promote equality of opportunity within the organisation and to remove barriers experienced by members of disadvantaged social groups in seeking employment with us and working with us.

Recruitment and Selection

The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd aim, through written instruction, appropriate training and supervision, to ensure that all those who are responsible for recruitment and selection are familiar with this policy and apply it in conjunction with our recruitment procedures.

Job adverts should encourage applications from all types of candidates and should not be stereotyped. All recruitment adverts will state that The Church at Carrs Lane or Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd "is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity". Reference to this will also be made on job and person descriptions. When

advertising a position which has traditionally been done by one sex, adverts should specify they are open to both sexes.

As an organisation seeking to deliver services within a Christian context, some posts can only be filled by Christians. The nature of these posts or the context in which they are carried out, and their link to the ethos of the organisation, give rise to a 'protected characteristic' (or 'genuine occupational requirement') for the post-holders to be Christians. Relevant responsibilities include: senior leadership or management of a Christian organisation; teaching or promoting the Christian faith; evangelism; leading or participating in worship, prayer or bible-study.

All staff in these posts may be required to demonstrate a clear personal commitment to the Christian faith. A list of such posts is kept by the church secretary and kept under regular review. (This policy is in accordance with Employment and Race Directives issued by the government and ACAS guidance.)

Recruitment information will be made available in large print or other formats if requested.

Monitoring

All applications will be handled in confidence and circulated only to those involved in the recruitment process. Equal Opportunities monitoring information and personal details will be removed from application forms prior to distributing for shortlisting and the details will be logged on a secure database for monitoring purposes. Any special requirements or adjustments required by candidates with disabilities will be recorded and reasonable adjustments will be made as necessary if the candidate is shortlisted for interview.

We will provide full and fair consideration for all job applicants, based on merit and ability. We will review and develop our recruitment procedures to encourage applications from, and the employment of, people from a range of backgrounds to reflect our client base and membership. Care will be taken to use selection methods and techniques which are relevant to the job. These will be reviewed regularly to ensure their fairness and consistency of application.

Person specifications will be reviewed to ensure that criteria are not applied which are discriminatory, either directly or indirectly, and that they do not impose any condition or requirement which cannot be justified by the demands of the post.

Interviews will always be conducted or supervised by suitably qualified individuals. Where possible, the same people will be involved in the whole recruitment process including shortlisting and interviewing and there will be representatives of both genders on the interview panel.

Selection, including any tests which may be used, will be conducted on an objective basis and will focus on the applicants' suitability for the job and ability to fulfil the job requirements. We seek to recruit the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, abilities, qualifications, experience and commitment to our values and purposes.

Questions asked of candidates will relate to information that will help assess their ability to do the job. Questions relating to applicants' race, ethnic origin, age, disability, religion or belief, gender, colour, sexuality, marital status, current or future family responsibilities, or unrelated criminal convictions will not form part of our selection process. One exception to this is where religion is relevant to the post.

Unsuccessful candidates can request copies of any notes held on them that are stored in a structured way. Therefore, it is essential to record selection decisions in an objective and non-discriminatory way. Notes of all interviews should be made using our standard documentation and will be kept on file for six months after the selection decision is made.

Equality and diversity in assessing information about criminal records

As organisations using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd undertake to comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered a position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of a recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover to the recruiter within the organisation and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of a recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows The Church at Carrs Lane or Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd to ask questions about your entire criminal record; we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and in accordance with The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013.

We ensure that all those in the organisation who are involved in the recruitment process are suitably qualified to identify and assess the relevance of circumstances or offences. We will also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and/or training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary work. We make every subject of a DBS

Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice⁴ and make a copy available on request.

The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd undertake, either by someone within the local church or within the Methodist Church Circuit and/or the Methodist Church District Safeguarding Officer, to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking a position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Please note that having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. It will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences with due consideration given to our responsibilities to protect children and vulnerable people.

Those who might pose a risk to church life

The Church at Carrs Lane aims to provide pastoral care for all its members, including those who are suspected of causing harm or who have caused harm to others. However, in this context, such care must be provided in a way that prioritises the safety of other church members, while aiming to include the person who poses a risk in opportunities for worship and church life. The person who might pose a risk may attend church on the prior agreement of a Safeguarding Contract which may involve The Church at Carrs Lane, the Probation Service and the Police Service. A risk assessment will be undertaken. It is possible that the terms of a licence or need for supervision could make it unfeasible for us to support a person who might pose a risk to church life. In such cases, we would explain why we could not provide pastoral care. Details of the full procedure we shall follow is outlined in section 4.7 (p45) of “Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church - Updated April 2019” found at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/11827/methodist-church-safeguarding-policy-procedures-and-guidance-april-2019-word.pdf>

Training and Development

The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd recognise that equal opportunity responsibilities do not end at selection, and are committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, all workers receive the widest possible range of development opportunities for advancement.

We recognise that our ability to meet our clients’ and church attendees’ needs is improved by having a diverse workforce which has the skills and understanding to achieve our aims. All employees will be encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their manager. Opportunities for promotion and training will be communicated and made available to everyone on a fair and equal basis.

The provision of training will be reviewed to ensure that provisions are made, where possible, to enable part-time workers, shift or remote workers, or those returning to work

⁴ Available from : https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/474742/Code_of_Practice_for_Dislosure_and_Barring_Service_Nov_15.pdf

following a break, to benefit from training. No age limits apply for entry to training or development schemes which are open to all employees and, where appropriate, volunteers.

Flexible Working

We will consider requests for flexible working in a way which fairly balances the needs of the individual and the organisation. It is a requirement of some jobs at Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd to work in shifts and to work unsocial hours due to the need to open and close the premises outside office hours, and to keep a presence at reception when groups are using the premises.

Terms and conditions of employment

We will ensure that all our policies, including compensation, benefits and any other relevant issues associated with terms and conditions of employment, are formulated and applied without regard to sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, gender reassignment⁵ or any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of the job. These will be reviewed regularly to ensure there is no discrimination.

Retirement

We have no fixed retirement age and anyone who wishes to work beyond state pension age may choose to do so for as long as they are able to fully undertake the duties and responsibilities of the post.

Bullying and harassment

The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd are committed to creating a work environment that is free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Some harassment is unlawful discrimination and serious harassment may be a criminal offence.

The Church at Carrs lane has also signed up to the Methodist Church's commitment to 'Positive Working Together'. Guidelines can be found at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/4291/positive-working-together-long-report-0615.pdf>. The guidance also provides information and resources about conflict management and the promotion of positive working within the context of bullying and harassment. See the short guide here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/4290/positive-working-together-short-report-0715.pdf>

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power which is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end. Examples of bullying would include picking on someone, setting them up to fail or making threats or comments about someone's job security without good reason.

⁵ This is the term used in law but we recognise that other terms may be preferable. See also footnote 1 on page 2.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to any personal characteristic of the individual (whether perceived or real), or by association (i.e. related to the individual's relationship or dealings with others who have that personal characteristic). It may be persistent, or an isolated incident and can take many forms, from relatively mild banter to actual physical violence, and includes emails, phone calls and texts made outside of work, as well as via social networking sites. Harassment may:

- have the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, or
- is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating their dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Examples of harassment would include: physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault, unwelcome sexual advances, demeaning comments about a person's appearance, unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature, the use of obscene gestures, and the open display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person e.g. magazines, calendars or pin-ups.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something intended as a "joke" may offend another person. Everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to them and to have their feelings respected by others. Behaviour which any reasonable person would realise would be likely to offend will be harassment without the recipient having to make it clear in advance that behaviour of that type is not acceptable to them e.g. sexual touching.

It may not be so clear in advance that some other forms of behaviour would be unwelcome to, or could offend, a particular person e.g. certain 'banter', flirting or asking someone for a private drink after work. In these cases, first time conduct which unintentionally causes offence will not be harassment but it will become harassment if the conduct continues after the recipient has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behaviour is unacceptable to them. A single incident can be harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

If you think you are being bullied or harassed, you may be able to sort out matters informally. The person may not know that their behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting. You may feel able to approach the person yourself, or with the help of someone else who is employed. You should tell the person what behaviour you find offensive and unwelcome, and say that you would like it to stop immediately.

Equally, anyone who witnesses incidents of harassment or bullying should report this to their line manager.

Grievances, Disputes and Disciplinary Procedure:

Complaints

If an informal approach does not resolve matters, or you think the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, you can make a formal complaint by using the grievance

procedure. An employee who brings a complaint of discrimination must not be less favourably treated. In the case of grievances about bullying or harassment, the normal grievance procedure is modified so that you can choose whether to raise your grievance with your line manager or with a member of the board of directors (CLCC) or trustees/elders (TCaCL).

We will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible.

All complaints will be investigated promptly and, if appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged harasser. You will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative of your choice at any meeting dealing with your grievance. You will be kept informed of the general progress of the process of investigation and the outcome of any disciplinary proceedings.

When dealing with general disciplinary matters, care is to be taken that employees who have, are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic, are not dismissed or disciplined for performance or behaviour which could be overlooked or condoned in other employees.

You have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint in good faith, even if the complaint is not upheld. However, making a complaint which you know to be untrue may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Whistleblowing

The Church at Carrs Lane and Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd have a Whistleblowing Policy and we aim to conduct our business at all times with the highest standards of integrity and honesty. All those who work for us are encouraged to report to their line manager or chair of the relevant management committee any perceived wrongdoing by the organisation, its employees, contractors or other agents who may fall short of these principles.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects workers who report wrongdoing in the workplace. However, if it should become clear that the procedure has not been invoked in good faith (for example for malicious reasons or to pursue a personal grudge against another worker), this will constitute misconduct and will be dealt with through our Disciplinary Procedure.

Positive Action

We recognise that passive policies will not reverse the discrimination experienced by many groups of people. To this end, if certain groups are under-represented within our organisation, we will actively seek to encourage applications from those groups.

The decision as to which applicant is offered a post must be based entirely on the merit of the individual. Positive discrimination (selecting a candidate purely on grounds of membership of a particular minority group) is unlawful (with the exception of employees on maternity leave or at risk of redundancy, where special rules apply). However, where two candidates are equally qualified and suitable in all other respects, we may decide to offer

the post to a candidate who is from a group that is under-represented in our workforce at that particular level.

Communication of this Policy

All job applicants and workers will be made aware of this policy and a copy will be included in the Employee Handbook, available to all employees on joining us. Volunteers and service users will also be made aware of this policy.

In addition, workers (employees and volunteers) will be reminded of the policy through advertisements, application forms, posters, training courses, meetings and any other methods which we consider appropriate.

A summary of this policy will be displayed on the church noticeboard for church attendees and on the church website, together with a notice advising people of the contact names and addresses of the people to whom they should make any complaints, or to whom they should give compliments. Once per year, a monthly Church Meeting will present a summary and explanation of church policies to its membership and adherents.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review of this Policy

This policy is reviewed regularly by the Review Group appointed by the Directors of Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd and the Trustees (Elders) of The Church at Carrs Lane.

The Trustees of the Church at Carrs Lane and the Directors of Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd are required to check and approve suitable changes to the policy that are recommended by the Review Group.

The Conference Centre Manager has overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy regarding the Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd.

The trustees of The Church at Carrs Lane will monitor the implementation of this policy in church life.

Relevant data will be collected to support this policy. Personal details provided by employees or job applicants for the purposes of equal opportunity monitoring are confidential, will be kept apart from all other records and not used for any other purpose.

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the Conference Centre manager (manager@carrslane.co.uk) or Chair of the relevant management committee of The Church at Carrs Lane or the Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd via the Clerk to the Trustees (clerk@carrslane.co.uk).