

Ottery St Mary PCC

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Introduction and Context

As a Christian worshipping community, Ottery St Mary church is committed to treating all people with love, dignity, and respect. In the collective life of the church, we will seek to promote equal opportunity and look to create an environment in which all can flourish, where everyone is treated with respect, and where diversity is encouraged and all are made welcome.

Ottery St Mary church upholds the belief that every human being is valued as part of God's creation and made in the image of God. Ottery St Mary church seeks to be a place where all people can experience God's love through worship and sacrament and all are welcome at God's table.

The Church of England

Ottery St Mary church is part of the Church of England and the Anglican Church worldwide. As such we are under the authority of our Bishops and Archbishops and the synodical structure of the Church and we must follow the Church's laws and regulations.

The Equality Act

The Equality Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. It prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation of people on the grounds of protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (Revised October 2021)
- Religion and belief
- Sex and sexual orientation

Policy

1. The PCC develops and encourages attitudes and behaviours that support equality, diversity, inclusion, and a Christlike welcome for all people.
2. All who interact with our church are helped and encouraged to flourish to their full potential as unique individuals, loved by God.
3. Ottery St Mary Church seeks to welcome everyone and is open to their involvement, irrespective of gender, gender re-assignment, race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership or being single, and social demographic, religion or belief (with the exception of roles within the church which necessarily require commitment to the Christian faith). This includes making reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled people in accordance with the Equality Act.

4. The PCC ensures no person using or seeking to use the services and activities of the Church is unfairly discriminated against either directly or indirectly. However, the PCC reserves the right to refuse the use of church premises which would bring the church into disrepute, or by any organisation deliberately opposed to Christianity.
5. The PCC treats all who come to be involved, attend or visit the church, however infrequently, with fairness and with respect.
6. The PCC ensures equality, diversity and inclusion are fully reflected in its employment and volunteer practices and procedures.
7. The PCC aims to ensure Ottery St Mary church attracts and retains diverse representation throughout the life of the church in volunteering and other roles to be reflective of the parish and wider community.
8. The PCC will challenge and eliminate discrimination in all its activities and promote a culture where all are treated with respect and dignity, recognising the value that a diverse church can bring.

Responsibilities

The EDI Policy must be upheld by the PCC and those in leadership positions, both ordained and lay, to encourage cultural change within the church and to ensure all are welcome.

Date of Review

The Policy will be reviewed by the PCC on an annual basis to take account of any legislative changes or national policy development.

Date of next review: February 2025