**Southwark Mothers’ Union**

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy**

**2023**

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| Date Effective: | March 2023 |
| Author: | Members of the F&A Unit |
| Approved By: | Finance & Administration Unit Committee |
| Ratified By: | Board of Trustees |
| Target Audience: | Southwark Mothers’ Union Members |
| Review Date: | Second year of the Triennium |
| Responsible for review: | Chair of Finance & Admin Unit |

**Dissemination Plan**

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| **Audience** | **Method** | **Paper or Electronic** | **Responsible** |
| All members | MU Secretary | Both | Vice President & Branch Leaders |
| Wider public | Website | Electronic | Website manager |

1. **Introduction**

As a Christian membership charity, the Southwark Mothers’ Union (MU) is committed to demonstrating faith in action and by supporting the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in our role in Christian care for families.

Many people in society experience discrimination and the MU considers this as unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

In accordance with its ethos and vision the MU in Southwark welcomes everyone, asking that all respect and work within the context of our Christian beliefs.

Despite our name we are an inclusive organisation and we are very proud to have a growing number of men who have joined us. All members of the Southwark MU are required to be baptised Christians, however those who are unable to take this step can join as a Mothers’ Union friend.

Trustees, Leaders and workers, both volunteers and employees have a duty to ensure that this policy is at the heart of our work by ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination. All those employed or who are members and volunteers in the organisation should draw the attention of their leader to suspected discriminatory acts or practices or cases of bullying behaviour or harassment.

1. **Purpose and Scope**
   1. **Purpose of the Policy**

This policy describes how the MU members in Southwark will operate so that individual differences and the contributions of all employees and members / volunteers are recognised and valued. The policy also restates the members commitment to ensure compliance with our legal obligations under the Equalities Act 2010.

* 1. **Scope of Policy**

This policy and the principles of non-discrimination, inclusion and equality of opportunity apply to all employees and member / volunteers. This includes, filling roles through advertisements and recruitment and selection processes; training and development opportunities as well as advancement; disciplinary and grievance procedures and when staff leave; conditions of service and where appropriate pay and benefits; conduct in the work we all do. It also applies to how staff and member / volunteers deal with other members and service users as well as anyone else who works with the MU to achieve its aims.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, including direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for those people with a disability.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

1. **Code of Practice**
   1. **Working in the community**

In working within and in offering services, activities and events to the community the MU in Southwark will:

* Ensure that they are accessible and provided fairly to people who seek our help.
* Ensure that all service users are treated with dignity and respect and that we recognise and value people’s differences.
* Ensure that complaints procedures are easy to use and that we respond to complaints efficiently and promptly.
  1. **Recruitment**

Any vacancy for paid jobs or voluntary roles will be advertised internally and externally as necessary.

The MU in Southwark will ensure that all roles are supported with descriptions of the task and the skills and experiences required. In addition, application forms will reflect the requirements of good practice and application packs and information will make it clear that life experience as well as formal qualifications and work experiences are valid.

It is the policy of Southwark MU to abide by the human resource policies held by Southwark Anglican Diocese when recruiting for a paid role. In addition:

* + 1. The MU in Southwark will monitor information about job applicants. This information will be treated as confidential and will be clearly separated from all processes concerned with the selection of staff.
    2. All advertisements will state that Southwark MU is seeking to be an effective equal opportunities employer.
    3. A copy of this policy will form part of all application packs.
    4. Given that the MU in Southwark seeks to serve the Church of England, it may be appropriate, in so far as the law allows to take account of the candidate’s religious affiliation.
  1. **Working conditions**

It is the policy of Southwark MU to abide by the human resource policies held by Southwark Diocese in considering how best to support the working conditions of its staff. This includes policies which are sympathetic and supportive of those requiring support in the following areas:

* + 1. Pregnancy & Antenatal Care
    2. Flexible hours and job sharing
    3. Disabled access
  1. **Use of language**

Where the language used has a personal impact on others and it has been made clear to the person concerned that their use of such language is unwelcome and/or offensive, action to address this concern will be taken through the use of the Southwark MU complaints and or disciplinary policy.

* 1. **Bullying and Harassment**

No one should be the subject of bullying or other forms of harassment. Harassment is unwanted/inappropriate behaviour including: verbal abuse. including belittling or putting people down in front of others; unwanted and unwarranted physical contact; repeated remarks which an individual finds offensive; stalking behaviours e.g. unwanted telephone calls, uninvited calls to someone’s home/work place etc. sexual/ racial or disability innuendo or other forms of inappropriate physical contact including sexual abuse.

If it has been made clear to the person concerned that their behaviour is unwelcome and they persist with it, then the recipient of the behaviour will be entitled to make a formal complaint.

* 1. **Dealing with Complaints**

If anyone feels that they have been, or are being discriminated against they are entitled to pursue the matter with the appropriate leader of their team / group and in line with our complaints policy.

All complaints of discriminatory behaviour, including bullying or harassment will be treated seriously. Complaints or allegations of an unfounded or malicious nature will be treated seriously and in line with the appropriate complaints or disciplinary policy.

Details of all complaints will be passed on to the Board of Trustees.

1. **Training Opportunities**

The Trustees will take steps to raise the awareness of this policy and its application among all employees and members /volunteers, including providing suitable training.

The MU in Southwark is working towards ensuring that those involved in the work of the organisation, including recruitment and selection will have access to training in the application of the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Subject to the requirements of the role, employees and members / volunteers will be encouraged to attend training relevant to their position.

1. **Monitoring Compliance**

It is the responsibility of Trustees to monitor effectiveness and to review and develop the policy in the context of our Christian beliefs. Each employee or member/volunteer is responsible for their own compliance with this policy.

| **Element (s) to be monitored** | **Person (position) responsible for the monitoring** | **Method** | **Monitoring frequency** | **Committee or group monitoring is reported to including responsibility for action plans and changes in practice** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reports on the profile of the workforce and any applicants for the posts.  Number of reported cases of discrimination, bullying or harassment  Training and awareness training offered and numbers attending | Nominated Trustee with data held by Secretary. | Reports to Trustees  Review of policy and practice | Annual  Three years | F&A unit committee |

1. **Associated Documents**

Available through branch leaders and trustees

* Safeguarding Policy
* Disciplinary and Grievance Polices (for employees)
* Complaints Procedure
* Code of Conduct