The Diocese of Southwark

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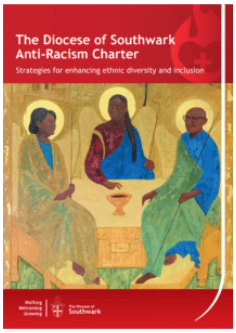
Diocese of Southwark Reporting Racial Incidents

Produced by the Diocesan Referrals Group

The Diocese of Southwark will not tolerate racist abuse, harassment and bullying, discrimination, or victimisation. Racism is an affront to God. It is a sin, born out of the denial that all human beings were created equal in God's image and that all are one in Christ. Racism, racial injustice and racialised exploitation, through structures such as historic or modern-day slavery, have no place in society or church institutions.



The Southwark Anti-Racism Charter was unanimously approved by Diocesan Synod on 13 March 2021. "It is not enough as a Diocese not to be racist; instead, we must actively counter, disrupt and oppose racial injustice. This isn't an easy task; it takes introspection as well as continued intentional action and is not a static description of ourselves." (Bishop Rosemarie)

"a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb".

Revelation 7.9

Introduction

As a continuation of our commitment to the Anti-Racism Charter and the Diocese's Anti-Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination Policy, this document clarifies how to report incidents of racism or racial abuse. This procedure is limited to reports made against clergy candidates, ordinands, curates, all licensed clergy (stipendiary, self-supporting & those holding a PTO), licensed lay ministers, Diocesan staff and volunteers. This procedure does not include complaints made against parishioners, PCC members or members of the public, in which our jurisdiction is limited. In those instances, please refer to the Anti-Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination Policy where we will endeavour to support you in ways we are able.

Formal processes and rules differ for various roles within the Church. For example, clear guidelines are set out in the Clergy Terms of Service for ordained ministers and in staff handbooks for diocesan staff. Procedures range from informal resolutions through to formal intervention, and where appropriate legal and/or police involvement. Those investigating claims of racial abuse will consider all the circumstances before reaching a conclusion, and particularly the perception of the complainant, as harassment is often felt differently by different people. In some cases, it may be possible to rectify matters informally. Sometimes people are not aware that their behaviour is unacceptable and an informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that behaviours will cease.

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."
Galatians 3:28

If you are experiencing racially motivated abuse, you should not suffer in silence or feel that you are to blame in some way for inviting the behaviour.

What is a Racial Incident or Racially Motivated Abuse?

- A racial incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person." (Recommendation 12 of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry)
- A racial incident or racially motivated abuse may be perpetrated against individuals based on their race, colour, nationality, culture, language, or religion.
- Racial Incidents may take many forms and may include (but are not limited to):
- Threatened or actual physical assault.
- Verbal abuse and name-calling.
- Expressions of prejudice calculated to offend others or influence the behaviour of others.
- Posts on social media websites including Facebook and Twitter.
- Distributing prejudiced literature.
- Wearing of badges or symbols belonging to known prejudiced organisations.
- Teasing in relation to a protected characteristic.
- Inappropriate humour.

If there is an immediate danger to life or someone is using violence or is threatening to be violent you should call the Police on 999.

If you believe you have been a victim of a racially motivated hate crime you should contact the Police. Further information on this can be found here: What is hate crime? and How to report hate crime?.

For safeguarding concerns, follow diocesan policies and contact the Safeguarding Team.

Process for a concern raised against an office holder

If you wish to raise a concern about an office holder, those in the vocations process (lay or ordained), ordinands, curates, all licensed clergy (stipendiary, self-supporting & those holding a PTO), licensed or commissioned lay ministers) this should be through the Archdeacon, or the Diocesan Bishop. They will assess, with support from key members of staff, if they believe the concern is racially motivated. If not, they will assess whether mediation is possible or if the issue should be referred to another procedure (e.g., Safeguarding, Bullying & Harassment, Clergy Disciplinary), or if any additional support can be offered, such as Unconscious-Bias training. All case files and assessment findings will be handled as confidential personal data in accordance with the guidance set out in *Guide to the Church of England Records Retention Schedule and Diocesan Privacy Notice.*

If the concern is assessed to be racially motivated, formal procedures can take place. These can come in several ways, including through the Clergy Discipline Measure and other sanctions. If a hate crime is suspected, the Diocese will support you in reporting it to the Police.

There are a series of actions that can be taken. Keep a factual log of all incidents – dates, times, nature of incident, details of accusations, criticisms, emails and other correspondence. Try to get witnesses to incidents and avoid situations where you are alone with the person.

The Diocese will endeavour to support to complainants and respondents as appropriate, and where possible to offer training, mediation and to seek healing and reconciliation as appropriate. We take every complaint and concern raised seriously and endeavour to respond to complainants as swiftly as possible.

Process for a concern raised against diocesan employees and diocesan volunteers

If you wish to raise a concern about a member of diocesan staff and diocesan volunteers this should be through the Diocesan Secretary or Director of HR. If your grievance is about the Diocesan Secretary, it should be submitted to the Bishop of Southwark. There are separate internal procedures if you are a member of staff who wishes to raise a grievance; please follow the policy set out in the Staff Handbook.

The Diocesan Secretary will assess, with support from key members of staff, if they believe the concern is racially motivated. If not, they will assess whether mediation is possible or if the issue should be referred to another procedure, or if any additional support can be offered, such as Unconscious-Bias training. All case files and assessment findings will be handled as confidential personal data in accordance with the guidance set out in *Guide to the Church of England Records Retention Schedule and Diocesan Privacy Notice.*

If the concern is assessed to be racially motivated, informal and formal procedures can take place. These can come in several ways, including through the Disciplinary procedure and other sanctions. If a hate crime is suspected, the Diocese will support you in reporting it to the Police.

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