



**Southwell Cathedral**

# **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY**

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## 1. Introduction

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Southwell Cathedral is committed to being a welcoming, inclusive and safe place for all. We believe that every person should be treated with dignity and respect and should have equal opportunity to participate in Cathedral life without discrimination or disadvantage.

This policy sets out our commitment to creating an environment in which diversity is valued, equality of opportunity is promoted and inclusion is embedded across all areas of cathedral life.

Southwell Cathedral is committed to:

- Treating all people with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and fairness in all cathedral activities.
- Creating and maintaining an environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.
- Valuing and celebrating the diversity of people within our congregation, workforce, volunteer community and visitors.
- Actively working to remove barriers that prevent full participation in cathedral life.
- Listening to, learning from and engaging with voices that are underrepresented or marginalised.
- Reflecting our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in worship, ministry, employment, volunteering, leadership, governance, education, music, outreach and community engagement.

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## 2. Scope

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This policy applies to:

- All clergy, employees and volunteers of Southwell Cathedral.
- All applicants for roles.
- Members of the congregation and all who worship at the Cathedral.
- Visitors to the Cathedral and those attending events or activities.
- Contractors, partners and third parties working with or on behalf of the Cathedral.

It applies across all areas of cathedral life, including but not limited to:

- Recruitment, selection and promotion.
- Terms, conditions and benefits of employment or volunteering.
- Training and development.
- Worship and ministry opportunities.
- Access to cathedral facilities, events and programmes.
- Pastoral care and support.

Everyone covered by this policy is expected to uphold its principles and contribute to an inclusive and respectful environment.

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### 3. Legal and regulatory framework

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As a registered charity, Southwell Cathedral will ensure that its policies and practices are fair, inclusive and lawful, and that it does not engage in activities that could be construed as discriminatory or exclusionary.

The Cathedral upholds the dignity and worth of all people as part of the mission of the Church of England, remaining grounded in its Christian ethos.

This policy is informed by, and complies with, relevant legislation and guidance, including (but not limited to):

- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- Church of England guidance on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Church of England safeguarding policies and practice guidance.
- Relevant diocesan policies and codes of conduct.

The Cathedral prohibits all unlawful discrimination, including direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. This applies whether the behaviour is intentional or unintentional.

Under the Equality Act 2010, the following **protected characteristics** are recognised:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin).
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

Southwell Cathedral will not discriminate against anyone on the basis of any protected characteristic. We are committed to promoting equality and to removing or reducing barriers that may disadvantage individuals or groups with protected characteristics.

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### 4. Roles and responsibilities

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#### Cathedral Chapter and Senior Leadership

- Provide visible leadership and accountability for equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Promote a culture of equality and inclusion.
- Encourage respectful behaviour.
- Identify and address potential barriers.
- Provide appropriate training and resources.
- Ensure that this policy is implemented, resourced and reviewed.

## Clergy, staff and volunteers

- Treat others with respect and fairness.
- Act in ways that uphold the dignity of all.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour and report concerns where necessary.

## All members of the Cathedral community

- Contribute to a culture of welcome, inclusion and mutual respect.

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## 5. Disability and reasonable adjustments

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For the purposes of this policy, disability includes physical or mental impairments that have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. Some disabilities may be visible, while others may not be immediately apparent.

Responsibility for removing barriers rests with the Cathedral.

Where disability-related issues arise, we will:

- Be flexible and creative in identifying solutions.
- Consult with the individual to understand how their disability affects them and what adjustments may help.
- Seek specialist medical or technical advice where appropriate.

If any physical feature or arrangement places a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage, we will take reasonable steps to remove or reduce that disadvantage.

For employees and volunteers who are (or become) disabled, we will seek to make reasonable adjustments to enable them to continue contributing effectively in their role.

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## 6. Buildings accessibility

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We recognise that historic buildings can present accessibility challenges. Southwell Cathedral is committed to improving accessibility wherever reasonably practicable.

We have taken steps to improve access, including:

- Level or ramped access where possible.
- Low-level touch pads to the main Cathedral doors.
- Lifts to the State Chamber and Chapter House.
- Accessible toilet facilities.
- Large-print guides, braille guides and T-loop hearing system.
- Tactile models of the Cathedral and features of the Chapter House.

Excepting the Historic Library and Pilgrim Chapel, the Minster building, Archbishop's Palace, Refectory, Cathedral Shop and Palace Gardens are wheelchair-friendly.

Assistance dogs (including guide dogs, hearing dogs, medical detection dogs and other disability assistance dogs) are welcome in all areas of the Cathedral estate at all times.

When developing or altering buildings and grounds, accessibility will be considered a key design priority wherever possible.

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## **7. Commitment to inclusion**

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Southwell Cathedral will take all reasonable and practicable steps to ensure that all people are able to participate fully and on an equal basis in employment, volunteering, worship and all aspects of cathedral life.

We will take proactive steps to remove barriers that may prevent full participation. This includes:

- Reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities.
- Providing accessible communication formats.
- Flexible working arrangements.
- Reviewing practices and premises for access barriers.
- Additional support for participation in cathedral activities.

Anyone experiencing difficulty accessing the Cathedral, its buildings, or services is encouraged to speak to a Steward or Verger. We will do all we reasonably can to assist.

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## **8. Fair recruitment and volunteering**

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Recruitment, selection and deployment of employees and volunteers will be based on merit and free from discrimination.

Selection criteria, job descriptions and person specifications will be:

- Job-related.
- Reviewed to avoid unnecessary barriers.
- Applied consistently.

Appropriate DBS checks and safeguarding processes will be followed without discrimination.

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## **9. Behaviour, dignity and respect**

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Southwell Cathedral expects the highest standards of behaviour from all those involved in its life. Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation will not be tolerated.

This applies to behaviour by:

- Clergy, employees and volunteers.
- Members of the congregation.
- Visitors.
- Contractors and third parties.

Further detail is set out in the Harassment and Bullying Policy and related conduct policies.

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## 10. Reporting concerns and complaints

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Anyone who experiences or witnesses discrimination, exclusion, harassment, victimisation or unfair treatment is encouraged to raise their concerns.

Concerns may be raised:

- informally with a member of Cathedral staff or clergy; or
- formally through the Complaints Policy, Volunteer Complaints Procedure, Whistleblowing Policy or Safeguarding Policy, as appropriate.

All concerns will be taken seriously and handled sensitively and, where possible, confidentially.

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## 11. Resolution

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Where a complaint is upheld, appropriate action will be taken, which may include:

- Mediation.
- Training.
- Changes to workplace arrangements.
- Disciplinary action.

The Cathedral will ensure that there is no retaliation against someone raising a genuine concern.

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## 12. Policy enforcement

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Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary measures, including withdrawal of volunteering roles, formal warnings or other appropriate actions.

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## 13. Monitoring and review

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This policy will be reviewed annually by the Chapter to ensure it remains effective, current, and aligned with legal and Church of England guidance.

Monitoring may include:

- Equality data from recruitment.
- Feedback from staff, volunteers and congregation.
- Accessibility reviews.
- Complaints analysis.

Feedback from clergy, staff, volunteers, worshippers and visitors will inform ongoing improvements to our equality, diversity and inclusion practice.