

## **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy**

St. Michael's Fellowship is committed to creating and cultivating a society where every child's life is filled with promise, not limited by the circumstances of their birth. Our mission is to support families, particularly those dealing with complex issues, empowering them to break intergenerational cycles of poverty and trauma and nurturing a brighter future for their children.

Our commitment to play our part in understanding and breaking down systemic and institutional barriers and prejudice and creating an equal and fair society, must start with us. Our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is deeply embedded in our core values and directly informs the compassionate, honest, and expert work we undertake with each family. We recognise that every individual – whether a child, parent, staff member, trustee, volunteer, or partner – brings unique experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds to our organisation.

Our aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our service users, and for each employee to feel respected and able to be their true selves. Ultimately, this helps us to achieve our mission statement of 'working together to keep families together'.

### **The purpose of this policy is to:**

1. Provide equity, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time and a work environment that does not tolerate any form of prejudice and discrimination.
2. To provide staff and volunteers, as well as children, young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and make them aware of their responsibilities in actively upholding and championing equity, diversity, and inclusion.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of St Michael's, including senior managers and the board of trustees, permanent staff, sessional staff, volunteers, interns and agency staff.

### **We aim to:**

**Equity:** We recognise that each individual has different circumstances and people don't begin in the same place in society. Some people have been historically disadvantaged, and face adverse conditions and circumstances making it more challenging with the same effort to achieve the same goals.

We recognise that experiences of inequality, discrimination, and oppression are individual, and multiple forms of discrimination intersect in a complex way, leading to cumulative and mutually reinforcing systems of inequality. This is known as 'intersectionality' (Kimberlé Crenshaw).

We will address the unique needs and challenges faced by different marginalised groups within our organisation and the vulnerable children and families we serve. Striving to provide resources and opportunities to help them reach equal outcomes. Ensuring that our programs and services are inclusive and responsive.

**Diversity:** We value the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of all individuals. This diversity enriches our services and enhances our ability to provide tailored support to families.

We will actively work to ensure that our workforce is representative of the communities we serve. We will implement targeted recruitment strategies to attract individuals from underrepresented groups and promote diversity at all levels of the organisation.

**Inclusion:** We aim to create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and heard. We ensure that our services are adaptable and inclusive, meeting the specific needs of every individual and family.

**We commit to:**

1. Comply with UK equalities legislation including the Equality Act 2010 which sets out the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
3. Ensure that we attract and retain people from the widest possible diversity of backgrounds and experiences to and at all levels of the organisation including the board of trustees. Ensuring staff, volunteers and trustees are representative of the community served and the employment policies are fair and robust.
4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised.
5. Actively promote our services and opportunities to a wide range of diverse communities from all backgrounds to ensure we are able to reach as many people as we reasonably can.

6. Provide services that are accessible according to need; taking into account the diversity and experiences of our service users.

**We will seek to do this by:**

1. Addressing all complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by employees, volunteers, service users, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities. We will provide clear and accessible reporting mechanisms, ensure confidentiality, and take appropriate steps to address and resolve reported incidents.
2. Establishing an anonymous reporting mechanism for raising concerns and making suggestions related to EDI. We will use this feedback to inform our actions and continuous improvement efforts.
3. Setting a zero tolerance to racism and micro-aggressions procedure and a clear process for reporting, recording and addressing incidents and concerns.
4. Holding all staff accountable for any acts of discrimination. We will enforce our disciplinary procedures.
5. Ensuring all staff contribute to creating a culture of inclusion and allyship within the organisation and that EDI goals are part of our performance appraisal process.
6. Ensuring robust diversity-related data collection to better understand and monitor the makeup of our workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equity, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this policy.
7. Assessing how this policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice through staff surveys and data collection, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.
8. Appointing an EDI Lead and a monthly EDI working group made up of staff from across the organisation to drive EDI initiatives and monitor progress.
9. Establishing an EDI sub-committee led by trustees to act as a critical friend to the organisation providing guidance and oversight on EDI matters.
10. Making EDI a key priority in our three-year strategy, setting specific goals and actions to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion.
11. Providing ongoing training and development opportunities across the organisation to enhance their understanding of EDI issues, including mandatory EDI training upon joining the organisation and ongoing topics such as anti-racism, unconscious bias, cultural competence, disability inclusion, LGBTQ+ inclusion, and other relevant areas. This will enable us to better support and engage with vulnerable children and families.
12. Ensuring our marketing materials and referral forms are accessible and shared through various platforms to reach diverse groups of people.

13. Regularly consulting and gaining feedback from service users in regards to the services we are providing to ensure they meet their needs.
14. Working closely with partner agencies and other local charities and community groups to expand and strengthen our understanding and capacity to address systemic barriers and promote inclusion.

## **Supporting documents**

This policy is supported by and should be read in conjunction with our:

- Bullying policy
- Harassment policy
- Disciplinary procedure
- Grievance procedure
- Equal opportunities in recruitment policy
- Complaints policy
- Zero tolerance to racism and micro aggressions procedure

## **Review**

This policy is subject to regular review to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in achieving our mission. We will evaluate its implementation, monitor progress, and make necessary revisions to advance our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

## **Contact details**

### **EDI Lead**

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