St Mark’s Unitarian Church, [also known as Unitarians in Edinburgh] Edinburgh

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

*‘Ours is a community of spiritual explorers, rooted in values that affirm unity, inclusivity, and acceptance.’*

Unitarians in Edinburgh are committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our members and friends, our employees, volunteers, and users of our premises, and the elimination of unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our members and friends, employees, contractors, and users of our premises to feel respected, and able to contribute their best. This commitment should also be evident to those visiting the church. In that regard the church is also committed that there should be no discrimination towards visitors.

The policy’s purpose is to:

* provide equality, fairness and respect for all who form part of our community or interact with it in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
* not unlawfully discriminate because of (the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of) age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
* oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes, but is not limited to, remuneration and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

The organisation commits to:

* Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in all of the activities undertaken in the church, as they are good practice, enrich everyone’s experience, so that they are part of the ethos of the church.
* Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued. This commitment includes training Council trustees and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include Council trustees, employees and volunteers conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.
* Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by employees, members, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the church’s activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct, where appropriate, under the organisation’s grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken.
* Decisions concerning employees and contractors being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
* Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law. Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by Trustees, members employees, and contractors.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy [2022-02] for St Mark’s Unitarian Church [also known as Unitarians in Edinburgh] was presented to the Council of St Mark’s approved, and signed

on 12th December 2023

Signed  *Julie Finneran*

Position Convenor, on behalf of St. Mark’s Church Council