

SHEFFIELD AND HALLAMSHIRE COUNTY FA EQUALITY POLICY



SHEFFIELD AND HALLAMSHIRE COUNTY FA EQUALITY POLICY

FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR

The Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA is fully committed to ensuring that everyone can take part in football across the County in an enjoyable, friendly, safe and inclusive environment. The Board of Directors, CEO, Council Members and staff believe that everyone should have the opportunity to be part of the football family, regardless of difference and we are working hard to ensure that this is a reality.

Our Equality Policy below confirms our clear commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and that we will take firm action, if required, against anyone who behaves in a way that is discriminatory.

Brian Coddington

On behalf of the Sheffield & hallamshire County FA Trustees

SHEFFIELD AND HALLAMSHIRE COUNTY FA

EQUALITY POLICY

Policy Statement

The Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA endorses the principle of equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in football, whether as participants, team members, volunteers, coaches, referees, club or league committee member or those within the County Football Association are able to do so, with fairness and respect.

We will ensure that everyone in football:

- Has an equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities without regard to their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation; and
- can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, they are able to enjoy football without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment, abuse or discrimination.

Legal Obligations.

Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA is committed to eliminating discrimination of any kind in football, and will under no circumstances condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero-tolerance approach to any form of bullying, harassment or abuse. Examples of the relevant legislation and the behaviours are provided in the Appendix.

Positive Action

The principle of equality, diversity and inclusion goes further than simply complying with legislation. It entails taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers – whether real or perceived – that restrict the opportunity for all sections of our community to participate equally and fully in football.

Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA will therefore seek to institute, support or contribute to initiatives that enable access to football and participation in associated activities by people from any group that is under-represented in the sport or has difficulty accessing it.

Implementation

The following steps will be taken to publicise this policy and promote equality, diversity and Inclusion in football:

- A copy of this document will be published on the County FA website.
- The Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA Board will take overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is observed. The Board of Sheffield & Hallamshire CFA will take full account of the policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to activities of the County FA.
- The Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA will collaborate fully with any surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in football and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports equality in football.
- The Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA Board, staff will undertake equality training and keep up-to-date with changes in any equality legislation.
- It will be a condition of Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA affiliation & membership that clubs and leagues, and all participants connected to clubs and leagues:
 - Formally adopt this policy or produce their own policy in terms that are consistent with it.
 - take steps to ensure that their Committees, members, players, coaches, volunteers and staff behave in accordance with the policy, including where appropriate taking disciplinary action under the Club's or League's Constitution.
 - ensure that access to membership is open and inclusive
 - support such measures and initiatives that the Sheffield & Hallamshire CFA may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Inclusion Advisory Group supported by a Board Champion will review this policy annually (or more regularly if necessary due to changes in legislation) and will report with recommendation to the Board.

Complaints and Compliance

Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA regards all forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) behaviour described in the Appendix as unacceptable, and will ensure that individuals feel able to raise any grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who breaches The Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA Equality Policy. Any person who believes that he or she has been treated in a way that they consider to be in breach of this policy should follow the Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA Complaints Procedure which can be found at www.Sheffieldfa.com

Alleged breaches of the Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA Equality Policy will be investigated by the County FA Football Services Department and if appropriate progressed via the recognised FA disciplinary procedures or referred to organisation General Manager. All investigations will be conducted impartially, confidentially and without avoidable delay. Any person or organisation against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of what is alleged and given the opportunity to present their side of the matter.

Where the alleged violation of this Equality Policy by way of harassment, victimisation or discrimination amount to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed. In the event that an individual or organisation associated with the Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, the Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA Board will co-operate fully with any investigation carried out by the relevant lawful authorities and, subject to the outcome, may consider taking action as above in relation to the matter concerned.

Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA thanks its members and representatives for their continued commitment to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into day-to-day practices and keeping the Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA region an enjoyable place to participate in football.

Policy Review Date

Date last reviewed: September 2022.

APPENDIX – Relevant Legislation and Forms of Unacceptable Discrimination

Discrimination has been legally defined through a series of legislative acts, including the Race Relations Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act 2006.

In April 2010, the Equality Act 2010 received Royal Assent. The Equality Act 2010 is a law which harmonises where possible, and in some cases extends, protection from discrimination. It applies throughout the UK and came into force in October 2010.

Discrimination refers to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the 'protected characteristics'. Under the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are defined as age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' a protected characteristic¹. This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or with someone who is assumed to have it.

Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

Discrimination arising from disability

When a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified, this is unlawful. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Victimisation

It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.

¹ The exception to this is pregnancy and maternity, which does not include protection by association or assumption – a woman is only protected from discrimination on grounds of her own pregnancy.