



## **CHESHIRE COUNTY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION EQUALITY POLICY**

Cheshire County FA is responsible for setting the standards and values that apply throughout grassroots football in Cheshire. Football is for everyone; it belongs to, and should be enjoyed by, anyone who wants to participate in it.

The Cheshire County FA Vision of “*Changing Lives Through Football*” is an all-embracing vision that demonstrates not only our commitment to equality but also our passionate belief in inclusivity and diversity. The foundations on which this is based are embedded in our values of being Inclusive, Progressive and Respectful. We are also committed to consistent behaviours and actions associated to our values.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect and that Cheshire County FA is equally accessible to all. All participants should abide and adhere to this Policy and to the requirements of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

Cheshire County FA’s commitment is to promote inclusion and to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership, nationality, ethnic minority, religion or belief or disability, pregnancy and maternity and to encourage equal opportunities.

This is fully supported by the staff, Board of Directors of Cheshire County FA and the Chief Executive who are responsible for the impartial and consistent implementation of this policy.

Cheshire County FA will ensure that it treats people fairly and with respect and that it will provide access and opportunities for all members of the football community to take part in, and enjoy, its activities.

Cheshire County FA will not tolerate harassment, bullying, abuse or victimisation of a participant, which for the purposes of this Policy and the actions and sanction applicable, are regarded as discrimination, whether physical or verbal. Cheshire County FA will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate action in whatever context it occurs.

When we are made aware, Cheshire County FA is committed to the immediate investigation of any allegation of discrimination and where such is found to be the case, Cheshire County FA will require that the practice stops and impose sanctions as appropriate.

Cheshire County FA is committed to inclusion and anti-discrimination and raising awareness and educating of these issues. Cheshire County FA commits to investigating concerns and applying relevant and proportionate sanctions where and when appropriate. Cheshire County FA is committed to supporting campaigns, achieving independently verified equality

standards, widening diversity and representation and promoting diverse role models. These are all seen as key elements of this Policy and its implementation.

### **Complaints and compliance**

Cheshire County FA regards all of the forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) behaviour described in the Appendix as unacceptable - and is determined to ensure that individuals feel able to raise any bona fide grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, Board or Council Member, District FA Member, participant or volunteer, who is found, after a full investigation, to have violated the Equality Policy. If you have seen or heard discrimination in football, please email [discipline@cheshirefa.com](mailto:discipline@cheshirefa.com) or visit [www.CheshireFA.com](http://www.CheshireFA.com) and report the incident via the FA or Kick It Out online forms.

### **Positive Action and Training**

Cheshire County FA is committed to equality inclusion and anti-discrimination as part of The Football Association's Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Plan. We will commit to a programme of raising awareness and educating, widening diversity and representation and promoting diverse role models, which we believe are all key actions to promote inclusion and eradicate discrimination within football.

### **Our ABC model of inclusion**

The ABC model of inclusion provides a framework to help Cheshire FA support and advocate an inclusive culture. This model accounts for the fact that all of us are on our own 'inclusion journey' and that we may be at different stages. The goal is to create an organisation of allies, who are keen to promote and encourage inclusion. So that everyone, in all their uniqueness, can be treated fairly and work together effectively.

#### ***Appreciate: inclusion is the antecedent of change***

Allyship begins with an individual's awareness and appreciation of the issues and experiences of others. This stage is reflective of an individual's growth in awareness. It may involve an initial step of accepting that equity in society is something worth striving for. Individuals in this phase are identifying the challenges to create an inclusive environment, and becoming open to learn more about their need to act.

#### ***Build: an inclusive climate by behavioural change***

This stage moves on from an individual gaining awareness and being open to address the challenges of inclusivity to directly building an inclusive environment. Individuals in this phase are helping build an inclusive, fair and equitable climate by their actions. They are proactively building relationships with others, gathering diverse perspectives, empathising, actively listening and communicating transparently.

#### ***Champion: change by acting as a catalyst for others***

The last phase of allyship is one of advocacy. Individuals at this stage take their behavioural commitment to another level. They tend to look for opportunities to affect change formally and informally. To be successful at this stage, individuals need to be courageous, action-oriented, composed and willing to commit.

This Equality Policy will be reviewed and updated, if required, on an annual basis.

**Signed**

  
**Chairman** **DAVE EDMUNDS** **Date 21/9/2021**

  
**CEO** **STEVE SMITHIES** **Date 21/9/2021**

## **APPENDIX – Relevant legislation and forms of unacceptable discrimination**

### ***Legal rights***

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 new 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 (employment only until 2012), disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status (employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' a protected characteristic<sup>1</sup>. 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:***

#### **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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

**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.