

Equality and Diversity Policy and Statement

Dorset County Football Association

June 2019



This statement demonstrates the commitment of **Dorset County Football Association** to meet the legislative requirements of Equality and Diversity, specifically the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in order to comply with the general equality duty of the Equality Act 2010 and extra specific duties.

The Equality Duty is a duty on public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It ensures that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees.

The three aims of the Equality Duty

The Equality Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have **due regard** to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- Direct discrimination in services and public functions happens when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.
- Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.
- Victimisation occurs when someone is treated badly because they have done something in relation to the Equality Act, such as making or supporting a complaint or raising a grievance about discrimination, or because it is suspected that they have done or may do these things.

2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. This involves considering the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability (Including mental health)
- gender reassignment
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity

Background:

As the governing body for football in Dorset, the Dorset County Football Association is responsible for setting standards and values that apply throughout the game at every level. Football belongs to, and should be enjoyed by, anyone who wants to participate in it.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect and that football is equally accessible to all and where all can feel welcome. It has been compiled to reflect the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, and everyone who participates in football across the County should be aware of, and comply with the principles that underpin the policy.

Dorset County FA's commitment is to promote inclusion, to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability, pregnancy and maternity, and to encourage equal opportunities. This Policy is fully supported by the Board of Dorset County FA, and the Chief Executive and Board Equality Champion have overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy, with Dorset FA Inclusion Advisory Group guidance and support.

Statement

The Equality Standard (A Framework for Sport) was launched by the UK in November 2004 to help address the inequalities that exist within the sports sector. It is a framework to guide sports organisations, including national governing bodies of sport, towards achieving equality. In 2010 Dorset FA achieved the Foundation Level of the Standard and we are currently in the process of reviewing the Standard to ensure we fulfil the criteria. It is important that we comply with the Standard to ensure that we continue to be an inclusive organisation who are committed to offer football for all, no matter age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, ability or disability including mental health, pregnancy or maternity to encourage equality and inclusion at all levels.

We recognise that there are still in the case of some of our diverse / protected characteristics communities, for example those from sexual minorities, major challenges to their feeling and being welcome, safe, and valued in the setting of football. Dorset FA is committed to explore with all our partners, members and beyond, effective solutions to address these issues.

The FA have a clear Equality & Inclusion Strategic Plan in place and The County Association are funded by The FA to deliver on National Game Strategy targets for male, female and disability players and female and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) coaches and referees. As an organisation we must also ensure that any players, coaches, referees or volunteers wishing to access football in Dorset have the opportunity to do so, regardless of those protected characteristics described above.

This work will include our Equality Policy and Equality Statement, our staff and board members, how we communicate with our stakeholders and customers, and our Human Resources policies. This work will be led by the Board Champion for Equality, Andy Mercer and the Equality Lead, Justine Mosley, supported by the Chief Executive, Sue Hough.

We will also look to support others in our community not covered by legislation.

We continue to make considerable strides in realising our statutory obligations to pay due regard and to promote equality across the equality strands, which we can be proud of and encouraged by.

We will continually build on our foundations that have been laid to achieve high standards in equality, diversity and inclusion.

Dorset FA is committed to developing, supporting and sustaining a diverse workforce, representative of the community it serves, through the creation of a work environment where staff are able to do their jobs to the best of their abilities without having to face discrimination or harassment.

Key Principles:

Dorset County FA will ensure that it treats people fairly and with respect, and will provide access and opportunities for all members of the community to take part in, and enjoy, football activities. Dorset County FA will not tolerate harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying, abuse or victimisation of any participant, or any form of discrimination direct or indirect, whether physical or verbal (including ‘banter’).

Dorset County FA will work to ensure that any such behaviour is met with appropriate action in whatever context it occurs, and actively encourages its reporting from those targeted and those witnessing/aware of it. Dorset County FA commits itself to the immediate investigation of any allegation of harassment, bullying or discrimination, as soon as it is brought to their attention, and where such is found to be the case, applying relevant and proportionate sanctions

Dorset County FA is committed to inclusion and anti-discrimination and will raise awareness of these issues through education, campaigning, the achievement and maintenance of independently verified equality standards, widening diversity and representation and the promotion of diverse role models all key actions to promote inclusion and eradicate discrimination within football, encouraging maximum opportunities for talent to be nurtured, not lost.

Dorset FAs commitment is that in the 2018/19 season our aim is to confirm the Foundation Level of the Standard so that we can achieve the Preliminary Level during the 2019/20 season.

Signed

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Position

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