



HERTS RUGBY

Hertfordshire Rugby Football Union



HERTS RUGBY

Hertfordshire Rugby Football Union's Purpose is

**"To help our clubs and schools provide and grow enjoyable, fully inclusive, opportunities in rugby in Hertfordshire"**

President: John Gregory

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

**All participants in rugby union regardless of age, sex, ability or disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, size, or sexual orientation have the right to protection from harm**

This policy has been developed by Hertfordshire RFU to comply with World Rugby "Rugby For All" principles, namely:

As rugby has evolved and expanded into the modern global sport it is today, the core character-building values – discipline, integrity, passion, solidarity and respect - have remained consistent since the game's inception in 1823.

These character-building values underpin World Rugby's vision as a sport for all, true to its values. This vision reflects the principle that rugby is a game for all shapes and sizes and is echoed in our stated mission to grow the global rugby family.

Rugby as a sport for all is enshrined in the governance of the game and its administration, including the World Rugby Playing Charter, Bye Laws and Regulations:

*"The laws provide players of different physiques, skills, genders and ages with the opportunity to participate at their levels of ability in a controlled, competitive and enjoyable environment ... It is through discipline, control and mutual respect that the spirit of the game flourishes ... these are the qualities which forge the fellowship and sense of fair play so essential to the game's ongoing success and survival"* - **World Rugby Playing Charter**

*"To prevent discrimination of any kind against a country, private person or groups of people on account of ethnic origin, gender, language, religion, politics or any other reason"* - **Objectives and Functions of World Rugby, Bye-Law 3**

*"All Unions, Associations, Rugby Bodies, Clubs and Persons shall not do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other Person on the ground of their religion, race, sex, sexual orientation, colour or national or ethnic origin"* - **World Rugby Regulation 20**

**Effective diversity and inclusion arrangements in every CB and club should be underpinned by two key principles:**

- **Promoting diversity and inclusion is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each player, coach, match official, volunteer, management committee member and volunteer should play their full part; and**
- **A victim-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of any person who discloses an allegation that they are a victim of discriminatory behaviour.**

### **Desired Outcomes of the Policy**

- a) Advancing equality of opportunity, fostering a culture of inclusivity and promoting good relations for all.
- b) Promoting a harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect and in line with our other values of trust, excellence, enjoyment, teamwork and inclusiveness.
- c) Preventing occurrences of unlawful or unfair direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- d) Preventing occurrences of associative discrimination and discrimination by perception.
- e) Fulfilling Hertfordshire RFU's legal and regulatory obligations under equality legislation, internal policies and codes of practice e.g. Sport England's 'A Code for Sports Governance', the Equality Standard - A Framework for Sport ([www.equalityinsport.org](http://www.equalityinsport.org)), NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) 'Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport'.
- f) Enabling and supporting transparent challenge and positive engagement with all stakeholders who raise concerns in relation to negative experience and impact as a result of perceived discrimination and/or prejudice, embracing the benefits of diversity and ensuring that a welcoming and inclusive environment is created.

### **Legal Requirements**

1. Hertfordshire RFU is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its stakeholders and recognises its legal obligations under - and will abide by the requirements of - the Equality Act 2010 and any relevant equivalent legislation (as amended) in any UK jurisdiction, and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to Hertfordshire RFU.
2. Hertfordshire RFU will seek advice each time this Policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.
3. Hertfordshire RFU will uphold the principle that the welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount and prioritise safeguarding of children and adults at risk in line with UK legislation (including the Care Act 2014, Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and supporting statutory guidance), Hertfordshire RFU's safeguarding policy and our commitment to safeguarding and protecting those who may be additionally vulnerable as a result of equality and diversity issues.

## **The Policy Principles**

1. Hertfordshire Rugby Football Union is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our CB and club membership, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.
2. The aim is for our CB and club membership to be truly representative of all sections of society and our local population, and for every player, coach, referee, volunteer or other member to feel respected and able to give their best.
3. Hertfordshire RFU is committed to eradicating unlawful discrimination of CB and club members or the public in a rugby setting.
4. The policy's purpose is to:
  - provide equality, fairness and respect for everyone engaged in rugby activity in Hertfordshire.
  - not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In addition, Hertfordshire RFU recognises that not all disability and difference is visible and may include communication and learning differences (including but not limited to Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Dyslexia etc.), mental health issues and the impact of past/current trauma.
  - In addition, Hertfordshire RFU recognises that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that all stakeholders are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds. Consequently, Hertfordshire RFU considers socio-economic background to be equivalent to a Protected Characteristic.
  - oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in selection and playing decisions, spectator behaviour at matches, officiating, club governance, dealing with discipline, safeguarding, training or other developmental opportunities
5. Hertfordshire RFU commits to:
  - Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the clubhouse and, on and around the pitch.
  - Create a CB and club environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all participants are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training the CB Executive and other leaders in rugby about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include all rugby participants conducting themselves to help Hertfordshire RFU and its clubs provide equal opportunities in rugby activity, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All persons engaged in rugby activity should understand they, as well as their club, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their rugby activity, against fellow players, match officials, volunteers, and the public

- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow rugby participants, the public and any others in the course of the CB and club's rugby activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could lead to serious disciplinary action and lengthy suspension from rugby activity.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both a safeguarding matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all rugby participants, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the CB and club.
- Review practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and this policy to take account of changes in the law.
- As far as practicable whilst maintaining personal confidentiality, monitor the make-up of the rugby community in the CB as a whole and at individual clubs regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

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 the CB Executive and has been agreed with clubs and the Rugby Football Union.

Agreed by Hertfordshire RFU Executive:

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020

For review 12 months after this date.