



Equality Policy Scottish Youth FA

Vision

The Scottish Youth Football Association vision is to increase participation and development of children and young people within Scotland.

Mission

The SYFA mission is to provide football for children of all ages throughout Scotland to enable them to develop and flourish in the game of association football.

To support every volunteer to enable them to develop within SYFA.

To lead the way in modernising approaches to the provision of football ensuring the continued growth of grassroots football throughout Scotland.

Policy Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the SYFA's commitment to equality and the organisational measures put in place to create a safe and inclusive football environment.

This policy should be read alongside Football Unites; Scottish FA Equality Framework <https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/en/social-and-environmental-sustainability/Equality-Diversity-Inclusion>

Legal Obligations

SYFA is committed to eliminating unfair discrimination of any kind.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 provides a legislative framework for equality.

The Equality Act introduced Protected Characteristics, characteristics and identities that are protected from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation by law.

These Protected Characteristics are:

Age Disability	Race
Gender reassignment	Religion or belief
Marriage and civil partnership	Sex
Pregnancy and maternity	Sexual orientation

It is discrimination when one person or group receives detrimental treatment based on these categories or distinctions.

Under the Equality Act you are protected from discrimination when you join a club or association, e.g your local football club.

Identifying discrimination

Discrimination comes in various forms. Some are easier to identify than others as they are more overt. There are 4 main types of discrimination:

Direct discrimination – When a person treats one person less favourably than they would treat another because of a protected characteristic

Indirect discrimination – When a provision, criterion or practice is neutral on the face of it, but its impact particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic

Harassment – unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the complainant or violating their dignity

Victimisation – treating someone unfavourably because they have taken or might take action under the Equality Act 2010 or supporting somebody who is doing so.

Examples of discrimination may include:

- A player calls an opposition player a racist slur
- An official makes a derogatory comment about what they perceive as the sexual orientation of the referee
- Chants that reference a players' disability
- A woman is not permitted to become a Club Chair, because the club constitution states that this role must be held by an ex-player
- The SYFA reject an applicant coach based on their religion

It is important to note that the use of age groups and existence of girls' football is not discrimination. Age specific and gender specific sports groups are justifiable distinctions in that they maintain appropriate Player Pathways, ensure fair competition, protect the safety of those involved and comply with the rules of the game.

Our Role

The SYFA play a key role in ensuring equality and inclusivity in our game. We are committed to working with individuals, groups, and organisations to uphold this. Our role includes:

Recruitment

Staff and volunteers are recruited fairly. No applicant for a staff, Board or Committee appointment will be treated less favourably than another on the grounds of their Protected Characteristics.

Ability to perform the role will be the sole consideration. We particularly welcome applications from those under-represented in our organisation.

Investigation

Reports of discrimination raised will be fully investigated by the Child Wellbeing and Protection team.

Action

The SYFA impose penalties on those who are found to have breached offence codes. Where applicable, a player's use of discriminatory comments and gestures also results in educational workshops being provided for their team.

Education

The SYFA provide relevant resources and training opportunities to clubs to foster a learning environment on topics related to equality, diversity and inclusion. Clubs are signposted to organisations for further support and advice.

Your Role

Players, volunteers, parents and spectators are central to the culture of youth football. Being present at training and matches provides a key, direct opportunity to play a role in upholding equality. Your role may involve:

Challenge

People involved in the game are empowered to directly challenge and question the behaviour and comments of others that may be discriminatory or offensive.

Report

Those who witness or experience discrimination are encouraged to report the incident. There are various channels available for reporting and there is no time limit on when a report needs to be submitted. Incidents can be raised during the match to the match official, or to the SYFA or to Police Scotland.

Email:

syfachildwellbeing@scottish-football.com

Call Police Scotland:

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Review

Clubs are reminded to regularly review the Code of Conduct with their players and officials to reinforce the behaviours and standards expected of those involved in the game. Principles of equality and non-discrimination inform our national Code of Conduct & 'Set The Standards'.

Support

Football should be a safe and inclusive environment for everyone. When something happens that makes a player feels unsafe, or excluded, based on their identity, they require the full support of those around them. CWPOs are encouraged to check in on the wellbeing of players who have recently experienced discrimination and remind them where to seek advice and support, if needed.

Implementation of Policy

SYFA is committed to Football Unites; Scottish FA Equality Framework, [found here](#) and The Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport, [found here](#)

SYFA use the Positive Action in Sport tool to help address disadvantage and under-representation, break down barriers and potentially increase participation.

A copy of this policy will be made available to members and published on our website.

SYFA staff, volunteer and board and committee members will commit to act in accordance with this policy and support measures and initiatives that SYFA take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

SYFA will provide access to appropriate training in order to raise awareness of collective and individual responsibilities of its board members, committee members and employees.

It will be a condition of SYFA membership that member clubs:

1. Formally adopt this policy or produce their own equality and diversity policy that is consistent with this one
2. Take steps to ensure that their committees, members and volunteers behave in accordance with this policy, including taking disciplinary action under the clubs constitution
3. Ensure that access to membership is open and inclusive
4. Support any measures that SYFA may implement to advance the aims of this policy.

Responsibility and Monitoring

SYFA through the Board of Directors takes its responsibilities for equality and diversity seriously and recognises that any discrimination that exists can only be eliminated in partnership with staff, volunteer and members.

SYFA Head of Operations will take overall accountability for ensuring that the policy is observed.

Appropriate action will be taken to address any deficiencies in the implementation of the Policy, and disciplinary procedures may be used in the case of a breach of this policy.

All members of staff and members will promote, support and uphold this policy in all their dealings with other members of staff, members, non-members and stakeholders.

This policy will be subject to review in line with changes in employment law and related policies and procedures.

Useful links:

<https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/en/social-and-environmental-sustainability/Equality-Diversity-Inclusion/football-unites>

<https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/en/news/scottish-fa-introduce-grassroots-discrimination-reporting-tool>

<https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion>