



INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY

EVERYONE DIFFERENT. EVERYONE MATTERS.

Policy commitment

Fairford Rugby Football Club (FRFC) is committed to a culture where everyone is welcomed, respected and able to participate. Discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation and exclusionary behaviour have no place in our Club.

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how FRFC will promote inclusion and diversity, prevent and respond to discrimination, and provide fair access to rugby and Club life. It supports the FRFC Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Statement and reflects current Rugby Football Union (RFU) inclusion guidance and the Equality Act 2010.

The policy provides practical standards for membership, coaching, volunteering, employment, team and activity selection, facilities, events, communications, partnerships and Club decision-making.

2. Scope

This policy applies to players, members, coaches, volunteers, employees, match officials, parents and carers, spectators, visitors, contractors, partners and anyone representing FRFC. It applies at the clubhouse and grounds, at training and fixtures, during travel, at social or fundraising events, and in online or social-media activity connected with the Club.

3. Our principles

- Everyone should be treated fairly, with dignity and respect.
- Difference and diversity strengthen our Club and the wider game.
- Barriers to participation should be identified and removed wherever reasonably possible.
- Decisions should be transparent, proportionate and based on relevant information.
- People should feel able to raise concerns safely and without retaliation.
- Safeguarding, welfare and individual dignity must remain central to the Club's response.

4. Equality Act 2010

FRFC will not unlawfully discriminate because of any protected characteristic:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Protection may also apply where someone is perceived to have a protected characteristic, is associated with someone who has one, or raises or supports a concern about discrimination. FRFC also values different backgrounds, experiences, caring responsibilities and socio-economic circumstances, whether or not these are protected characteristics in law.

5. Forms of unacceptable conduct

Direct discrimination	Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
Indirect discrimination	Applying a rule, practice or requirement that disadvantages a group sharing a protected characteristic and cannot be objectively justified.
Harassment	Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
Victimisation	Treating someone badly because they raised, supported or were believed likely to raise a discrimination concern.
Bullying and exclusion	Intimidating, humiliating, abusive or deliberately excluding behaviour, whether or not it is linked to a protected characteristic.
Discrimination by perception or association	Unfair treatment because someone is thought to have a protected characteristic or because of their connection with another person.

6. Inclusive participation and Club activity

FRFC will seek to make its activities welcoming and accessible while complying with RFU rules, competition requirements, safety standards and the needs of each form of rugby. In practice, the Club will:

- Advertise opportunities fairly and use clear, relevant criteria for membership, volunteering, employment, development and selection.
- Avoid assumptions about a person's ability, commitment, background or needs.
- Consider whether facilities, information, kit, timings, costs, travel and communication create avoidable barriers.
- Use inclusive and respectful language, imagery and online communications.
- Support participation across age-grade, senior, women's, girls', mixed-ability and walking rugby activities, subject to applicable RFU regulations and local provision.
- Challenge racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, faith-based or other discriminatory language and behaviour.

7. Disability and reasonable adjustments

FRFC will discuss individual needs sensitively and consider reasonable adjustments for disabled people. Adjustments will depend on the circumstances and may include accessible information, changes to communication, support with access to facilities, adapted arrangements or equipment, and flexibility in how a person participates or volunteers.

A request should be considered promptly and collaboratively. The Club may seek appropriate advice where an adjustment affects safety, competition rules, facilities or another person's rights. Information about disability or health will be handled respectfully and shared only where necessary.

8. Recruitment, volunteers and learning

Recruitment and appointment processes will use relevant role requirements and fair decision-making. FRFC will encourage applications from different parts of the community and will provide suitable induction, guidance or learning so that people understand this policy and their responsibilities.

9. Roles and responsibilities

FRFC Committee	Approves the policy, provides leadership and proportionate resources, considers equality impacts in Club decisions, monitors concerns and reviews progress.
Chair	Has overall oversight and ensures significant concerns reach the correct Club, RFU, safeguarding or external process.
Relevant Club officers	Manage concerns fairly, keep appropriate records, identify support and communicate outcomes where it is lawful and appropriate to do so.
Coaches and team managers	Create inclusive environments, apply fair processes, consider adjustments and act on inappropriate conduct.
Members, volunteers and others	Treat people with dignity and respect, follow Club codes and policies, and raise concerns safely when standards are not met.

10. Raising a concern

Speak up

A person who experiences or witnesses discrimination, harassment, bullying or exclusion connected with FRFC should report it as soon as they can. They may approach the Chair, a Committee member, their coach or team manager, or another appropriate Club officer.

General equality or inclusion concerns: Lorna Pugh, Chair | chair@fairfordrfc.co.uk **Concern involving a child or adult at risk:** Sandra Lewis, Club Safeguarding Officer | safeguarding@fairfordrfc.co.uk

A report should include, where possible, what happened, when and where it occurred, who was involved, any witnesses, available evidence and any immediate safety or support needs. People should preserve relevant messages, emails, photographs or social-media material and avoid sharing it more widely than necessary.

11. How FRFC will respond

- Listen and record the concern appropriately.
- Consider immediate safety, welfare, safeguarding and support needs.
- Identify the appropriate route and the person responsible for managing it.
- Act promptly, impartially and proportionately, giving those involved a fair opportunity to provide information.
- Use informal resolution only where it is suitable, safe and agreed; serious matters will not be minimised or mediated inappropriately.
- Refer matters to the Club complaints or disciplinary process, the RFU, safeguarding services, police or another authority where required.
- Explain the next steps and communicate an outcome as far as confidentiality and data protection allow.
- Take steps to prevent retaliation and review whether wider learning or action is needed.

Possible outcomes include advice, education, an apology or restorative action, changes to arrangements, a warning, conditions on involvement, suspension, termination of membership or volunteering, referral to another body, or another proportionate action permitted by Club and RFU procedures.

12. Confidentiality and records

Information will be handled as confidentially as possible and shared on a need-to-know basis. Absolute confidentiality cannot be promised where information must be shared to protect someone, investigate fairly, comply with the law or meet RFU requirements. Records will be factual, relevant, secure and retained in line with the Club's data-protection arrangements.

13. Reporting to the RFU and external agencies

The RFU provides an online route for reporting discrimination and inclusion concerns. A report may be made directly to the RFU where appropriate, including where the matter cannot be resolved safely through the Club:

[England Rugby – Report an issue](#)

In an emergency, or where a crime or immediate danger is suspected, contact the police on 999. Safeguarding concerns must also follow the FRFC Safeguarding Policy and the current RFU safeguarding reporting pathway.

14. Breaches of this policy

A breach may be addressed under the relevant FRFC code, complaints, disciplinary, safeguarding or employment process and, where applicable, RFU Regulation 19. Conduct may be referred to the RFU or another body even where it occurs away from Club premises if it is connected with rugby or could affect safety, welfare, confidence in the Club or the reputation of the game.

15. Monitoring and review

The Committee will review themes from concerns, feedback, participation and accessibility without unnecessarily identifying individuals. It will consider whether policies, facilities, communications, training or decision-making should change.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if the law, RFU guidance or Club arrangements change. The Committee may consult members, volunteers and relevant community groups as part of the review.

16. Related FRFC documents

- Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Statement
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure
- Safeguarding Policy and reporting procedure
- Social Media guidance
- Data Protection and Privacy arrangements

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Official reference points

[RFU Inclusion & Diversity](#)

[RFU Regulation 19 – Discipline](#)

[Equality Act 2010 – protected characteristics](#)