



Equality Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect and that Southend United Football Club is equally accessible to all.

Southend United Football Club acknowledges that it is responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout the Club at every level to ensure that football belongs to and is enjoyed by anyone who wants to participate in it.

Southend United Football Club in all its activities, will not discriminate, or in any way treat anyone less favourably, on grounds of any of the 9 protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Race/Ethnicity
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Religion or Belief
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Maternity and Paternity

Southend United Football Club also recognises gender identity, low socio-economic status, homelessness and refugee and asylum seeker status may also lead to some members of the community being treated less favourably and will endeavour to support these groups in line with this policy.

Southend United Football Club is an equal opportunities club and is committed to promoting equality by treating people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and by providing access and opportunities for all members of the community to take part in and enjoy our activities.

Southend United Football Club will not tolerate harassment, bullying, abuse or victimisation of an individual, which for the purposes of this policy and the actions and sanctions applicable is regarded as discrimination. This includes sexual or racially based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal. We will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate action in whatever context it occurs, and we are committed to the development of a programme of on-going training and awareness raising events and activities in order to promote equality and the eradication of discrimination within the club and within football.

Southend United Football Club is committed to a policy of equal treatment of all members and requires all members to abide and adhere to this policy and the requirements of the *The Equality Act 2010. (As amended from time to time)

Southend United Football Club commits itself to the immediate investigation of any claims, when it is brought to their attention, of discrimination on the above grounds and where such is found to be the case, a requirement that the practice stop, and sanctions imposed as appropriate.

Southend United Football Club will do all they can to achieve and maintain the statements in this policy and will review it annually and in the event of any changes to Equality legislation, the FA's Equality Policy or the Clubs Equality Policy.

This policy is fully supported by the Southend United Football Club Board and the Senior Safeguarding Officer who is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

To report an incident of discrimination please contact our General Enquiries number on 01702 304 050 or email info@southend-united.co.uk. Match day incidents should be reported to the nearest steward or [reported anonymously via the Kick It Out app](#) or our home match day text alert number on 07701 331606.

***Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act came into force in April 2010 providing a modern, single legal framework with clear, streamlined law to more effectively tackle disadvantage and discrimination. The Equality Act was introduced to strengthen protection, advance equality and simplify the law. Its purpose is to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not and foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not.

These characteristics, known as 'Protected Characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (man or woman) and sexual orientation.

It is essential that all staff at Southend United Football Club have a clear understanding of the following terms (as contained on the Equality and Human Rights glossary list):

Associate discrimination: Where a victim of discrimination does not have a protected characteristic, but, is discriminated against because of their association with someone who does, eg. The parent of a disabled child.

Direct discrimination: Less favourable treatment of a person compared with another person because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination: The use of an apparently neutral practice, provision or criterion which puts people with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage compared with others who do not share that characteristic.

Harassment: Unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or the effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.

Perceptive discrimination: The belief that someone has a protected characteristic, whether or not they do have it.

Positive action: Refers to a range of lawful actions that seek to overcome or minimise disadvantages (e.g. in employment opportunities) that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs.

Positive discrimination: Treating someone with a protected characteristic more favourably to counteract the effects of past discrimination. It is generally not lawful although the duty to make reasonable adjustments is an exception where treating a disabled person more favourably may be required by law.

Victimisation: Subjecting a person to detriment because they have done a protected act or there is a belief that they have done a protected act i.e. bringing proceedings under the Act; giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the Act; doing any other thing for the purposes or in connection with the Act; making an allegation that a person has contravened the Act.

Further information and guidance on the Equality Act 2010 can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>