

# Equal Opportunities Policy

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## INTRODUCTION

The Football League (EFL) is responsible for setting the standards, values and expectations of all Clubs in relation to equality, inclusion and diversity. Football is for everyone; it belongs to, and should be enjoyed by anyone who wants to participate in it, whether as a player, official, staff member or spectator.

The aim of Blackpool Football Club & Academy's Equality Policy is to promote our own equality objectives and in doing so, help to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect. All Blackpool Football Club & Academy representatives should abide and adhere to this Policy and to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. In doing so, we are working towards being legally compliant in relation to equality legislation.

## OUR AIM

Blackpool Football Club & Academy's commitment is to promote inclusion and to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership race, nationality, ethnicity (race), religion or belief, ability or disability, pregnancy and maternity and to encourage equal opportunities. These are known as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010.

This Policy is fully supported by the Board of Blackpool Football Club & and Alex Cowdy (Chief Executive) is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

Blackpool Football Club & Academy will ensure that it treats everyone fairly and with respect and that it will provide access and opportunities for all members of the community to take part in, and enjoy, its activities. Every staff member, Board member, official, spectator, fan and visiting teams can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to work and watch football in an environment without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

Blackpool Football Club & Academy is committed to equality, inclusion and anti-discrimination as part of The Football League's (EFL) Code of Practice. Blackpool Football Club & Academy will commit to a programme of raising awareness and educating, investigating concerns and applying relevant and proportionate sanctions, campaigning, widening diversity and representation and promoting diverse role models, which we believe are all key actions to promote inclusion and eradicate discrimination within football. Blackpool Football Club & Academy has established a working group to include representatives from across the organisation to ensure compliance with, and to review legislation, policies and procedures. This Equality Policy will be reviewed and updated, if required, on an annual basis.

## THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

In April 2010, the Equality Act 2010 received Royal Assent. The Equality Act 2010 is a new law which harmonises where possible, and in some cases extends, protection from discrimination. It applies throughout the UK and came into force in October 2010.

Discrimination refers to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the 'protected characteristics'.

## WHAT ARE THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS?

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Pregnancy and maternity (including paternity)
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' a protected characteristic. This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or with someone who is assumed to have it.

## FORMS OF DISCRIMINATORY BEHAVIOUR

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from disability
- Harassment
- Victimisation
- Bullying

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Staff complaints will follow the procedure, set out in the Equal Opportunities Policy, and Staff Handbook. Fans and other customers should use existing procedures e.g. Customer Charter. All complaints must be made in writing.

**Signed by Steve Edwards (Club Secretary), with approval by the Board of Blackpool Football Club**

