

## Equity and Diversity

**RFL takes its commitment to Equity and Diversity seriously and this is reflected in the fact that as a sport we have achieved the Intermediate level of the Sport England Equality Standard: a Framework for Sport and are the first Governing Body of Sport to be ranked in the Stonewall Top 100 Employers. The RFL has earned a reputation for being a leading sport in terms of Equality and Diversity and as such share our learning and expertise throughout and beyond the game. The values of the game of Rugby League; uncompromising, inclusive, passionate family game reflect our commitment to creating a sport for all.**

Equity is about fairness. Each club is responsible for setting the standards, vision and values that should apply throughout the organisation and game by ensuring that discrimination in sport is tackled, barriers identified and overcome and current inequalities in participation across the wider game are addressed. Rugby League is a game for everyone to enjoy equally and clubs have a responsibility to ensure they are inclusive, welcoming and respect and value the rights, dignity and worth of every person

In order to achieve equity, it should be recognised that in some instances, unequal distribution of effort and resources may be required. This may be necessary when sections of society are faced with barriers that prevent or restrict their participation in Rugby League in its widest sense.

Equality is also about legal protection for people in terms of employment and delivery of good and services by protecting people from being discriminated against on the grounds of actual or perceived membership to one of the protected characteristics as defined by the 2010 Equality Act; sex, gender identity, race, religion and faith (including no faith), disability, age, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, maternity and paternity.

Diversity is recognising, valuing and respecting the diversity of each individual. Diversity encompasses visible and non-visible differences which may include, but are not limited to, differences protected under the Equality Act.

### **What are the benefits of Equity and Diversity?**

1. It makes good business sense – an inclusive and welcoming club is more likely to attract and retain a wider talent pool of players, coaches, employees and spectators. Increased participation results in increased revenue for the club. A club for a reputation for inclusion is also more likely to attract funding, grants and a wider range of sponsorship opportunities.
2. Legal responsibility – clubs must comply with legislation, RFL RESPECT code of conduct and Tackle IT! failure to do so may result in legal proceedings which could be costly to the club in terms of possible fines as well as a damaging loss of reputation
3. Moral and social arguments – a club that is reflective of the community in which it is based is more likely to be able to respond to diverse need and so become a community club rather than simply a club situated within a community. It's morally the right thing to do.

### **Club responsibilities:**

- Zero tolerance towards any incidents of discrimination prejudice and abuse
- Encourage reporting of unacceptable behaviour and language by spectators, player and club staff and when appropriate report to the RFL compliance, safeguarding or Equity departments
- To ensure the club Equity Policy reflects the current legislation and the principles of the RFL Equity Policy and the club has a proactive approach to implementing the Equity policy
- To embed Equity and Diversity within the club strategy and business plans
- To be aware of the local demographics and to develop targeted actions to address under representation at the club in terms of players, coaches, club staff and volunteers and spectators

- To increase awareness and knowledge of Equity and Diversity through training and accessing information and support
- To have a proactive approach to creating an inclusive and welcoming club from policies, procedures, facilities to a positive and welcoming attitude by all clubs staff

### **RFL Support**

- Individual guidance and support from the RFL around policy development, engaging with diverse communities, implementing Tackle IT!, education and training needs and signposting to other organisations that can support the work of the club
- Resources developed by RFL and available on the RFL website in the Equity and Diversity section – this includes:
  - Tackle IT! programme (suite of seven posters, DVD and education pack)
  - Guidance on tackling homophobic language and behaviour
  - Disability Guidance for clubs
  - Rainbow Forum – LGBT network
  - Research and recommendations for clubs wishing to engage with both Asian Muslim and LGBT young people
  - Fact sheets on faith and sport, disability, women and newly emerging communities
  - Multi-faith calendar to help plan events
  - Video of key Rugby terms in British Signed Language
  - Links to other useful organisations
  - Newsletters
- Two free places for club staff on each RFL Equality and Diversity one day training course
- Disability awareness training for club staff as part of the disability access audit process

### **Contact details:**

#### **RFL**

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[www.therfl.co.uk/equitydiversity](http://www.therfl.co.uk/equitydiversity)

#### **Women Sport and Fitness Foundation (WSFF)**

[www.wsf.org.uk](http://www.wsf.org.uk)

#### **Sporting Equals (promoting ethnic diversity across sport)**

[www.sportingequals.org.uk](http://www.sportingequals.org.uk)

#### **English Federation of Disability Sports (EFDS)**

[www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)

#### **Pride Sports (a social enterprise supporting LGBT sports groups)**

[www.pridesports.org.uk](http://www.pridesports.org.uk)

#### **Stonewall (a campaigning organisation for justice and equality for lesbian gay and bisexual people)**

[www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

**Youth Sport Trust ( a charity that aims to give all children a sporting start to life**

[www.youthsporttrust.org](http://www.youthsporttrust.org)