



SUTTON UNITED FOUNDATION

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Sutton United Foundation ('the Foundation') is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our staff and volunteers, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our staff and volunteers to be truly representative of all sections of society and our participants, and for each member of staff and volunteer to feel respected and able to give their best.

The Foundation - in providing services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of participants and of the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in the activities we perform for the Foundation
- not unlawfully discriminate, respecting the protected characteristics described in the Equality Act 2010, being age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination.

The Foundation commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion as they are good practice and make business sense
- Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff and volunteers are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training staff and volunteers about their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Responsibilities include staff and volunteers conducting themselves to help the Foundation provide equal opportunities and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff and volunteers should understand that they, as well as the Foundation, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful

discrimination, in the course of their services, against fellow staff and volunteers, participants, suppliers and the public

- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by staff and volunteers, participants, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the Foundation's activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to instant dismissal.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff and volunteers, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so that their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the Foundation's efficiency.
- Decisions concerning staff and volunteers being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Review practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitoring how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

In April 2025 the Supreme Court ruled that references to “sex” and “woman” in the Equality Act 2010 must be interpreted strictly as referring to a person's sex assigned at birth, not gender identity. The Football Association banned transgender women from women's football with effect from June 2025.

The ruling does not require services to exclude trans people from all single-sex spaces. It does, however, clarify that if a service operates a single-sex space, for example a gym changing room, then exclusion is based on biological sex and not legal sex. Neither the court nor the government has said how “biological sex” would be defined or proven.

A service provider may operate a single-sex space on the basis of privacy or safety of users. To base this on biological sex must be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim – for example, the safety of women in a group for abuse survivors. This means that service

providers may still operate trans-inclusive policies, but they may open themselves to legal challenge.

Adopted by the Trustees on: 8 November 2021

Reviewed by Dave Farebrother FEI CEng on: 6 August 2025

Next review: August 2028