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Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Haywards Heath RFC believes that all participants in rugby union regardless of age, sex, ability or disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, size, or sexual orientation have the right to protection from harm.

Promoting diversity and inclusion is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective, each player, coach, match official, volunteer, management committee member and volunteer should play their full part.

Desired Outcomes of the Policy

- a) Promoting equality of opportunity, fostering a culture of inclusivity and good relations for all.
- b) Promoting a harmonious environment in which everyone is treated with respect and in line with the core values of trust, excellence, enjoyment, teamwork and inclusivity.
- c) Preventing occurrences of unlawful or unfair direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- d) Preventing occurrences of associative discrimination and discrimination by perception.
- e) Fulfilling HHRFC legal and regulatory obligations under equality legislation.
- f) Enabling and supporting transparent challenge and positive engagement with all stakeholders who raise concerns in relation to negative experience and impact as a result of perceived discrimination and/or prejudice, embracing the benefits of diversity and ensuring that a welcoming and inclusive environment is created.

Legal Requirements

HHRFC is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its stakeholders and recognises its legal obligations under – and will abide by the requirements of – the Equality Act 2010 and any relevant equivalent legislation (as amended) in any UK jurisdiction, and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to the Club.

HHRFC will uphold the principle that the welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount and prioritise safeguarding of children and adults at risk in line with UK legislation (including the Care Act 2014, Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and supporting statutory guidance), HHRFC safeguarding policy and our commitment to safeguarding and protecting those who may be additionally vulnerable because of equality and diversity issues.



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HHRFC Policy Principles

1. HHRFC is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our CB and club membership, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

2. The aim is for our club membership to be truly representative of all sections of society and our local population, and for every player, coach, referee, volunteer, or other member to feel respected and able to give their best.

3. HHRFC is committed to eradicating unlawful discrimination of club members or the public in a rugby setting.

4. The policy's purpose is to: –

- Provide equality, fairness, and respect for everyone engaged in rugby activity
- Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics of age, disability, gender identity, marriage, and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In addition, HHRFC recognises that not all disability and difference is visible and may include communication and learning differences (including but not limited to Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Dyslexia etc.), mental health issues and the impact of past/current trauma.
- In addition, HHRFC recognises that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that all stakeholders are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds.
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in selection and playing decisions, spectator behaviour at matches, officiating, club governance, dealing with discipline, safeguarding, training or other developmental opportunities.

5. HHRFC commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the clubhouse and, on and around the pitch.
- Create a club environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all participants are recognised and valued. All persons engaged in rugby activity should understand they, as well as their club, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their rugby activity, against fellow players, match officials, volunteers, and the public.



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HHRFC will: –

- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination by fellow rugby participants, the public and any others in the course of the club's rugby activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could lead to serious disciplinary action and lengthy suspension from rugby activity. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both a safeguarding matter and 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 rugby participants, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised.
- Review practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and update them and this policy to take account of changes in the law.