



Olney RFC

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Statement of Intent

Valuing diversity, reducing inequality and ensuring all people are treated with dignity and respect are fundamental to Olney Rugby Football Club. The club is inclusive and all are welcome.

Olney RFC is committed to building an environment that celebrates diversity and tackles all forms of discrimination. We will promote equality of opportunity, working to be a role model on equality issues. The commitment outlined in this policy covers all aspects and sections of the club and it is expected that all members, officers, coaches, parents/carers and volunteers who work on behalf of, represent or engage with Olney RFC will adhere to the principles of this policy.

Everyone involved in Olney RFC plays a part in making sure all aspects of our activities are inclusive and welcoming of diversity. Olney RFC is committed to ensuring that all people irrespective of their protected characteristics of age, disability, colour, race, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, nationality, religion or sexual orientation have a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in all our activities.

Olney RFC is fully committed to the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination and values the differences that a diverse membership brings to the club. This policy has been produced to try to prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect. Olney RFC will uphold its internal values of teamwork, respect, enjoyment, discipline and sportsmanship.

The implementation of this policy and completion of any action areas will be the responsibility of the Executive Committee who will involve all members/coaches from all sections of the club. It is the responsibility of everyone involved in Olney RFC to ensure the principles of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are understood and implemented.

2. Legal Requirements and Definitions

The commitments outlined within this policy are underpinned by Olney RFC's legal obligations. Olney RFC takes all claims of inappropriate behaviour, bullying, harassment and/or discrimination, whether direct or indirect by anyone involved with

Olney RFC seriously. These claims will be dealt with through the club's disciplinary procedures.

Discrimination can take many forms including verbal, physical and online abuse. It is necessary for people to be aware of the different types of discrimination and the impact their actions have on others.

- Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.
- Discrimination by association is direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic (e.g. carers of disabled people);
- Discrimination by perception is direct discrimination against someone because the other person thinks they possesses a particular protected characteristic (e.g. a heterosexual man who is perceived to be gay);
- Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is applied such that it would be to the detriment of a considerably larger proportion of the relevant group to which the individual belongs than to others. This would not be objectively justifiable and would be to the individual's detriment. An example of indirect disability discrimination could be requiring interview candidates to quickly read and interpret a long piece of text that could put people with dyslexia at a disadvantage.
- Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct. Members can complain of behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.
- Victimisation is considered to take place where someone is treated less favourably than others because they have alleged or supported a complaint or grievance or have given evidence in relation to a complaint.
- Bullying may be defined as behaviour which is offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting or an abuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure. Bullying is not limited to but can include racist, sexist and homophobic language and/or abuse.

Olney RFC regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation as serious misconduct and could lead to a temporary suspension or a permanent ban from the club without notice. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures including disciplinary action may be brought against any individual who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person.

3. Expectations

As an organisation Olney RFC:

- Will inclusively welcome all to the club. For the avoidance of doubt membership is open to all without discrimination and may only be refused where admission to membership for good cause such as conduct or character likely to bring the Club or the sport into disrepute and no person shall be denied membership of the Club on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, nationality, creed, colour, age, disability, sex, occupation, sexual orientation, religion, political or other beliefs.

- Aims to create an environment in which everyone is respected and valued for the diversity and individuality they bring;
- Will not tolerate or allow to go unchallenged any form of discrimination, harassment and bullying by any individual towards other individuals whilst engaged in any Olney RFC activities;
- Reserves the right to withdraw membership of anyone who participates in discriminatory behaviour. This decision will only be taken after a full investigation in the circumstances;
- Fully support members who speak out about discriminatory behaviour they have witnessed or experienced through reporting.
- Expectations of acceptable behaviour, as stated in this policy, apply equally to visiting teams and officials. Olney RFC reserves the right to raise breaches of this policy by members of visiting teams with their club or constituent body, as appropriate.

Olney RFC expects everyone involved in activity connected to Olney RFC to:

- Fully adopt and embrace the ethos of equity and diversity as outlined in this policy;
- Be respectful of all others and not discriminate, bully, harass or victimise anyone;
- Respect individual difference based on any characteristic;
- Where necessary explain the policy and its implications to others, including children;
- Be role models for everyone involved in Olney RFC activities;
- Challenge, where appropriate, and report all forms of discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation to the Club Discipline Secretary or any member of the Club Executive Committee so the appropriate action can be taken, and
- Assist Olney RFC in any investigation and provide accurate unbiased information.

Exemptions to the policy

- Olney RFC reserves the right to limit both rugby and non-rugby related physical activities to persons of specific age, gender or disability groups where this is necessary to ensure equitable, safe and equal competition.

4. Breach of Policy

As stated throughout this policy, Olney RFC takes seriously all cases of harassment, bullying, discriminations and victimisation. Any member, parent, or volunteer who works on behalf of, represent or engages with Olney RFC who display any behaviour which is contrary to this policy or its intent will be subjected to the appropriate disciplinary procedure. Any individual may raise a complaint and no member or volunteer will be penalised for doing so unless it is without foundation and not made in good faith.

Reference:

Club's Codes of Conduct,
Disciplinary and Procedures Policy