



# GILLINGHAM FOOTBALL CLUB LTD

MEMS Priestfield Stadium, Redfern Avenue, Gillingham, Kent ME7 4DD

Tel: 01634 300000 Fax: 01634 850986

www.gillinghamfootballclub.com www.priestfield.com www.bluesrockcafe.com



## Equality Policy

The Football League 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 Gillingham Football Club 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 Gillingham Football Club 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.

Gillingham Football Club's commitment is to promote inclusion and to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion & beliefs, sex or sexual orientation. These are known as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010.

This Equality Policy is fully supported by the Board of Gillingham Football Club with Chairman Paul Scally who is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Gillingham Football Club 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.

### Complaints and compliance

Gillingham Football Club regards all of the forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) behaviour described in the Appendix, as unacceptable and is concerned to ensure that individuals feel able to raise any bona fide grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, member or volunteer, spectator or fan who is found, after a full investigation, to have violated the Equality Policy.

### Positive Action and Training

Gillingham Football Club is committed to equality inclusion and anti-discrimination as part of The Football League's Code of Practice. Gillingham Football Club 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. This Equality Policy will be reviewed and updated, if required, on an annual basis.



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## **APPENDIX – Relevant legislation and forms of unacceptable discrimination**

### ***Legal rights***

Discrimination has been legally defined through a series of legislative acts, including the Race Relations Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act 2006.

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'. Under the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are defined as age (employment only until 2012), disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status (employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' a protected characteristic<sup>1</sup>. 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 discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:***

#### **Direct discrimination**

Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

#### **Indirect discrimination**

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

#### **Discrimination arising from disability**

When a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified, this is unlawful. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

#### **Harassment**

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

#### **Victimisation**

It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

#### **Bullying**

Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.

<sup>1</sup> The exception to this is pregnancy and maternity, which does not include protection by association or assumption – a woman is only protected from discrimination on grounds of her own pregnancy.