



## **Equality Policy**

Bristol Rovers Football Club acknowledges that the English Football League (EFL) has a responsibility to set the standards, values and expectations for all Clubs in relation to equality, inclusion, diversity, abuse, harassment, bullying and anti-victimisation both physical and verbal. It is the Club's belief that football should be accessible to everyone who wishes to participate in it whether as a player, official, member of staff or fan.

The aim of this policy is to promote, both internally and externally, the Club's equality and diversity objectives and in turn to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect and that Bristol Rovers Football Club is equally accessible to all; it is considered a Club of choice. All those operating within the footprint of the Memorial Stadium and other venues associated with Bristol Rovers Football Club be they employees, volunteers, fans or contractors should abide and adhere to this Policy and to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. This not only demonstrates legal compliance but also a positive mindset and demonstration of fairness and respect to each other.

Bristol Rovers Football Club's commitment is to promote inclusion and to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of sex, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation and to truly encourage equal opportunities (the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010).

This Policy is fully supported and endorsed by the Board of Bristol Rovers Football Club, the Senior Safeguarding Officer and the Chair, Mr. Steve Hamer who is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

The aim of Bristol Rovers Football Club is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect. The Club will provide access and opportunities for everyone, both internally and externally, to maximise their opportunities to take part in and enjoy the activities that are taking place. All fans, members of staff, visiting teams, volunteers, officials and contractors can be assured that their views, rights, dignity and feelings are respected and they are able to work and watch activities that are taking place in a positive environment without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

### **Complaints and compliance**

Bristol Rovers Football Club treats all forms of discriminatory behaviour (the list below is not exhaustive) as unacceptable and wishes to ensure that individuals and groups are able to raise any grievances or complaints relating to such behaviour without fear of being adversely affected or subsequently victimised. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, volunteer, fan or contractor who is found, after a fair and full investigation, to have breached this policy.

### **Positive Action and Training**

Bristol Rovers Football Club is committed to supporting the EFL's Code of Practice and to demonstrate its wish to comply and so will commit to a programme of raising awareness and education. It will also investigate concerns and if necessary apply proportionate sanctions plus it will seek to promote role models and widen the understanding of diversity issues throughout the Club and the wider surrounding communities all in an effort to promote inclusion and eradicate discrimination and victimisation within the football family.

This Equality Policy will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis or sooner if required.

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

**The Equality Act** came into force in April 2010 providing a modern, single legal framework with clear, streamlined law to more effectively tackle disadvantage and discrimination. The Equality Act was introduced to strengthen protection, advance equality and simplify the law. Its purpose is to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not and foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not.

These characteristics, known as 'Protected Characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Be aware that pregnancy and maternity does not include protection by association or assumption – a woman is therefore only protected from discrimination on the grounds of her own pregnancy.

It is essential that all staff at Bristol Rovers Football Club have a clear understanding of the following terms (as contained on the Equality and Human Rights glossary list):

**Associate discrimination:** Where a victim of discrimination does not have a protected characteristic, but, is discriminated against because of their association with someone who does.

**Direct discrimination:** Less favourable treatment of a person compared with another person because of a protected characteristic.

**Indirect discrimination:** The use of an apparently neutral practice, provision or criterion, which puts people with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage compared with others who do not share that characteristic.

**Harassment:** Unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or the effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.

**Perceptive discrimination:** The belief that someone has a protected characteristic, whether or not they do have it.

**Discrimination arising from disability:** This is when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified which is unlawful. This mode of discrimination relates solely to disability.

**Positive action:** Refers to a range of lawful actions that seek to overcome or minimise disadvantages (e.g. in employment opportunities) that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs.

**Positive discrimination:** Treating someone with a protected characteristic more favourably to counteract the effects of past discrimination. It is generally not lawful although the duty to make reasonable adjustments is an exception where treating a disabled person more favourably may be required by law.

**Victimisation:** Subjecting a person to detrimental treatment because they have done a protected act or there is a belief that they have done a protected act i.e. bringing proceedings under the Act; giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the Act; doing any other thing for the purposes or in connection with the Act; making an allegation that a person has contravened the Act.

**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.

Further information and guidance on the Equality Act 2010 can be found at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

**Signed – Chairman**

**Date**

