



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

2009

Equal Opportunities Policy

1.0 Introduction

Maidstone Football Club are committed to providing equal opportunities for players, members, supporters, visitors and contractors and will not tolerate any discriminatory behaviour with respect to any of the following:

- Colour
- Ethnic origin
- Gender
- Creed
- Marital status
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Other

2.0 Aims

Maidstone Rugby Club will continually develop strategies and procedures to tackle the varying forms of discrimination, which may occur. These will broadly fit into the following categories:

1. Direct discrimination – where a person is not treated equally due to any of the categories listed above.
2. Indirect discrimination – where a requirement, situation or condition, which is applied for all groups, has an adverse effect on one or more groups.
3. Harassment – where someone is subjected to unwanted conduct, i.e. unwelcome sexual attention or racial harassment.
4. Victimisation – where someone is treated less favourably due to action taken against others.
5. Segregation – where someone is segregated due to his or her beliefs, attitudes or opinions.

3.0 Roles and responsibilities

It is the duty of all individuals and groups associated with Maidstone Football Club to avoid discriminatory practices themselves to condone and discourage discriminatory practices from others.

Maidstone Football Club will encourage those who wish to report instances of discrimination and provide a confidential process by which all discriminatory matters can be dealt with by means of the formal Complaints Procedure.

The Executive Committee will be responsible for equal opportunity monitoring and the point of contact for those who may wish to discuss any discriminatory practice informally in the first instance.

Maidstone Football Club will take action against anyone who is in breach of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

4.0 Recruitment

Maidstone Football Club will offer equity for access to all its teams and will encourage the recruitment of players from the widest possible audience.

All players will be made aware of the Equal Opportunities Policy via the Player Pack produced for each player.

All materials used for marketing and promotional purposes will be subject to evaluation prior to issue to make sure that they do not contain anything which could be considered discriminatory or offensive to individuals or groups.

Process at Hearing

Make the individual as comfortable as possible – remember this is not a court of law

A designated member of the Disciplinary Committee must take notes at the hearing as a true and accurate record.

The Chair of the Disciplinary Panel must read out the alleged offence and ask the player for admission or non-admission.

Read out the written report of the incident.

Provide the individual with the chance to explain what happened in their own words.

Ask any representatives present to make any mitigating or supporting comments.

Ask the individual to withdraw whilst they discuss and agree sanctions as appropriate.

2.3.3 Sanctions

The Disciplinary Panel will have the powers to carry out the following:

Make the sanctions in accordance with the recommended sanctions of the IRB as contained in Appendix 2 of the RFU Handbook. Youth Rugby recommended sanctions can be found in Appendix 3 of the RFU Handbook.

Take no further action

To take no action but refer to the Kent RFU Discipline Sub-Committee

Issue a caution

Suspend any individual for an agreed period of time

Terminate membership

Any other penalties as deemed suitable to the offence committed.

2.3.4 Appeals

All individuals should be given the option to appeal against any sanctions given.

The Appellant shall serve notice of appeal in writing, stating the grounds of the appeal. The Chair shall appoint two other Officers of the club to serve on the Appeal Panel (none of whom served on the original Disciplinary Committee) and shall advise the Appellant of the appeal hearing, which should be no more than 14 days after the original hearing. A member of the original panel that heard the case may attend the appeal hearing as an observer. The Appeal Panel has the power to quash a finding and any sanction imposed by the original Disciplinary Committee. It may also substitute an alternative finding and/or reduce or increase the original sanction. There shall be no further right of appeal from this appeal.

The Appellant shall remain under suspension pending the outcome of the appeal hearing.