

EQUALITY POLICY

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

ESF Events strive to ensure that individuals from different ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations or gender identity don't face barriers to participating and enjoying sport. Everyone should have equal access to youth sport.

Aim:

At ESF we are committed to breaking down barriers, not just for players, but also for ESF staff, volunteers, referees, coaches and spectators.

ESF aims to:

- Identify boundaries within youth sport that prevent individuals from different ethnicities and LGBTQ individuals from engaging with the sport and ensure that every opportunity is given to enable members of gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans communities to participate and progress within their chosen area of participation.
- Combat all forms of racial, homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic language and behaviour. whether by spectators, players, coaches or other people in attendance.
- Encourage and support current and future generations of participants from all communities to join youth sport, whether as players, match officials, supporters, coaches or administrators/volunteers.

At ESF we support the Kick It Out Campaign and will take the necessary action to kick all forms of discrimination out of youth sports.

Being LGBTQ+ isn't a safeguarding risk, it's how others in our society may behave towards a young person who categorises themselves as LGBTQ+ that may cause risk.

Understanding the difference between sexuality and gender identity

It's important not to confuse sexuality and gender identity. People who are referred to as the sexuality or gender identity that doesn't belong to them can find it distressing and it can result in a feeling of being misunderstood or having their identity rejected.

Sexuality is a type of sexual orientation, such as gay, lesbian, bisexual. Sometimes people who are LGBTQ+ may also be trans, or may be gender fluid, but that's not always the case.

The term 'trans' describes people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. It doesn't always relate to their sexuality.

One's sexuality and gender identity is a truly individual concept and may differ from person to person, which is why communication with young people is so important.

If you're not sure, and a young person has already revealed their identity to you, it's sometimes advisable to simply ask, in an appropriate way and setting.

Banter or bullying behaviour

Banter is often passed off as being acceptable within a sports setting. However, where is the line between banter and bullying behaviour? Banter may not include all the same elements as bullying, but it doesn't mean it is acceptable.

All language that is upsetting, offensive, threatening, abusive or violent should be challenged and dealt with appropriately. Just because someone uses certain language to refer to themselves, it doesn't necessarily mean it's acceptable for them to use this language towards others. If you think something is banter or a joke, it doesn't mean others will feel the same.

Correct use of pronouns

It's important to use the correct personal pronouns when talking to, or referencing, anyone. This ensures that you're creating an inclusive and welcoming environment

You can often identify someone's personal pronoun by listening to their language and how they reference themselves. Be led by the person, never assume their personal pronoun.

If you are unsure of the correct pronoun to use, it's an idea to use gender neutral terms such as they/them or just their name, until you are sure. More information on the correct use of pronouns can be found on the [Pronouns.org website](https://www.pronouns.org) or [Stonewall's International Pronouns Day webpage](https://www.stonewall.org/uk/what-we-do/advocacy-and-education/stonewall-international-pronouns-day). You can also find a full glossary of LGBTQ+ terms on [Stonewall's website](https://www.stonewall.org/uk)

The procedure:

Any concerns of a discriminatory nature need to be reported to ESF Events Officials.

- If the issue is one of poor practice ESF will either:
 - a. Deal with the matters itself or
 - b. Seek advice from ESF Designated Safeguarding Lead
- If the concern is more serious - they will contact the ESF Events Designated Safeguarding Lead first, then contact the relevant National Governing Body and/or the Police.

When reporting an incident of social media discrimination, screenshots or links to the offending posts are recommended in order to assist in taking up the issue with the relevant social media platform or authority.

WHO TO CONTACT:

- ESF Events Safeguarding phone: 07947 313302 (for the duration of the festival)
- ESF Events Safeguarding email: safeguarding@esfevents.co.uk

- The appropriate National Governing Body; The Football Association (FA), Scottish Youth Football Association (SYFA), England Netball, Rugby Football Union (RFU) or Rugby Football League (RFL).
- The Police or Children's Social Care
- If you've seen discrimination, don't turn away. Report it to; . [Kick It Out](#) no longer provide a telephone number on their website
- NSPCC 24 hour Helpline 0808 800 5000 or text 88858 or email help@nspcc.org.uk
- Child Protection in Sport Unit via cpsu@nspcc.org.uk
- Butlin's or Haven Resort Safety team on resort