

Equality Statement



The Pony Club is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all members, parents, staff, volunteers, officials and stakeholders, irrespective of age, gender reassignment, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, race, ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality) or sexual orientation. These are referred to as “Protected Characteristics” under the Equality Act 2010. The Pony Club includes individuals from all socio-economic backgrounds in the scope of our protection.

We tackle discrimination through positive action and the promotion of equality, by challenging bullying and stereotyping and by creating an environment which champions respect, consideration and dignity for all.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to The Pony Club feel proud of their identity and have the ability to participate fully in Pony Club activities.

The Pony Club believes that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all. Our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination, harassment and bullying applies to all areas of our work and to all who are associated with us.

The Pony Club is an equal opportunities employer. We do not discriminate in our own employment practices or policies or in the servicing of our equestrian sport and activities.

With a valued membership of tens of thousands of young people, it is our duty to promote their safety and welfare. This includes preventing their exposure to any type of abuse, bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour. Through working with British Equestrian (BEF) fellow member bodies and through education and equality and diversity campaigns, our aim is to be inclusive and respectful in dealings with others, to the benefit of all.

Equality Policy

The Pony Club endorses the principle of sports equality and strives to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in Pony Club Sport and Activities, whether as participants, team members, spectators, volunteers, coaches or staff:

- has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, irrespective of age, gender, gender reassignment, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, race, ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality) sexual orientation and socio-economic background.
- can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected and in particular that they are able to enjoy all Pony Club activities without the threat of intimidation, bullying, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

Legal obligations

The Pony Club is committed to avoid and eliminate unfair discrimination of any kind and will, under no circumstances, condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero-

tolerance approach to discrimination, bullying and harassment. Examples of the relevant legislation and the behaviours in question are given in the Appendix.

Positive action

The principle of Sports Equality goes further than simply complying with legislation. It entails taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers – whether real or perceived – that restrict the opportunity for all sections of the community to participate equally and fully.

The Pony Club will therefore seek to institute, support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access and participation by people from any group that is under-represented.

Implementation: Equality and Diversity Action Plan

The following steps will be taken to publicise this policy and promote sports equality in The Pony Club:

- A copy of this document will be published on The Pony Club website.
- The Pony Club Chairman will take overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is observed.
- The Board of Trustees will take full account of the policy when making decisions regarding Pony Club activities.
- The Pony Club will collaborate fully with surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports and activities.
- The Pony Club will provide access to training for Board Members to raise awareness of both collective and individual responsibilities. Equality and Diversity training for Pony Club coaches and volunteers will be developed and delivered for existing coaches and volunteers and will form a key and on-going part of the induction of new members.
- The Pony Club will incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications.
- The Pony Club will ensure that adequate measures are taken to fulfil the objectives of this policy.
- This policy will apply to all Pony Club Branches and Centres who are expected to:
 - Read and actively implement this policy
 - Ensure that their members and volunteers behave in accordance with the policy, including where appropriate taking disciplinary action under the **Code of Conduct**
 - Ensure that access to membership is open and inclusive
 - Support measures that The Pony Club may initiate which advance the aims of this policy.
- It will be a condition of The Pony Club workforce, paid or unpaid to
 - Read and actively implement this policy
 - Support measures that The Pony Club may initiate which advance the aims of this policy.

Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy.

Employees, members, coaches and volunteers are required to assist and support The Pony Club commitment to provide protection from discrimination, harassment or bullying. This includes reporting immediately any suspected incident of discrimination, harassment or bullying that they

witness, in confidence to the Branch DC, Area Rep, Centre Coordinator, or Senior Leadership team as appropriate so that it can be dealt with expeditiously.

The Board will review all Pony Club activities and initiatives against the aims of the policy on an annual basis, and the Chairman will report formally on this issue at the AGM.

The Board will review the policy at intervals of no more than three years (or when necessary due to changes in legislation) and make appropriate recommendations to the AGM.

The Board will address problems identified as a result of monitoring and review.

Complaints Procedure

The Pony Club aims to ensure that individuals can raise bona fide grievances or complaints without fear of being victimised or penalised.

Any employee, member or volunteer who violates The Pony Club Equality Policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Reporting complaints of discrimination, bullying or harassment

If you have a complaint but are not sure what you should do about it, it is suggested that you talk about your concerns, as soon as possible, with someone who you feel comfortable with. It is suggested that you keep a diary of all incidents, dates and times and any witnesses. Keep any relevant evidence such as notes, texts, social media posts, emails, voicemails, images etc.

After your discussion you or your confidant may agree to try to resolve the matter informally by talking to the offending individual(s) and asking them to stop their offensive behaviour. If this is not possible or appropriate (if the matter is too serious or too awkward), or if you try it and it is not successful, then you should use The Pony Club Resolutions Procedure available on www.pcuk.org. This should also be the procedure used in the event of allegations of discriminatory behaviour being made against The Pony Club itself.

The purpose of The Pony Club resolutions procedure is to ensure that complaints are taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and dealt with fairly and appropriately and recorded accurately. Any investigation of the allegation will be undertaken fairly and objectively and without avoidable delay. We handle complaints in a positive, respectful and pro-active manner and expect resolutions and outcomes to contribute to a process of continuous improvement.

Any person or organisation against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of what is alleged and given the opportunity to present their side of the matter.

Possible outcomes for non-compliance with The Pony Club Equality Policy

Where the violation of the Equality Policy is believed to amount to a criminal offence, the appropriate law enforcement authority will be informed. Those who commit serious acts of discrimination, bullying and/or harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence and can be held personally liable. Employees found to be in breach of the policy will be subject to The Pony Club's in-house disciplinary procedure and sanctions.

In the event that an individual or organisation associated with The Pony Club is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, The Pony Club Board will co-operate fully

with any investigation carried out by the relevant lawful authorities and, subject to the outcome, may consider taking action in relation to the matter concerned.

No one raising a complaint of discrimination, bullying or harassment will be penalised for raising a complaint, even if it is not upheld, unless their complaint was untrue and made in bad faith. Where an unfounded allegation of discrimination, bullying or harassment is made maliciously, this is a serious matter and The Pony Club reserves the right to take appropriate action.

The Pony Club
Board Chairman sign off
DATE

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 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 characteristic¹. 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, or where such treatment is the result of mistakenly thinking an individual has those protected characteristics. This is unlawful. It is also direct discrimination if the less favourable treatment is based on the protected characteristics of a third party with whom the individual associates and not their own protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice that may be equal in the sense that it is applied to all individuals but is indirectly discriminatory in its effect on people who share a certain protected characteristic such as sex or one particular disability group.

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.

In addition to the legally protected characteristics listed above, The Pony Club also includes socio-economic background under its protection from acts of bullying and harassment.

¹ 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.

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.

Bullying

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or abuse of power and influence, which undermines, humiliates or injures the recipient.

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.