

EQUALITY POLICY

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

ESF Events strives to ensure that individuals from different ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations or gender identities do not face barriers to participating in 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 barriers within youth sport that prevent individuals from different ethnicities and LGBTQ+ communities from engaging with sport and ensure that every opportunity is given to enable participation and progression within their chosen area.
- Combat all forms of racial, homophobic, biphobic 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 challenge and remove discrimination from youth sport.
- Being LGBTQ+ is not a safeguarding risk. Risk may arise from the behaviour or actions of others towards a young person who identifies as LGBTQ+, and this will be treated as a safeguarding concern where appropriate.

Understanding sexuality, sex and gender identity

Sexuality and gender identity are distinct concepts and should not be confused. People who are referred to by an identity that does not belong to them may find this distressing and may feel misunderstood or rejected.

Sexuality refers to sexual orientation, such as gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Gender identity refers to a person's internal sense of their gender.

The term transgender describes people whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. Gender identity does not determine sexual orientation.

For the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, the term “sex” refers to biological sex. ESF Events recognises that individuals may identify differently in terms of gender identity and remains fully committed to treating all individuals with dignity, respect and fairness, and to protecting everyone from discrimination or harassment on all protected grounds, including gender reassignment.

One’s sexuality and gender identity are personal and individual. Open, respectful communication with young people is essential. Where appropriate and in a suitable setting, it may be acceptable to ask how a person wishes to be addressed.

Banter or bullying behaviour

Correct use of pronouns

Using correct personal pronouns helps create an inclusive and welcoming environment. Be guided by how individuals refer to themselves. Never assume pronouns. If unsure, use gender-neutral language such as *they/them* or use the person’s name until clarified. Further information can be found via Pronouns.org or Stonewall’s resources.

The procedure

Any concerns of a discriminatory nature must be reported to a member of the ESF Events team. If the issue is poor practice, ESF will either:

- Deal with the matter directly, or
- Seek advice from the ESF Designated Safeguarding Lead

If the concern is serious, ESF will contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and where appropriate the relevant National Governing Body and/or the Police. Evidence such as screenshots or links should be retained when reporting social media-based discrimination.

Who to contact

- ESF Events Safeguarding phone line: **07947 313302** (for the duration of the festival)
- Relevant National Governing Body
- Police or Children’s Social Care
- NSPCC Helpline: **0808 800 5000**, text **88858**, email help@nspcc.org.uk
- Child Protection in Sport Unit: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk
- Resort Safety Team (where applicable)