



**MSP**

UNLOCKING THE POWER  
OF SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## MSP Equality and Diversity Policy 2017 - 2022

### 1. MSP Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

Sport and physical activity has a unique opportunity to 'improve the quality of life for all people', irrespective of age, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief, social status and sexual orientation, across Merseyside.

MSP is the only strategic organisation dedicated to unlocking the power of sport and physical activity, across the whole of Merseyside. We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity, celebrating and valuing diversity, eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including cyber or e-bullying and harassment, and promoting good relations.

The principles of equality and diversity are fundamental to everything that we do as an organisation and embedded in the realisation of all our Strategic Outcomes<sup>1</sup>. We are committed to achieving equality for all by reducing discrimination in employment, service delivery and through our partnerships on the grounds of age, disability gender, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation<sup>2</sup>.

MSP is also committed to working towards ensuring that people are not discriminated against due to their socio economic status (poverty) or because they are care leavers, carers, armed forced veterans and/or people with an offending history<sup>3</sup>.

Ensuring that we meet our legal obligations and wider commitment towards the principles of equality and diversity are embed is the responsibility of both the MSP Advisory Board and Core Team<sup>4</sup>.

MSP also recognise that our position as a strategic organisation provides a unique opportunity to further extend this commitment across our network through relationships with stakeholders, external organisations and partners. The MSP Advisory Board and Core Team accepts the duty to take responsibility for challenging any practice which is in breach of the Equality Act 2010 but also advocating and promoting best practice, across our network of partners.

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<sup>1</sup> MSP Strategic Framework 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Statements for each individual characteristic as detailed in the Equality and Diversity Policy Statement of Liverpool City council – MSPs host organisation.

<sup>3</sup> This commitment is aligned to the Equality and Diversity Policy Statement of Liverpool City Council. At all times the members of the Core Team are subject to and adhere to the policies and procedures of the Council.

<sup>4</sup> MSP's Equality and Diversity Policy is subject to annual review by the MSP Advisory Board. The Policy is underpinned by the MSP Equality Action Plan; this details the specific actions which the Core Team will take in realising the Policy. The Plan is subject to annual review by the Executive Director and the Compliance & Scrutiny Group.

## 2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the MSP Advisory Board and Core Team:

- Prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect<sup>5</sup>, that could potential arise in the realisation of MSPs Strategic Framework 2022 both internally<sup>6</sup> and externally. The organisation is legally required to abide by the Equality Act 2010, including have due regard for adhering to the Public Sector Equality Duty<sup>7</sup>.
- Provides a basis upon which to extend our commitment to adopting the principles of equality and diversity across our network of stakeholders, external organisations and partners. In doing so, the MSP Advisory Board and Core Team accepts the duty to take responsibility for challenging any practice which is breach of the Equality Act 2010 but also advocating and promoting best practice, across our network of partners.
- Work towards addressing those barriers or challenges that may preclude individuals from participating in sport and physical activities that are specifically outside of the scope of the Equality Act 2010. In accepting this morale responsibility, MSP are committed to going beyond the minimum statutory addressing those circumstances, removing barriers, reducing inequalities or challenges<sup>8</sup> that may prevent individuals, groups or communities from having the opportunity to be active every day.

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<sup>5</sup> Direct Discrimination: treating someone less favourable than you would treat others because of a Protected Characteristic:  
Indirect Discrimination: applying a provision, criterion or practice which, on the face of it, applies equally to all but which, in practice can disadvantage individual with a particular Protected Characteristic. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.

<sup>6</sup> At all times the members of the Core Team are subject to and adhere to the policies and procedures of Liverpool City Council.

<sup>7</sup> The Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

<sup>8</sup> In addition to the protected characteristics - as detailed in the Equality Act 2010 (age; disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation), MSP recognises that specific groups or communities may also be disadvantaged due to their economic or social circumstance. These include those in poverty, care leavers, armed forces veterans and/or people with an offending history.

### **3. Legal Requirements**

- MSP is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its individuals, groups, communities or partners. We recognise our legal obligations under, and will abide by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and any equivalent legislation or later amendments to such legislation, as relevant to MSP.
- The organisation is legally required to have due regard for adhering to the Public Sector Equality Duty<sup>9</sup>.
- MSP regards discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including cyber or e-bullying and harassment, as serious misconduct. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures including disciplinary action may be brought against any stakeholder (including members of the MSP Advisory Board and Core Team) who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person. This action would be driven through Liverpool City Council, the Core Team's Host Authority.

### **4. Reasonable Adjustments**

- When any decision is made about an individual, the only personal characteristics that may be taken into account are those that are consistent with any relevant legislation and are relevant to the substance of the decision made.
- MSP recognises it has a specific duty to make reasonable adjustments for identified groups. Working with stakeholders and external partners, MSP will look to identify and make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to specifically enable people with disabilities or long term health conditions to participate more fully in sport and physical activities.

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<sup>9</sup> The Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

## 5. Responsibility and Implementation – MSP Core Team

The following responsibilities will apply and be driven by the MSP Core Team:

- Taking responsibility for actively promoting and developing an awareness of equality and diversity.
- Ensuring the principles of equality and diversity are integral to and embedded within the realisation of all our Strategic Outcomes.
- Continuing to maintain embed the requirements of the Equality Standard – A Framework for Sport at Foundation and Preliminary level.
- Increasing collaboration with partner organisations to ensure equitable, fair and consistent treatment of all stakeholders.
- Proactively engage with the diverse communities of Merseyside.
- Promoting non-discriminatory behaviour by all participants.
- Underpinning decision making through applying impact assessment and equality analysis processes to support the development of inclusive and responsive policies, procedures and services.
- Aiming to provide all services in a way that is fair to everyone and not to disadvantage any group or individual.
- Ensuring that all children<sup>10</sup>, young people and adults at risk<sup>11</sup> have equal rights to protection from harm, and promote the understanding that they may be vulnerable to abuse.
- Establishing innovative schemes to encourage specific groups<sup>12</sup> to take part in sport and physical activity provide equality information and develop local awareness campaigns.
- Monitoring and evaluating participation of priority groups within MSP funded programmes.
- Adhering at all times to the equality and diversity policies and procedures of Liverpool City Council<sup>13</sup>, the Core Team's Host Authority.  
Identify agreed development priorities for the MSP Core Team within MSPs Equality and Diversity Acton Plan.
- Presenting this policy statement for review and endorsement annually by the MSP Advisory Board. Proposed amendments to ensure this policy reflects current legislation or policy relating to equality and diversity will be presented for review by the Board – as and when specific changes are required or as part of the annual review, whichever comes first.

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<sup>10</sup> A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout. The fact that a child is has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection'. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015 – Chapter 1, Footnote Page 5, Glossary Page 92)

<sup>11</sup> MSP adopts the definition of adults at risk as outlined by the Anne Craft Trust:  
<http://www.anncrafttrust.org/docs/04%20Safeguarding%20Adults%20at%20Risk%20Definition.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> In addition to the protected characteristics - as detailed in the Equality Act 2010 (age; disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation), MSP recognises that specific groups or communities may also be disadvantaged due to their economic or social circumstances.

<sup>13</sup> As a hosted organisation, MSP adheres at all times to the policies and procedures of Liverpool City Council:  
<https://liverpool.gov.uk/media/8906/liverpool-city-council-equality-and-diversity-policy-statement-march-2016.pdf>

## **Responsibility and Implementation – MSP Advisory Board**

The following responsibilities will apply and be driven by the MSP Advisory Board:

- Proactively raise awareness of equality and diversity across the partnership through providing strategic leadership.
- Actively engaging with the diverse communities of Merseyside to ensure the work of MSP and the Board is more widely known
- Appoint a Board Equality Champion to ensure that equality and diversity is included as an agenda item at Board meetings, where appropriate.
- Ensure the application of impact assessment and equality analysis processes to support the development of inclusive and responsive policies, procedures and service provision and to underpin decision making, by the MSP Core Team.
- Provide oversight to ensure that the principles of equality and diversity are integral to and embedded within the realisation of all our Strategic Outcomes.
- Commit to encouraging equality and diversity among its membership, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. This commitment detailed in the MSP Advisory Board Equality and Diversity Statement and shared publicly through the MSP website.
- Develop and implement an Action Plan detailing the specific areas for development within the context of ensuring the Board continues to encourage equality and diversity among its membership. This action plan will be included alongside the MSP Advisory Board Equality and Diversity Statement and shared publicly.

### **6. The Equality and Diversity Policy will be communicated in the following ways:**

- The policy will be included in any new MSP Advisory Board or Core Team member inductions.
- A copy of the policy will be publicly available on the MSP website.
- MSP will promote continuing professional development for all members of the MSP Advisory Board, Core Team and volunteers to enhance understanding and to proactively raise awareness or equality and diversity within and across the partnership.

### **7. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- A review of this Equality and Diversity Policy will take place annually by the MSP Advisory Board.
- The Equality and Diversity Action Plan will be reviewed on a twelve month basis. Review to be undertaken by the Compliance, Scrutiny & Nominations Group and the Executive Director. The plan will be updated by the Equality Lead and he Executive Director, in advance of the review.
- The policy statement, action plan and supporting procedures will remain in force until it is amended, replaced or withdrawn.

MSP's commitment to Equality and Diversity is fully supported and endorsed by MSP Advisory Board as part of Governance Framework 2017-2022.