

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Rise's vision is to create a higher quality of life for communities that need it the most across Northumberland and Tyne & Wear. A key principle of our approach to our work and how we operate as an organisation is to tackle inequalities.
- 1.2. This policy sets out our belief and commitment to embedding and pro-actively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across the structure, systems, strategies and programmes of our organisation, as well as encouraging and influencing our partners to commit to the principles and practices of equality, diversity and inclusion too. We are fully committed to working to tackle inequalities, striving for equal and fair access for all to sport and physical activity, particularly under-represented groups, and being as diverse and inclusive as we possibly can be.

2. Policy Objectives

- 2.1. The Charity is fully committed to the principles and practices of equality, diversity and inclusion and recognises the importance of these principles underpinning all aspects of our work. The objectives of this policy are therefore to:
 - 2.1.1. Highlight the Charity's commitment to working pro-actively to tackle inequalities and promoting equal access for all to sport and physical activity, particularly for under-represented groups, helping everyone to feel comfortable taking part in whichever setting or environment they choose.
 - 2.1.2. Ensure that no job applicants, employees, workers, office holders, volunteers or participants (together "stakeholders") are unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together the "protected characteristics").
 - 2.1.3. Highlight the Charity's commitment to embracing diversity and inclusion, ensuring that people with different identities are welcomed, feel valued and are included, both in the context of working for the Charity and also in relation to participating in sport and physical activity.
 - 2.1.4. Encourage our partner organisations, including suppliers and customers, to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practices of equality, diversity and inclusion, as set out in this policy. This includes the specific requirement for partners that we commission to demonstrate their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

3. Purpose of the Policy

- 3.1. The Charity recognises that some individuals (and/or certain groups in our society who share one or more “protected characteristics”) may not have been able to participate equally and fully in physical activity and sport related activities in the past across the country. Others have received unfavourable treatment in employment settings. In some instances, this may have been as a result of unlawful discrimination and/or poor practice.
- 3.2. One of the reasons why this policy has been produced is to try to prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against “stakeholders” that may preclude them from participating fully in physical activity and other sport related activities (e.g.. training, competing, refereeing, organising, volunteering, coaching, selecting, etc.). Another reason why it has been produced is to make clear the Charity's stance in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and the pro-active approach it is taking towards embracing these principles, to ensure that diversity is respected and celebrated, and that everyone feels valued and included. The Charity also recognises the importance and value of diversity of thought and experience, and how such diversity can positively impact on our ability to deliver on our purpose and mission.

4. The Differences between Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 4.1. It is recognised that it is useful within this policy to highlight the differences between equality, diversity and inclusion:
 - 4.1.1. Equality is about providing equal opportunities and protecting people from being discriminated against. It is backed by law which is designed to address discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - 4.1.2. Diversity focuses on recognising, respecting and valuing the differences between people, in relation to their ‘protected characteristics’ as well as their diverse experiences, perspectives and lifestyles.
 - 4.1.3. Inclusion, on the other hand, refers to an individual's experience within their workplace and in wider society, and the extent to which they feel valued and included.

5. Commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- 5.1. Our Board of Trustees, Senior Management Team and all employees are fully committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. In line with our Rise Together 2021-2031 strategy, we want to demonstrate a clear stance against all forms of inequality, and, through our adoption of the [Active Partnerships Racial Equality Commitment](#), we are striving to being an anti-racist

organisation. The following Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement has been signed off by the Board:

“Rise recognises the considerable positive impact that taking part in sport and physical activity brings to an individual’s physical and mental wellbeing. It improves the quality of lives of those that take part, and it also plays a significant role in achieving wider outcomes, such as educational attainment, employability, social development, crime reduction and community cohesion to name a few. We are passionate about helping everyone across Northumberland and Tyne & Wear, particularly under-represented groups and those communities that need it the most, to be able to experience and enjoy the benefits that sport and physical activity provide in order to contribute to improvements in quality of life.

We recognise that we live in a diverse society and that some groups of people do not have equal access to sport and physical activity, and this is something we are committed to challenging and addressing. We want to tackle the inequalities that exist, promoting and enabling equal access to sport and physical activity and supporting under-represented individuals, groups and communities to be able to take part, and to feel comfortable doing so in whatever activity they choose.

We will focus on encouraging and advocating for policies and practices that promote equality, diversity and inclusion at all levels in sport and physical activity, including ensuring that it is embedded in projects and programmes that we support and fund. We will also encourage our partner organisations and other providers that we work with to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practices of equality, diversity and inclusion, as set out in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

We are fully committed to supporting the principle and practice of equality of opportunity, treating everyone according to their needs, and being as diverse and inclusive as we possibly can be. Nobody should receive less favourable treatment or consideration, nor be unlawfully treated, on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, or sex or sexual orientation (together known as the “protected characteristics”). They also should not be disadvantaged by any conditions or requirements that cannot be justified as necessary on legal grounds.”

6. Legal Requirements

- 6.1. The Charity is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its “stakeholders” and recognises its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Charity will abide by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, and any

equivalent legislation (as amended) in any UK jurisdiction, and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to the Charity.

- 6.2. The Charity will seek periodic advice on this policy to ensure that it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

7. Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation

The Charity recognises the following as being unacceptable:

- 7.1. *Unlawful discrimination*, which can take the following forms:

- 7.1.1. *Direct Discrimination*: treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a “protected characteristic”. Direct discrimination also includes Associative Discrimination: discrimination against a person because they have an association with someone with a particular “protected characteristic” (for example, the parent of a disabled child) and Perceptive Discrimination: discrimination against a person because the discriminator thinks the person possesses that characteristic, even if that person does not in fact do so.

- 7.1.2. *Indirect Discrimination*: applying a provision, criterion or practice which, on the face of it, applies equally to all but which, in practice can disadvantage individuals with a particular “protected characteristic”. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.

- 7.2. *Harassment*: engaging in unwanted conduct relating to a relevant “protected characteristic” or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient, or any other individual affected by such conduct. The Charity is committed to ensuring that everyone is able to conduct their activities free from harassment.

- 7.3. *Bullying*: the misuse of power or position to criticise persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.

- 7.4. *Victimisation*: subjecting someone to a detriment because they have in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) or doing any other thing for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010 (or any equivalent legislation).

7.5. The Charity regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures, including disciplinary action, will be brought against any person who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person.

8. Reasonable Adjustments

8.1. 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 being made.

8.2. The Charity recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. The Charity will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests made, by making any adjustments required to enable the relevant individual to work for the Charity, or to support them to participate in physical activity and/or sport related activities.

9. Responsibility, implementation and communication

9.1. The following responsibilities apply:

9.1.1. The Charity's Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that this Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy is implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate. The Board of Trustees is also responsible for ensuring that the policy is enforced and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.

9.1.2. A member of the Board will be designated as the "Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Champion" and will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are included as an agenda item at Board meetings when appropriate and that the Board takes equality, diversity and inclusion issues seriously, and into consideration when making decisions.

9.1.3. The Chief Executive Officer has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy.

9.1.4. The Strategic Director (South of Tyne) has been designated as the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Lead by the Chief Executive Officer and will have the overall day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of the policy and for achieving any equality, diversity or inclusion-related actions resulting from it. The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Lead's work programme reflects this.

- 9.1.5. An internal Equality, Diversity and Inclusion sub-group of the Board, involving both employees and trustees, exists to oversee and support the Charity's equality, diversity and inclusion work.
- 9.1.6. All employees and trustees have the responsibility to respect, follow and promote the spirit and intentions of this policy.
- 9.1.7. The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy will be updated every two years, in line with changes in legislation, and/or in line with societal requirements, and will be taken to the Board for approval.

9.2. Implementing the policy will involve the following actions:

- 9.2.1. The Charity will regularly review its employment practices to ensure continuing compliance with relevant legislation, and where possible good practice. All job packs sent out by the Charity for employee and trustee positions will contain the following policy statement:

"Rise is committed to providing equal opportunities for all [and is committed to following best practice in the welfare of young people and adults at risk]. We wish to increase the diversity of our staff and trustees and welcome applicants from all sections of the community, particularly from people with disabilities and those from ethnically diverse backgrounds, as these groups are currently under-represented within our workforce. We welcome requests for flexible working, including part-time working or job sharing."

- 9.2.2. No applicant for any post (including job applicants, consultant advisers and suppliers) will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job or which constitute unlawful discrimination.
- 9.2.3. Organisations that the Charity commission to deliver services will be expected to have their own equality / equality, diversity and inclusion policies in place, as well as having knowledge of issues in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion (and commitment to adhering to those policies). Employees of the Charity will request sight of their policies and this requirement will be referenced in any service level agreements or contracts issued by the Charity.
- 9.2.4. In recognition that our language and imagery reflects our commitment to reducing inequalities, and also in recognition that the words we use can consciously or unconsciously exclude, undermine, offend or reinforce negative stereotypes, we will constantly assess national

standards and societal preferences around language and therefore how we utilise terminology within the Charity. We appreciate that meaning and connotations will change over time, but we will endeavour to always use inclusive language principles, and inclusive imagery.

9.2.5. The Charity will promote continuing professional development for all employees, trustees and volunteers in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, and, where appropriate, will provide specialist facilities, equipment or training.

9.3. This Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy will be communicated in the following ways:

9.3.1. Reference to the policy will be included in the staff handbook and any code of conduct;

9.3.2. The policy will be highlighted in all staff, trustee and volunteer inductions; and

9.3.3. A copy of the policy and the [Active Partnerships Racial Equality Commitment](#) will be publicly available on the Charity's website(s) and copies in other formats will also be available from the Charity if requested.

10. Actions

10.1. The Charity will consider producing, maintaining and monitoring an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan to ensure the objectives of this policy are consistently delivered throughout all areas of the organisation and to ensure practice is continually monitored and improved.

10.2. The Charity recognises that, in some cases, to further the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion, an unequal distribution of resources may be required. If appropriate and proportionate, the Charity will consider positive action or may introduce special measures to assist any group with a "protected characteristic" which is currently underrepresented within any group of "stakeholders".

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

11.1. A review of this policy will take place as and when required as set out in paragraph 9.1.7 above, but not less than once every two years.

11.2. Any Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan, created to ensure the objectives of this policy are delivered, may be produced and reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer and the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Lead regularly, but in any event not less than once every 2 years.

12. Complaints Procedures

12.1. To safeguard individual rights under this policy, any person who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the appropriate procedure (i.e. the Grievance Procedure for employees or the Complaints Procedure for those external to the organisation).

12.2. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who violates the Policy under the Charity's Disciplinary Procedure.

12.3. An individual raising an employee grievance in relation to treatment incompatible with this policy will not be penalised for doing so unless it is both untrue and not made in good faith.

12.4. As with all grievance and disciplinary procedures, the final point of appeal relating to this policy is the Board of Trustees.