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Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Maldon & Tiptree Football Club

Document owner	Club Chairman / Club Welfare Officer
Chairman	Jamil Trofder
Club Secretary & Welfare Officer	Garry Neave-Houghting
Safeguarding contact	garry.mtfc@gmail.com | 07538 973069

Status: Approved. Effective date: November 2026. Review: annually, or sooner following a significant incident, legal change or updated FA guidance.

1. Policy statement

Maldon & Tiptree FC is committed to a welcoming, safe and inclusive football environment in which everyone is treated with dignity, fairness and respect. Participation, employment, volunteering, selection and access to club activities must be based on relevant, objective criteria rather than prejudice or stereotypes.

The club will challenge discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying and abusive conduct whether occurring at the ground, in training, during travel, online or at any club-related activity. This policy applies alongside the club safeguarding, anti-bullying, social media and codes of conduct policies.

2. Scope and accountability

This policy applies to the board, employees, players (including under-18s), managers, coaches, matchday staff, volunteers, contractors, parents/carers, spectators and anyone representing the club. It applies to recruitment, trials, team selection, coaching, facilities, communication, events and disciplinary processes.

The Chairman is accountable for leadership, resources, policy approval and oversight. Managers and team leaders implement fair day-to-day practice. The Club Welfare Officer is a point of contact for safeguarding concerns and supports appropriate referrals; safeguarding and discrimination complaints may require different processes running in parallel. Everyone must speak up about unacceptable behaviour.

3. Legal and football framework

The club will act consistently with the Equality Act 2010, including its protections relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership (where relevant), pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The club also recognises its duties under applicable safeguarding, data protection and employment law.

The club supports The FA's equality, diversity and inclusion objectives, safeguarding principles and Respect standards, and will comply with applicable FA, Essex FA, league and competition rules as amended. This document is club policy, not an assertion of FA approval or accreditation.

4. Fair access, participation and selection

Recruitment, trials, team selection, playing opportunities, development, employment and volunteering will be managed fairly, transparently and against role-related criteria. Selection decisions may legitimately consider ability, fitness, safety, competition rules and the needs of the team, but must not rely on unlawful discrimination.

The club will communicate accessible routes to participation, consider reasonable adjustments for disabled people, and seek practical solutions to barriers relating to facilities, transport, communication

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and cost where reasonably possible. Concerns about access should be raised early with the relevant manager or club leadership.

5. Inclusive conduct and language

All participants must use respectful language and behaviour. Racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, disablist, religiously abusive or other discriminatory remarks, gestures, chants, symbols and online posts are prohibited. “Banter” is not an excuse for harm.

Managers and coaches must set the tone, intervene promptly, record incidents and avoid humiliating or excluding individuals. Spectators must not abuse officials, opponents or club members. Retaliation against someone who reports a concern or supports an investigation is prohibited.

6. Disability inclusion and reasonable adjustments

The club will consider reasonable adjustments on an individual basis, including accessible communications, training modifications, safe facilities and participation arrangements, subject to applicable rules and risk assessments. People should not be required to disclose more personal or medical information than is necessary.

Where a proposed adjustment affects safety or competition eligibility, the club will consult the individual, relevant football authorities or qualified advisers as appropriate, document the decision and review it.

7. Children, adults at risk and safeguarding

Children and adults at risk must be treated with dignity, listened to and supported to participate safely. Concerns about abuse, exploitation, grooming, bullying or discriminatory harm must be handled under the club’s safeguarding procedures; do not investigate suspected abuse yourself.

Where someone is in immediate danger, call 999. Otherwise report safeguarding concerns promptly to Garry Neave-Houghting (garry.mtfc@gmail.com; 07538 973069). Where the concern involves the Welfare Officer or reporting internally is unsafe, contact the relevant County FA safeguarding team, statutory services or police directly.

8. Reporting discrimination or harassment

Reports may be made to a manager, the Chairman or the Club Welfare Officer. Reports should include, where known, what happened, when and where, who was involved, witnesses, any evidence (including screenshots) and any immediate safety needs. Reports can be made by the person affected or by a witness.

The club will acknowledge and triage concerns promptly, consider immediate protective measures, identify whether safeguarding, criminal or football-regulatory reporting is required, and appoint an impartial person to handle the matter. Serious discriminatory incidents may need referral to The FA/Essex FA, the league or police under the applicable rules. No club process should obstruct statutory investigations.

9. Fair handling, outcomes and appeals

Complaints will be handled proportionately, confidentially and without prejudging the outcome. Both the person reporting and the person complained about will be treated fairly, offered appropriate support and informed of the process as far as lawful and practicable. Conflicts of interest must be declared and managed.

Depending on severity and applicable rules, action may include education, a warning, removal from an activity, restrictions, disciplinary proceedings, referral to football authorities or police, and termination of club involvement. Where the club makes a formal decision, it will provide an appropriate route to review or appeal by someone not previously involved.

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10. Privacy, records and monitoring

Reports and outcomes will be recorded accurately and stored securely, with access limited to those who need to know. Personal information, including special category data, will be processed under the club's data protection arrangements and applicable UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018 requirements. Absolute confidentiality cannot be promised where disclosure is necessary to protect people or comply with law.

The board will review patterns of complaints, barriers to participation and improvement actions, using anonymised information where appropriate. No equality monitoring data should be collected without a clear lawful purpose and suitable safeguards.

11. Training, communications and implementation

The policy will be shared at induction and made accessible to players, staff, volunteers and relevant visitors. Managers, coaches and key personnel should complete training appropriate to their roles, including safeguarding and equality education required by football authorities.

The club will display or communicate reporting routes, remind spectators and participants of conduct standards, and review accessibility of key club communications and activities.

12. Review and related policies

The Chairman and Club Welfare Officer will coordinate an annual review and earlier updates where required. The club should cross-reference its safeguarding children policy, safeguarding adults at risk policy, anti-bullying policy, social media use policy, photography and filming policy, code of conduct, complaints procedure and data protection arrangements.

13. Approval and sign-off

This policy takes effect only once approved by the club. Signatures and dates below must be completed by the authorised officers.

Role	Name	Signature / date
Chairman	Jamil Trofder	Signed by: 32FBD8BF89AF41C... 12th November 2026
Club Secretary & Welfare Officer	Garry Neave-Houghting	Signed by: 7AF83006FE7D429... 12th November 2026
Next review due	12 months from approval	12th November 2027

External guidance to check before adoption: The FA safeguarding and equality guidance; Essex FA reporting routes; Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance on the Equality Act 2010.