

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Annual Achievements Report 2022/23

season



Introduction

I am honoured to champion EDI and Mental Health across both the club and Foundation and despite it being a challenging year, equality & diversity are still club & Foundation priorities. There have been many initiatives that we are proud to share with our Leeds United family.

Angus Kinnear,

CEO Leeds United & Trustee with responsibility for EDI – Leeds United Foundation

Strategic objectives



Governance

The EDI work has now settled and the club & Foundation have a clearly defined governance structure:

Strategic safeguarding & EDI Board

Made up of Senior Managers from across the club, Academy and Foundation. Chaired by the CEO.

Foundation Board

Receives quarterly EDI updates from the Head of Safeguarding & EDI.

EDI Working Group

Made up of staff from across the club and Foundation – includes leads for women & girls, Race & religion, LGBTQ+ and disability.

Discrimination Education Working Group

Staff from across the club & Foundation that deal with matchday organisation and communications – with the aim of educating staff and supporters around discrimination issues, how to report hate crime and the consequences if hate crimes are committed at the club.

Fan Groups

Supporter Advisory Board – a group of 11 supporters from diverse backgrounds. The group will discuss spectator issues and receive reports from the club on any projects or improvements planned for the future. Chaired by one of the supporters from the group.

Disability Advisory Group – a group of 12 disabled fans with differing backgrounds. The group looks at any issues that may be faced by people with disabilities. Chaired by the Head of Safeguarding & EDI.

Leeds United Disabled Organisation (LUDO) – an independent organisation representing disabled fans that works closely with the Club and Foundation on disabled fan issues.

Marching out Together – an independent organisation representing LGBTQ+ supporters that works closely with the Club and Foundation on LGBTQ+ issues.

Board Reporting

The Head of Safeguarding and EDI:

1. Reports monthly to the CEO, who in turn reports on EDI issues to the Club Board.
2. Reports to the Foundation Governance Committee regarding EDI quarterly prior to the report being presented to the Foundation Board

PLEDIS



The club and Foundation achieved the preliminary stage of PLEDIS in February 2023.

The Panel commended the substantial amount of progress that the Club has made since attending the initial assessment in June 2022.

The Panel noted the positive and innovative steps taken to introduce Wellbeing Officers on match days and the roll out of EDI awareness training to Club Legends.

The Panel noted the Club's intent to provide greater support to their Women's team and encouraged Leeds United to do so in line with all other Premier League Club approaches to Women's football.

The Panel were delighted to see that the Foundation had been involved with training which included 'handling difficult conversations' as this will help to build confidence when discussing EDI topics and encouraged them to continue to do so in a joined-up way with the wider Club. The Panel noted the strong and effective ways of working between the Club and Foundation.

The club & Foundation are now working towards the Intermediate standard of PLEDIS which involves greater scrutiny of governance and partnership arrangements, with a target of submitting the new evidence for April 2024.

Our Progress



Consultation

Consultation is the key to Informed decision-making and planning, giving insight into the needs of existing and potential staff, players, participants, and fans.

The Club & Foundation will:

- develop a strong and active consultation group, made up of staff, players, participants, and fans.
- Ensure consultation processes with key stakeholders and partners is established and developed over time.

This year we have:

- Launched the Disability Advisory Group, made up of 12 supporters with disabilities. This has allowed the Club and Foundation to develop improved facilities such as the sensory room and looking at improved disabled car parking facilities with the council.
- Regularly met our LGBTQ+ supporter group, Marching Out Together and deliver a number of initiatives with them including training stewards and Academy staff, Rainbow Laces, Pride collection in the shops and also hate crime awareness.
- Consulted the Leeds City Council access team on the improvement of matchday disabled parking.
- Developed a wellbeing team that supports children and more vulnerable people attending matchdays
- Sent out 2 surveys to disabled ticket holders to look at additional services we may be able to provide and to see if any further assistance is required in some areas.
- Reviewed our Foundation consultation groups to ensure consultation is carried out on every programme in an appropriate manner for the participants.



Diverse workforce

The club & Foundation will:

- Encourage a diverse representation of people associated with the club & Foundation, both on and off the field of play.
- Deliver the FA Football Leadership Diversity Code and will work towards achieving the objectives of the code.
- Promote and deliver activities which work towards increasing the diversity of the staff, players, participants, and fans of the club.

This year we have:

- Implemented data collection for all new staff and people applying for our vacancies
- The club has also participated in the FA Diversity scheme and the Academy now has a new member of the team from this scheme. We now have a second member of staff joining the team.
- The Foundation have launched a partnership with Leeds City College and Sports Connect to deliver football supported education to young women.
- The Kicks programme now employs and has trained one of their participants as a coach
- HR has visited 10 school / college jobs fairs to allow young people from all backgrounds to see the diverse range of jobs in football
- Implemented a range of ways to apply for jobs – application forms (paper and online) Teams form, plus over the telephone if required.

Case Study:

Ahmed came to the city with his family in 2012 following conflict in Syria.

Ahmad on Kicks

Ahmad started his involvement in Kicks as a participant at the Ebor Gardens session in the Richmond hill / Burmantofts. He joined in the sessions and helped the coaches with the language barriers that were present at the time as only a few participants were able to speak English. Ahmad would continually help the coaches at the session with not only just the social aspects of the session but also help setting up equipment and inspiring other participants to do so as well. LUFC filmed the session when Ahmad was a participant.

[LUTV | Live streams, highlights and more \(leedsunited.com\)](https://www.leedsunited.com)

Leading the way

Ahmad had 2 mentors identified through 'Leading the Way' to support and assist him to gain his coaching, first aid and safeguarding qualifications whilst getting him practical experience at sessions. Ahmad completed his playmaker and level 1 coaching qualifications as well as 30 hours voluntary coaching experience next to level 2 coaches at Kicks sessions across the city. Ahmad then had a successful interview for a paid position coaching on Kicks and is now very much part of our coaching family.

During this period Ahmad has been studying for his A levels (predicted 3 A's) and is now at Leeds University studying medicine in September. Ahmad will continue his great work with the Kicks team whilst he studies.



Awareness & Education

The club & Foundation will:

- Ensure all people associated with the club & Foundation will be aware of the club's approach to equality and understand their responsibilities
- Ensure Training & Development for EDI will be embedded and monitored across the club & Foundation, improving the workforce understanding of issues relating to equality.

This year we have:

- Introduced a staff Employee Assistance Programme, giving confidential access to staff for mental health support and guidance on home and work issues.

- Included EDI updates for senior staff and Board members in both club and Foundation
- Produced an 'acceptable language' guidance and distributed to all managers.
- Set up a Discrimination Education Working Group with representatives from the club and Foundation to deliver training to staff and fans. Developing a Discrimination Action Plan.
- Developed an 'All Leeds Aren't We' campaign to reduce discrimination at matchdays.
- EFL have delivered EDI and correct language training to all our matchday staff.
- EDI training has been delivered to all our Academy players U9's to U 16's.
- Implemented a workforce development plan across the club and Foundation that has delivered training to staff in all departments
- Discrimination textline available through programme / big screen and LED boards for all spectators to use
- Downs Syndrome awareness training given to retail staff



Promoting EDI

The club will:

- be widely known for its positive work on equality
- deliver equality messages and training to fans through its outreach programmes
- Promote Equality through our Policies, Strategies and Plans
- utilise marketing/Communications and promotions that are inclusive and use appropriate range of channels
- Promote and run Equality events & Activities, delivering an agreed awareness calendar

This year we have:

- Developed a webpage which displays our commitment to EDI, as well as sharing our policy and reporting processes.
- Launched our EDI working group, to cover all departments within the club & Foundation.
- Developed a wellbeing team to support vulnerable spectators on matchdays
- Launched the Discrimination Education Working Group to look at communication positive messages around diversity and to educate staff and supporters around the meaning of hate crimes and consequences of their actions if they choose to discriminate at our matchdays and activities.
- Used our marketing platforms to reflect our diversity, using people from a range of backgrounds in photoshoots and articles.
- Expanded our catering to include:
 - Gluten free lager
 - Kosher menus
 - All diets catered for

- Local suppliers - less miles
- Intro of Vegan options across the board
- Vegan wines
- Larger range of beers and lagers
- Compostable cups both coffee & beer
- Washable plastic
- New self-destructing cup (if not recycled it will return to nature)
- More international flavours introduced.
- New products on ground catering vegan hotdogs, dirty fries
- Ramadan food when fast is broken

Iftar

This year we organised an Iftar event at Elland Road where we invited participants of our KICKS programme and their families, to celebrate Ramadan together. It was important to us that we openly invited everyone on the programme, as we wanted this event to be inclusive to everyone so that participants from different cultures, beliefs and faiths could come together and learn about Ramadan from families who celebrate the event and come together as one for the evening.

The Ramadan event was organised to suit everyone of all ages, which included fun games for the young people so that they could socialise together, whilst their family members socialised with others through conversations.

When it was time to break the fast, the club provided everyone who attended the event with a free food buffet. There was also Leeds United merchandise gifts that were provided to everyone as a thank you from us.

During the Ramadan event, we catered for more than 340 people with most of them being participants on our Foundation programmes, which including KICKS along with other programmes we provide across Leeds.

South Asian Emerging Talent

Our first phase of the South Asian Emerging Talent festivals demonstrated a series of successful engagement outcomes. For the Season 2022/23, the PL targeted six partner clubs to host an Emerging Talent Festival for the U9, U10, U11, and U12 Age Groups, with the winners from each club going on to represent their host club at a Premier League Emerging Talent Festival in July 2023. We hosted the day at our Thorp Arch training ground and it was a huge success and participants from Kicks and the wider community attended.

<https://vimeo.com/tmgmakes/review/839661417/13f4b1e98b>



Just Don't

- Support for the Mayor's campaign against sexual harrassment of women
- Just Don't - West Yorkshire Combined Authority (westyorks-ca.gov.uk)



Helping Local People

- Working with the Leeds United Supporter's Trust, food has been collected for local food banks
- The Foundation has been collecting clothing



Her Game Too

- The club has been working with Her Game Too since the 2021/22 season, officially partnering the campaign to tackle sexism and champion and support women in sport. Since then, the two parties have worked together on a number of matchday activations



EDI events

- Black history month - supported by players and the Foundation
- World mental health day - Foundation hosts local artists
- World refugee day - young people plant sunflowers to celebrate refugees
- Mental health awareness week
- Holocaust memorial day
- Remembrance Day
- Downs Syndrome Day
- Rainbow Laces Campaign



Leeds
Children's
Charity at
Lineham Farm

Lineham Farm

- Leeds United children's charity partner for the 2023/24 season
- training ground and matchday visits
- first team player visits to Lineham Farm



Religious celebrations

- hosting Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year festival, with educational sessions in schools
- Community Iftar at Elland Rd
- Eid celebrations



Supporter Groups

- Marching Out Together help in sharing the message of diversity with fans
- Club sponsors Leeds Pride 2023
- Disability Advisory Group formed
- Spectator Advisory Board



LUKE AYLING NAMED 2022/2023 PFA COMMUNITY CHAMPION



Facilities

- Sensory room opened
- Prayer room opened
- New Changing Places facility



Catering & Hospitality

- Multi national menus
- Ramadam food when fast is broken
- Vegan diets catered for
- Kosher menus
- sustainable / eco products used



Training

- Appropriate language
- Disability awareness
- Mental Health First Aid



Wellbeing Team

- supporting children, young people and adults at risk on matchdays



Assessing Impact

The club & Foundation will:

- Ensure a robust reporting system is in place for discrimination incidents
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation methods are in place to assist development of current and future work at the club, including
 - Regularly auditing staff, Players, Board, match day fans and outreach programmes against equality statistics for Leeds.
 - Analysing the results from Audit Surveys to inform the Equality Action Plan

This year we have:

- Surveyed all staff in the club and Foundation to ensure we have an understanding of our current diversity, allowing us to focus our recruitment in the future.
- Procured a new HR system that logs all EDI data on new staff and players.
- Promoted hate crime reporting around the stadium, on LED boards, on the website and in the programmes.
- Developed an equality action plan based on staff survey results.
- Created a Discrimination Education Working Group to oversee education around discrimination and to manage the Discrimination Action Plan which includes the reporting of incidents.