

'Hear It, Say It, Change It'

West Yorkshire Netball

statement of purpose on race



West Yorkshire Netball is committed to being actively anti-racist and playing its part in tackling and dismantling racism in our sport.

Our vision is that netball in West Yorkshire is a safe and welcoming space where all participants are treated equally, respectfully and can thrive. This is aspirational. We acknowledge that it is not the situation in the county or society, at present. We are committed to taking action to change. West Yorkshire Netball is sending a clear message with intent that we will not tolerate racism and discrimination of any type.



In 2020, alongside England Netball, we ran our own 'Here to Listen' Forum. Black, Asian and ethnically diverse members of the West Yorkshire Netball family shared their experiences of participating in or supporting the sport. For some, this was the first time they had spoken openly. Collectively, they had faced discrimination in every area, from coaches, officials, as players, in team selections, umpiring decisions, and in access to developmental opportunities. They spoke of the repeated microaggressions and the common dismissal of overtly racist comments as 'banter'. The pain and hurt were tangible. Racism had marginalised individuals and led talent to walk away from the sport they loved.

Our conversations around race equity have continued. We set up a Racial Equality Advisory Group. The members have focussed with energy and positivity on what West Yorkshire Netball need to do to embed anti-racist principles in all of our structures. We know we cannot do this overnight; the work is ongoing and aligned with the efforts of England Netball. However, we all have to educate ourselves and take responsibility for understanding structural racism as we work to change the netball landscape in our county.

Structural racism is the collective failure of an organisation to provide the same service or opportunities to people, regardless of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. No organisation is immune from this.

In the short term, we have improved our procedures to ensure that all complaints are followed up. We have a dedicated email address for support and advice. We are also working closely with England Netball. They are developing a new 10-year strategy that aims to embed equality, diversity and inclusion throughout our sport. There will be free workshops and training tools accessible to our netball community.



West Yorkshire Netball is an anti-racist organisation:

- Know that we will not tolerate any form of racism or discrimination in coaching, on court, in officiating or umpiring, in our workforce, or any areas of our netball, from supporters, and players'.
- Challenge racist language and behaviour wherever you see or hear it. If you feel uncomfortable you know something is wrong. Don't dismiss events as minor and say nothing. Be an active ally, not a bystander.
- Report racist incidents to West Yorkshire Netball quickly and know your concerns will not be dismissed.
- Educate yourself to understand the inequalities which exist across racial groups and confront your own prejudices. It is not enough to be 'not racist'. We want everyone involved in West Yorkshire Netball to be actively anti-racist.
- We will Provide an environment in which everyone can feel safe, thrive and contribute to a great place to play Netball.

Advancing racial equity will significantly and positively impact our goal to challenge discrimination in our sport in all its forms. We will work with our West Yorkshire Netball community to ensure this happens.

