



# Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy

NEWPORT COUNTY AFC

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## **1. Introduction**

Newport County AFC is committed to providing a safe, friendly, and caring environment for all our players, staff, volunteers, and participants, so that they can work and enjoy football in a secure and relaxed environment. Bullying and harassment is not acceptable and will be dealt with in a swift and effective manner.

Newport County AFC acknowledges its responsibility for the working environment and for the welfare and protection of its employees and volunteers, while believing that individual employees and volunteers are responsible for their own behaviour, both professionally and personally. There is an expectation that staff will conduct themselves in a manner which does not cause offence to another person. In essence: everyone has a responsibility for upholding personal dignity and to challenge unacceptable behaviour.

Even though we are members of a team, employees of Newport County AFC can expect to be valued and respected as an individual. If you experience any form of bullying, whether physical, verbal, emotional or through online means, you must report such incidents to the appropriate parties, so the matter can be dealt with as quickly as possible.

We expect everyone associated with Newport County AFC to treat each other with kindness, empathy, and respect.

## **2. Clarification of Terms**

### **Definition of bullying**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally.

### **Types of bullying**

- **Physical:** Deliberately hurting someone on a regular basis e.g. physically pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, spitting or unwanted physical contact
- **Verbal:** Deliberately hurting feelings, threats of violence and intimidation.
- **Emotional:** Making someone feel left out and different by deliberately setting out to exclude them e.g. spreading rumours; persistent teasing and humiliation; continual ignoring of others; posting of derogatory or abusive comments; videos or images on social media; racial, homophobic, transphobic, bi-phobic or sexist comments; taunts or gestures; disablist or faith targeted; sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
- **Cyber-bullying:** Cyber-bullying is the use of technology such as mobile phones, email, chat rooms or social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate, or target a person.

Unlike physical bullying, cyber-bullying can often be difficult to identify and evidence as the cyberbully (the person responsible for the acts of cyber-bullying) can remain anonymous when threatening or causing distress to others online. This may encourage them to behave more inappropriately or aggressively than they might face-to-face.

### **Types of cyber-bullying**

- **Flaming:** Online fights usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.
- **Denigration:** Putting hurtful online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or websites set up to make fun of someone.
- **Exclusion:** Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites, or other online group activities.
- **Outing:** Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures, and videos.
- **Trickery:** Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.
- **Impersonation:** Pretending to be someone else when sending or posting mean or false messages online.
- **Harassment:** Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online.
- **Cyber-stalking:** Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm.

### **Actions NOT considered to be bullying**

- Not liking someone
- Accidentally bumping into someone
- A single act of telling a joke about someone
- Arguments
- Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others

### **Reasons for bullying**

- They think it's fun, or that it makes them popular or cool
- They feel more powerful or important, or they want to get their own way all the time
- They feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group
- They are fearful of other children's differences
- They are jealous of another child
- They are unhappy
- They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them.
- Due to an imbalance of power or a perceived difference

### **The effects of bullying**

All types of bullying cause psychological, emotional, and physical stress. Each person's response to being bullied is unique and the impact upon a person should not be minimised or their expressed experience dismissed. Some signs that may indicate a bullying problem are:

- depression and anxiety
- increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem and loneliness
- withdrawal and loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy
- unexplained injuries
- weight loss/gain
- lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery
- frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- changes in eating habits / disordered eating e.g. skipping meals or binge eating.
- difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to participate in usual activities.
- sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, self-harm, or talking about suicide
- needing money on a regular basis (to give to the perpetrator)

### **3. Scope**

This policy covers all employees, volunteers, players and participants of Newport County AFC, and all persons performing work at the direction of, relating to, or on behalf of Newport County AFC (for example contractors, subcontractors, agents, consultants, and temporary staff).

This Policy extends to all functions and places that are work related, for example: work lunches, conferences, Christmas parties and client functions. This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. Nor does it form part of any contract for service. This Policy will also serve to fall in line with similar policies designated and adhered to by the Academy and County in the Community.

### **4. Complaints of Bullying and Harassment**

Newport County AFC believes any person who feels that they are not being treated with respect and dignity and who feel they have been bullied, harassed, or victimised have the right to complain/raise a grievance and to have that complaint/grievance dealt with seriously and promptly.

Newport County AFC is committed to resolving issues raised under the Bullying and Harassment Policy through alternative conflict resolution processes, such as a facilitated discussion or mediation where appropriate and agreeable by all parties.

Newport County AFC expects everyone associated with the Club to report all incidents of inappropriate behaviour. All incident reports will be treated seriously, promptly and in complete confidence.

Complaints from members of the public regarding the behaviour of a person associated with the Club, will be dealt with under the Club's Complaints Policy.

## **5. Procedures**

1. Members of staff, volunteers, players, and participants will report bullying incidents to the Head of Safeguarding, or any member of the Club Safeguarding Team. The staff member will create a report using the online 'My Concern' platform. Alternatively, you can report directly to the EFL Safeguarding Regional Manager, or the NSPCC. Please note that this may cause a delay in us being able to deal with your concern quickly.
2. In serious cases of bullying, the incidents will be referred to the Local Authorities and EFL for advice and possibly to the FA Case Management System. If necessary, the police will also be consulted.
3. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly.
4. An attempt will be made to help the perpetrator(s) change their behaviour and to uncover the reason for the behaviour. Newport County AFC will provide adequate support to the perpetrator who may be met with challenges themselves resulting in this behaviour.
5. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue, the Club will initiate disciplinary action under the Club's disciplinary policy or Code of Conduct. If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation, the Club will implement the following procedures:

### **Recommended Club Action**

- Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
- If this fails or is not appropriate, a two-person panel consisting of the Head of Safeguarding and Designated Safeguarding Officer should meet with the alleging target(s) to obtain details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account. Agreed accounts should be uploaded to My Concern.
- The same panel should meet with the alleged perpetrator(s) and, if age appropriate, parents/carers and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed by all as a true account. Agreed accounts should be uploaded to My Concern.
- If bullying has, in the view of such Club officials, taken place, the individual should be warned and put on notice of further action. This may include temporary or permanent suspension should the bullying continue following the notice of further action. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
- In some cases, involving those under the age of 18, the parent/carers of the perpetrator or target can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.

- For bullying involving those under the age of 18, all coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process.
- All coaches/line managers involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning
- The Club reserves the right to implement procedures to ensure the potential target of bullying is kept safe. This may mean a young person, employee or volunteer may be removed whilst an investigation takes place.

### **In the Case of Adults Reported to be Bullying Anyone Within the Club**

- The appropriate authorities should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate. These authorities could include, and are not limited to LADO, EFL, FA, Police, Social Services.
- It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, the Head of Safeguarding will invoke the Affiliated Football Bodies process and refer to the FA, EFL, FAW and statutory partners.
- More serious cases may be referred to the Police and/or Social Services if targeted at someone under the age of 18. This information can also be shared with the DBS service, should you meet the harm test and be removed from regulated activity either through choice or by dismissal.

## **6. Prevention**

The club will have extensive policies and procedures in place including staff and players Codes of Conduct, to avoid such instances of bullying and harassment, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of the Club.

The Safeguarding Officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with members to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

All employees and officials of Newport County AFC agree on their commitment to ensuring a safe working environment for all, through the undertaking of relevant assessment and qualification, such as the FA Equality Code of Practice.

We take accountability for ensuring that staff are regularly offered training from our charity partners at Kidscape, and our stakeholders at the EFL, FA and FAW, which will enable them to understand the difference between teasing, bullying and banter, and also to recognise the signs and symptoms of bullying.

Kidscape also provide ZAP anti-bullying sessions to young people and their families who have experienced or are experiencing a bullying situation, to work on building assertiveness and resilience. By working with our charity partner, we are also able to signpost young people and their families to this support.

## **7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The Head of Safeguarding and relevant staff will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the club.

## **8. Additional Information**

On occasions, we may need to share your personal information with external agencies, such as the police, social services, EFL, FA or FAW to assist with further enquiries, especially in serious incidents of bullying.

Should we feel that it is not necessary to contact the police on this occasion, that does not affect your rights to contact the police yourselves if you feel that it is necessary to do so.

We are duty bound to provide a safe environment for all players, staff, volunteers, and participants. Should there be an external situation which would threaten your safety and wellbeing within Newport County AFC, please do discuss this with us, so that we can take appropriate measures to support where able and necessary.

We respect your right to confidentiality when you report an allegation of bullying. Whilst investigating instances of bullying, we are also responsible for providing confidentiality to the perpetrator until the investigation is complete. Should the investigation proceed to a criminal investigation, we will not be able to disclose any details of the investigation until the criminal proceedings are complete.

This policy is in line with guidance as outlined in:

The Equality Act 2010

The Childrens Act 1989

The Childrens Act 2004

Rights, Respect and Equality (Wales) 2020

Social Services and Well-Being Act 2014

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

## **Useful Contacts**

### **Head of Safeguarding**

Kelly Anderson

Email: [Safeguarding@newport-county.co.uk](mailto:Safeguarding@newport-county.co.uk)

Tel: 07871 632037

### **Academy Manager**

Damien Broad

Email: [Damien.Broad@newport-County.co.uk](mailto:Damien.Broad@newport-County.co.uk)

**Designated Safeguarding Officer – Academy**

Gareth Evans

Email: [academy.admin@newport-county.co.uk](mailto:academy.admin@newport-county.co.uk)

**Designated Safeguarding Officer – Club**

Ben Lucey

Email: [ben.lucey@newport-county.co.uk](mailto:ben.lucey@newport-county.co.uk)

**EFL Safeguarding Officer**

Mark Derrien

Tel: 07944 272236

Email: [mderrien@efl.com](mailto:mderrien@efl.com)

**Newport City Council Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Mike Sloan

Tel: 01633 851485

Email: [Mike.Sloan@newport.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Sloan@newport.gov.uk)

**FA Safeguarding**

Tel: 0800 169 1863

Email: [safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:safeguarding@TheFA.com)

**NSPCC helpline**

Tel: 0808 800 5000

**Kidscape Parent Advice Line**

[parentsupport@kidscape.org.uk](mailto:parentsupport@kidscape.org.uk)

WhatsApp: 07496 682785

**Police**

Tel: 999 or 101

**9. Useful Websites**

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

[www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org)

[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

[www.youngstonewall.org.uk](http://www.youngstonewall.org.uk)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)