



Academy: Returning To Football Training and Playing Policy

NEWPORT COUNTY AFC

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Newport County AFC Academy is committed to the emotional, mental and physical wellbeing of all players within the club.

This policy is in place to provide all relevant information regarding the steps involved in the safe return to train and return to play protocols for players returning from any reason that would require intervention of participation from sport. Some of these reasons can include but are not limited to soft tissue injury, illness (disease, viral infection, bacterial infections etc), as well as a range of medical conditions.

The act of encouraging or forcing (directly or indirectly) a player to train or play whilst injured, ill or any other reason that would require removal from training or playing can be classed as abusive practice.

It is vital that players, parents, coaches and any other relevant members of staff use the appropriate channels to report if the individual player is experiencing any pain or discomfort. If a player expresses that they do not want to/feel that they cannot continue their participation in a training session or a game, the club has a duty of care to respect the players request and remove them from the field of play immediately.

Any player returning from an injury must first be assessed by a relevant member of the medical department within the injury clinic time slots to be reassessed and cleared for return to train/play. Without clearance from the medical team, a player is not permitted to participate in academy training or games.

During the return to train/play phased return, there are instances where a player will have reduced contact training time, reduced participation (eg. Non-contact) or other relevant interventions to assist with a safe and appropriate phased return to train/play. When a player returns to full contact training and is cleared to play in games, there will be instances of reduced minutes to further assist the safe return to full participation.

Parents/Carers.

When a child is unable to participate in football within the academy, we understand that this can be a frustrating time for the child as well as the parents/carers. It is understandable to want to see your child involved in training and games as soon as possible, but we as a club need to ensure that a safe phased return to train/play is followed to reduce risk of reinjury or the occurrence of a long-term injury or complication.

It is the duty of care of the club medical department to liaise with the parents/carers of the player with assessments of the injury or illness and clearance before returning to training and/or games.

There may be certain situations where the medical department may liaise with the club's doctor who will be more experienced with the injury or illness. This will be on a case-by-case basis where a consultation may be required or further assessment via imaging (MRI, X-Ray etc.) or other tests such as bloods.

Long Term Injuries

There may be instances where a player may miss an extended period from the game, this may be due to an illness, significant soft tissue injury (e.g., Tibial fracture), or if surgical intervention is required (fractures, appendicitis, etc).

During this time of not being able/cleared to participate in sport, the player care team, relevant coaching staff, and relevant medical staff are at hand to assist with any wellbeing support, advice, and development such as life skills or analysis.

With some long-term injuries, the dictation and clearance for return to train/play may be subject to approval/clearance from an external party, such as a consultant, surgeon, club doctor etc. In these circumstances, the club will follow the correct protocols whilst maintaining contact with the external party.

Illness and Hospitalisation

In the instance that a child required medical intervention externally of the club, such as A&E or other medical consultation. It is asked that the parents/carers inform the medical department at their earliest convenience.

During the child's return to training/play protocol, the medical team may liaise with the medical practitioner, hospital or consultant depending on the case at hand, to gather any relevant information about the injury, the intervention that was implemented, and information from the relevant persons for the safe return to train/play for the child. In situations this may be a formal phone call, an email or letter.

Return to Training Contacts

This phase of the return to play protocol begins from the onset of injury up until clearance to full return to training.

1. Onset of injury – internal or external of the academy.
2. Initial assessment of injury by relevant medical staff.
3. Plan put in place for return to full training.
4. Relevant number of follow up assessments and interventions.
5. Restrictions on initial return to training, this can include but is not limited to.
 - i. Non-weightbearing exercises (home based or pitch-side)
 - ii. Weight-bearing exercises (home based or pitch-side)
 - iii. Walking/Jogging/Running Drills only
 - iv. Non-contact training (ie. Passing drills etc)

v. Full-contact training (may be limited minutes)

The return to training process is to be overseen by a relevant member of the medical department with further feedback from the player, coaching staff and any other relevant parties.

A player may only return to training and return to full contact training on subject of clearance from a relevant member of the medical department.

Return to Game Contacts

A player may only return to participation in games after being cleared to do so by a relevant member of the medical department.

Throughout the full return to play process from the initial injury to first game contact, the relevant medical staff are to keep notes of all clinical assessments and rehabilitation on PMA/new system (when introduced). Any scans or tests carried out during this process are to be uploaded onto PMA with consent from the parents and request from the location of the scan.

Concerns

If a member of staff has a concern regarding a player returning to training or games too soon, they should liaise with a relevant member of the medical department and submit an online entry into MyConcern (safeguarding case management system).

Should a parent/carer have any concerns regarding their child returning to training/games too soon, they have the right to refrain their child from taking part and discuss their concerns with a relevant staff member.

To raise a concern please see below relevant staff members.

Shaun Bowden – Senior Safeguarding Manager / Club Secretary

Email: shaun.bowden@newport-county.co.uk

Email: safeguarding@newport-county.co.uk

Morgan Simmons – Designated Safeguarding Lead

Email: morgan.simmons@newport-county.co.uk

Email: safeguarding@newport-county.co.uk

Jordan Hughes – Academy Manager

Email: jordan.hughes@newport-county.co.uk


Gauri Khanvilkar – Lead Academy Physiotherapist

Email: gauri.khanvilkar@newport-county.co.uk

Chris Silver – Player Care Officer

Email: player.care@newport-county.co.uk

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