



# Academy Scouts Policy

NEWPORT COUNTY AFC

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<b>Updated by</b>	Shaun Bowden
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## **1. Position and Values**

Newport County AFC Academy's Assistant Academy Manager takes lead responsibility for scouting new talent and for line managing the part-time talent scouts employed by Newport County AFC (NCAFC) who seek to identify promising young players through attendance at:

- Soccer schools
- Saturday/Sunday junior schools
- Inter county soccer
- Tournaments/Festivals not involving other professional clubs.

Our representatives will not scout at academy soccer and centre of excellence games (Below U16's) unless prior arrangements have been made with both clubs involved. The Club has a relatively small team of scouts who may also receive tips from parents, peers, colleagues and occasionally agents.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people is of paramount importance to NCAFC and all scouts practice in accordance with the Club's safeguarding policy and procedures. This policy sets out clear expectations around scouting activity, behaviour, and safeguards.

## **2. Recruitment and Deployment of Scouts**

NCAFC has a robust and rigorous safe recruitment process for scouts against a clear job description. All scouts are subject to the following:

- Enhanced DBS checks
- Take up of references indicating that they are suitable and appropriate people to undertake a role with children and young/vulnerable people
- Full induction to their role and to club policies by the Assistant Academy Manager including:
  - Codes of conduct
  - Orientation to the Club's safeguarding framework, policies, reporting processes and linked policies (including Equality and Diversity Policy)
  - Recognised safeguarding training e.g. the FA 'Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football' workshop.
- Issuing of Club ID badges, which includes a photograph, to be renewed every season and which states the year of that current season (ID badges are always recovered from any scout who is no longer involved with the club and their details are removed from the SCR).

## **3. Professional Training and Development**

NCAFC provides training for scouts and continued professional development to ensure that they:

- Recognise the issues related to safeguarding children and understand our club's policies and procedures.
- Know who the Senior Safeguarding Manager is at the Academy
- Understand the talent requirements of the club
- Provide a positive first impression and promote and enhance the club's image

- Understand how to demonstrate club loyalty.
- Understand all aspects of grass-roots football including how to approach managers/club coaches in an appropriate manner.
- Know what The FA and EFL rules are in relation to the recruitment of young players
- Understand the nature of creating positive, professional relationships with families and players and others they liaise with
- Recognise that they must complete appropriate paperwork required by the club
- Receive regular supervision and training appropriate to the hours of work and the role they hold.

NCAFC has a very holistic and long-term approach to player recruitment and development. The Assistant Academy Manager is an integral part of the Academy and Club team attending regular meetings with all of the key coaching, management and support staff. Scouts will also be expected to attend Club training, briefings and meetings as required to ensure they are kept fully informed and up to date.

#### **4. Bogus Scouts**

Across the football landscape there are scouts both in the UK and abroad who claim to be acting on behalf of a Premier League or Football League club who simply are not. These individuals present potential risks for young people and their families and may:

- ask families/individuals to pay them in return for promises of trials or extra training or to cover insurance or medical fees or transport
- say they can give players extra training in order to get you a trial
- have scruffy or old or odd-looking identification (but it may also look very convincing)
- have a letter supposed to be from someone at our Club
- wear old or scruffy Club kit (although some may look very smart)
- offer to take a player to a trial
- approach players and/or parents through social networking (Facebook, twitter etc).

Our staff are trained and encouraged to be alert to and to make both players and parents aware of the dangers associated with bogus scouts. We advise players, coaches and parents/carers to:

- never assume that an individual is a proper Club scout just because they say they are
- always ask for identification and check it closely
- look closely at any kit/uniform but not assuming that professional or branded clothing indicates means a proper scout
- contact the Academy's Senior Safeguarding Manager, Head of Academy or Academy Assistant Manager to verify the person's identity
- never make any payments to them for any reason – a genuine approach will not involve any financial exchange
- ensure players know to never agree to go anywhere with them, especially if no parent/trusted adult knows where you are or where they are going
- always challenge any unidentified or suspicious adults observing children's matches and report concerns to the Safeguarding Officer or to the Police if there are any immediate concerns about safety.

## **5. Scouts Attendance Policy**

All clubs wishing to send scouts to Newport County Academy home games must request permission at least 48 hours prior to the commencement of the fixture. All requests made with less notice will be refused.

An acknowledgement e-mail will be sent by return e-mail to confirm the scout's attendance. All requests must be sent by email to the Academy's Assistant Manager and be age group specific. Scouts will not be allowed to view any other age groups on this visit. A maximum of one scout per age group will be allowed. Any representatives who turn up without prior authorisation or without suitable ID will be asked to leave the premises.

Scouts must report to the Assistant Academy Manager or designated contact at least 10 minutes prior to kick off but should not arrive at the training ground any earlier than 20 minutes prior to kick off. All scouts will produce an official current season photo ID pass.

The making of approaches or communication of any kind with players or parents is strictly forbidden. Photography or video of any kind is not allowed.

Any breach of these rules will be reported to the Football League/Premier League and the originating clubs will be refused subsequent requests for Newport County fixtures.

## **6. NCAFC Scouts Attending Matches**

We will email clubs to inform them of the intention of specific scouts to attend a specific match at least 24 hours before the kickoff time (at all levels including grass roots)

Once notification of authorisation has been received from the club, the Academy's Assistant Manager will email our scouts via the PMA to inform them of the match and ticket collection and any other agreed arrangements. Our Scout will then respond confirming these arrangements and confirming their commitment to the following Youth development rules:

- Code of Conduct for Scouts
- Produce their ID card upon request
- Inform the club of their arrival
- Comply to any documentation regarding the approach procedure and processes that the home club has for their players.

## 7. Scouts Attending Newport County AFC Academy Home Games Policy

**Objective:** To establish clear guidelines and expectations for scouts attending Newport County AFC academy matches, ensuring a professional and respectful environment that upholds the integrity of the academy and its players.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all scouts wishing to attend matches involving Newport County AFC academy teams, including U18, U21, and development games.

### **Policy Guidelines:**

#### 1. **Registration and Approval Process:**

- All scouts must complete a formal registration process to attend academy matches by submitting a request to the Academy Manager or designated representative.
- Requests should be submitted at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled match and must include the scout's name, scouting organisation, and purpose for attending.
- Confirmation of approval will be sent via email. Entry will not be granted to any scout who has not registered in advance.

#### 2. **Entry and Sign-in:**

- Scouts must arrive 30 minutes prior to kick-off for entry and check-in.
- On arrival, scouts must sign in at the site communicated on the scout ticket.
- Official identification may be requested prior to entry.

#### 3. **Conduct and Professionalism:**

- Scouts are expected to maintain professional conduct at all times, adhering to the values and standards of Newport County AFC.
- Disrespectful behaviour, including inappropriate comments or disruptions during the match, will not be tolerated.
- Direct communication with players before, during, or after matches is prohibited unless authorised by the Academy Manager.

#### 4. **Confidentiality and Player Welfare:**

- Scouts must respect player confidentiality and the integrity of their personal development. Any player-related information should be kept confidential.
- Recording of matches or players is not permitted without prior consent from the Academy Manager.
- Scouts must not interfere with a player's concentration, performance, or development during match days.

#### 5. **Access and Seating:**

- Approved scouts will be given access to designated spectator areas. Please note that there is no undercover seated area available.
- Team sheets will not be issued to scouts at any time.

- No access will be granted to the guest lounge or other restricted areas.
6. **Parking:**
- Car parking is available on-site but is provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Please plan accordingly.
7. **Reporting and Communication:**
- After attending a match, scouts are encouraged to share their feedback or scouting reports with the Academy Manager or coaching staff as required.
  - Any discussions related to potential transfers, player interest, or representation must be conducted in a formal manner, outside match times.
8. **Compliance with Regulations:**
- Scouts must comply with all relevant regulations set by football governing bodies, including The FA and EFL, as well as any club-specific guidelines regarding recruitment and player development.
9. **Disciplinary Actions:**
- Any breaches of this policy may result in revocation of access to future academy games, with further disciplinary action taken as deemed necessary.

**Contact Information:** For further inquiries or to request access to academy games, please contact the Academy Manager

## **8. Scouts Code of Conduct and Method of Approach**

### **Introduction**

Scouting in the professional game is a difficult activity and all representatives need to work with a degree of independence and show initiative. NCAFC believes that, the intensity and increase in activity by professional clubs to acquire and unearth talent makes it vitally important that club representatives work within the rules and regulations laid down by The FA. Club representatives are responsible to the Recruitment Officer.

### **The Code**

The following points provide a simple but sensible code for all our club scouts/representatives to follow:

1. Identification: each scout should carry with them their "Club's Representative Card" issued season to season and present this on any approach.
2. Rules and regulations: scouts must ensure that they are totally conversant and familiar with the football governing bodies' rules and regulations concerning schoolboy/youth players.
3. Scouts must ensure that safeguarding training and requirements are maintained through completion of the FA 'Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football workshop (or a recognised refresher, update or equivalent learning) at least every three years

4. Scouts must comply with club requirements in relation to safe recruitment and deployment background checks including DBS checks
5. Club representatives must always seek to introduce themselves to the person in charge of the team
6. The representative should wait until an appropriate time to enquire as to the status or details of any player involved (not in the middle of the game)
7. No approach either directly or indirectly should be made to a boy or parent of a boy signed with another club.
8. If a question is raised, re "the boys' registration" this should be verified through the Club to the registrations department.
9. If information is refused by the person in charge of the team, this should be reported back to the Club's Recruitment Officer, who in turn, will bring this to the notice of its respective league authorities to follow up and respond to.
10. Approaches to players outside the specified dates/times agreed for viewing is illegal and should be avoided at all costs.
11. Scouts should NOT unfairly criticise other clubs' officials.
12. Scouts must ensure that they are familiar with the club's policies and procedures and comply with them
13. Scouts must ensure that they know how to contact the club's Designated Safeguarding Officer
14. Scouts must be registered with EFL through the Single Central Record (SCR)
15. Scouts must promote and enhance the club image and demonstrate club loyalty
16. Be issued with and wear Club ID badge stating the current season and have a recent photograph and should be renewed every season
17. Scouts must ensure that they understand the talent requirements of the club and have knowledge of children's technical and physical development
18. Scouts must always be honest and realistic with parents and players
19. Scouts must maintain good lines of communication with the Club Recruitment Officer and staff
20. Scouts should complete all records and paperwork in a timely and conscientious manner
21. Scouts must attend club meetings, supervision and training when required
22. Scouts must always report any potential safeguarding or welfare concerns without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Officer
23. It is expected that scouts should NOT unfairly criticise other club's officials.
24. Scouts must never abuse their position or make any unrealistic promises to children, parents, or club managers
25. Scouts should never promise trials at NCAFC without the permission / agreement of the club
26. Scouts must never, as part of their role in football, transport players or allow any player to stay overnight at their home or other accommodation

## Areas of Recruitment

- All soccer schools
- Saturday/Sunday junior schools
- Inter county soccer
- Tournaments/Festivals not involving other professional clubs

## Academy soccer and centre of excellence games (Below U16's)

It is not allowed to scout the above areas of soccer unless prior arrangements have been made with both clubs involved.

### DECLARATION

I have read and understood the above code and the club's expectations of my conduct. As a representative of Newport County AFC I duly agree to comply with it.

Signed:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

### 9. Key Academy Contacts

#### **Academy Manager**

Jordan Hughes

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

#### **Head of Schoolboy Football & Operations**

Ryan Morley

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

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