



Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

NEWPORT COUNTY AFC

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1. Introduction – reason for the policy

- 1.1 As a football club, inclusive of a Category 3 Academy, we aim to provide an efficient and professional service to everyone we work with, and everyone who contacts us is entitled to be treated respectfully and courteously as are our staff.
- 1.2 Some of our work involves dealing with challenging circumstances, and we accept that people sometimes act out of character when they are anxious or distressed, and we understand that, for a variety of reasons, some people struggle with communication. Our staff are trained to make allowances for this. However, we will always address unacceptable behaviour.
- 1.3 This is because we have a duty to protect our staff from harassment and abuse and a duty to ensure that our resources are focused on the areas where they can do the best.
- 1.4 This policy sets out:
 - the type of behaviour we regard as unacceptable.
 - how we will respond to unacceptable behaviour.
 - how we will support our staff in managing unacceptable behaviour.
- 1.5 It covers all those that we work with and is designed to protect our staff and those carrying out work on our behalf. It applies regardless of where we carry out our work and whether the unacceptable behaviour occurs during the working day or, where it relates to our work, outside working hours.

2 What is unacceptable behaviour?

- 2.1 It is difficult to provide a comprehensive list of what we regard as unacceptable behaviour, but we have provided examples below:
 - using physical violence or intimidation
 - being verbally abusive including shouting, making threats
 - making derogatory remarks
 - making inflammatory statements
 - using racist, homophobic, sexist, or otherwise discriminatory language
 - making unsubstantiated allegations
 - making threats to damage property
 - making offensive posts about us online
 - making frequent inappropriate or unnecessary visits to our staff
 - insisting on seeing or speaking to one member of staff when a suitable alternative has been offered

- routinely ignoring policies and procedures
- setting unreasonable timescales for a response
- refusing to accept that certain matters are not within our remit
- frequently and inappropriately changing the substance of a complaint while we are dealing with it
- frequently raising peripheral or trivial matters that do not relate to the main query or our role
- continuing to pursue a complaint after we have made it clear that our complaints processes have been fully implemented and exhausted
- continuously complaining
- making unreasonable demands on staff through excessive contact
- misusing the contact details of our staff.

2.2 We will review this list regularly and make any necessary changes.

3 How we will respond to unacceptable behaviour

Supporting staff who have experienced unacceptable behaviour

3.1 The relevant senior manager will work with those affected by unacceptable behaviour to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Dealing with criminal behaviour

3.2 If the unacceptable behaviour is also criminal, or if the person has threatened criminal behaviour towards our staff or property, we will contact the police. We will also place appropriate restrictions on the person's contact with our staff until the matter has been fully resolved.

3.3 Examples of criminal behaviour that we would refer to the police are: assaults on our staff; threats to kill or harm a member of staff; criminal damage or threat of criminal damage; blackmail; harassment and cyber-crime.

3.4 The relevant senior manager will be responsible for contacting the police and placing any necessary restrictions on the person's contact with our staff.

3.5 The restrictions we use in such cases will depend on the nature and seriousness of the behaviour and the risks posed to our staff. Some examples of the restrictions we may use are:

- prohibiting direct contact between the person and members of staff
- prohibiting the person from visiting our premises or attending our events

- only permitting the person to contact certain members of staff and at certain times
- asking for contact to be made through third parties.

Dealing with abusive or excessive phone calls

- 3.6 If the unacceptable behaviour happens during a telephone conversation, our staff have the right to terminate the call. In these circumstances, they will warn the caller that they will terminate the call if they continue with the behaviour. They will give the person a chance to modify their behaviour and explain that if the call is terminated, we may decide not to accept further calls from them.
- 3.7 If the caller does not heed the warning, our staff may end the call. They should then report the matter to a senior manager, who will keep a record of the incident. They will not be expected to take further calls from the person unless and until the complainant agrees to behave appropriately.
- 3.8 If necessary, the senior manager will restrict the person's telephone contact using one of these methods:
- a. giving the person one point of telephone contact and managing and monitoring their calls as appropriate – e.g., restricting their contact to certain days of the week/times of day
 - b. advising them that they are only permitted to contact us by email until they have agreed to behave appropriately
 - c. insisting that they use a representative if they want to call our staff.
- 3.9 Any restrictions on the person's contact with our staff will remain in place until they have agreed to behave appropriately, and the relevant senior manager has obtained the consent of the Senior Safeguarding Manager to remove the restriction.

Unacceptable behaviour in meetings

- 3.10 If the unacceptable behaviour happens during a meeting, our staff have the right to terminate the meeting. They will warn the person about their behaviour first and if the person does not heed the warning, the member of staff may end the meeting. If the meeting is on our premises or at one of our events, our staff may ask the person to leave. If the Senior Safeguarding Manager is present, they should carry out this role.
- 3.11 Any members of staff who have had to ask a person to leave a meeting should inform a senior manager promptly.

Unacceptable behaviour in e-mails

- 3.12 If the unacceptable behaviour happens through emails, the person will be warned about their behaviour by a relevant staff member or manager and advised as follows:

- if they continue with the behaviour, we will not respond to their emails and they will only be permitted to send emails to a generic mailbox, rather than a member of staff - we will also refer the abusive emails to the police where we believe they may amount to criminal behaviour
- in relation to excessive and unnecessary emails, they will be advised that if they continue to send them, we will not respond and they will only be permitted to send emails to a generic mailbox, rather than a member of staff.

3.13 Our staff will not be expected to respond to emails from the person unless and until they agree to behave appropriately.

3.14 Where the person has continued with the unacceptable behaviour, we may advise them that they will only be permitted to communicate with us through a third party. In extreme cases, we may block their email contact with our staff. The Senior Safeguarding Manager will decide whether to restrict contact in this way and when any such restrictions should end.

Unacceptable behaviour on social media

3.15 If the unacceptable behaviour happens through social media, we will warn the person that if they continue with the behaviour, we will restrict their contact with us and, where appropriate, report them to the social media service provider. The relevant senior manager will issue the initial warning and will decide whether to report the person to the provider.

Unnecessary visits

3.16 If the unacceptable behaviour happens through unnecessary visits to our premises, particularly our offices, the relevant senior manager will warn the person that if they continue with the behaviour, we may prohibit them from entering our premises other than for pre-arranged meetings.

3.17 If the person continues with the behaviour, the Senior Safeguarding Manager will decide whether to prohibit the person from entering our premises (or take other appropriate action) and whether/when to remove any restrictions.

4 Notification about restrictions and how long restrictions stay in place

4.1 When we impose restrictions, we will notify the person promptly about the: nature of any restrictions; reasons for the restrictions; duration of the restrictions and ways of having the restrictions removed.

4.2 The Senior Safeguarding Manager will review restrictions at appropriate intervals to check whether they are still required, updating our records accordingly and ensuring, where relevant, that those affected are kept informed of decisions.

4.3 Any restrictions on an individual's contact with our staff will remain in place until we are satisfied that the person does not pose a risk to our staff or property. This may come about through a successful appeal to the Board of Directors or a decision of the Senior Safeguarding Manager upon review of a restriction.

4.4 We will keep a record of all such decisions and associated reasons.

5 Appealing against restrictions

- 5.1 We will permit appeals against restrictions on contact provided the affected person appeals in writing within 14 working days of the date of the restriction. The Board of Directors will consider the appeal.
- 5.2 The Board of Directors may decide to:
- keep the restriction in place with no changes
 - replace the restriction with a different one
 - remove the restriction;
- 5.3 We will inform the appellant of the decision in writing within 14 working days of the decision being made. Appeal decisions will take effect immediately and we will update our records accordingly.

6 Records of unacceptable behaviour

- 6.1 We will keep a record of all incidents of unacceptable behaviour and ensure that relevant staff are kept informed of incidents and restrictions.
- 6.2 Where we are satisfied that an individual has modified their behaviour after a first warning, we will keep a record of the incident for 6 months.
- 6.3 Where we have had to place restrictions on an individual's contact with us, we will keep a record of the incident and restrictions for one year.

Useful contacts:

Senior Safeguarding Manager / Club Secretary

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