



## **Equality & Promoting Diversity Policy & Procedures**

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**Review Date: December 2018**

**AFC Bournemouth will review this policy annually, when legislation changes or following any learning outcomes from safeguarding incidents, concerns, or allegations.**

**Last updated 20<sup>th</sup> December 2017**



## Introduction

AFC Bournemouth is committed to providing a working environment in which employees and all children, young persons and adults at risk engaged in activities at the club are able to realise their full potential and are protected from harm and can contribute to its business success irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

This commitment extends to all externally focused club activities, be it a matchday, event or outreach programme within our community.

The club is also committed to address the additional vulnerability of some participants and the extra barriers they may face e.g. those in care, looked after children, those with mental health issues, physical disability etc.

The Chairman is the Board Champion for equality and diversity while the Chief Executive has overall responsibility in all the Club's operations. The General Manager will oversee the implementation of the Club's policies and procedures while individual managers will have responsibility for the practical application of this policy in the recruitment, selection, training and promotion of workers. However, all employees are expected to give their support to the key values around equality and diversity.

In order to achieve our equality objectives, the club will consult with its internal equality groups, its equality partnership group, other community stakeholders and our supporters and club partners.

These are key values to which all employees are expected to give their support.

## Declared Disabilities

The Equality Act requires employers to treat people with a declared disability equally with non-disabled persons in all employment matters. A disability under the Act is described as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' (more than minor or trivial) and 'long-term' (more than 12 months) negative effect of the individual's ability to undertake normal daily activities.

The club will make reasonable adjustments/changes to the premises etc. to accommodate the needs of employees with disabilities so long as these changes do not contravene other health and safety laws.

For the avoidance of doubt, when using the term 'club' in this policy document, this includes employees of the AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust and the AFC Bournemouth Academy.

In order to create conditions in which this goal can be realised, the club is committed to identifying and eliminating unlawful discriminatory practices, procedures and attitudes throughout the club. The club expects all employees to support this commitment and to assist in its realisation in all possible ways.

It should be read in conjunction with the Harassment guidance below.

This commitment applies to all aspects of employment and activities conducted at the club, including:

- All employees including volunteers have personal responsibility for the practical application of this Policy, which extends to the treatment of job applicants, workers (including former



workers), contractors, customers, and visitors.

- Recruitment and selection, including advertisements, job descriptions, interview, and selection procedures;
- Training;
- Promotion and career development opportunities;
- Terms and conditions of employment, and access to employment related benefits and facilities;
- Grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures;
- And selection for redundancy.

Special responsibility for the practical application of this policy falls upon managers and supervisors involved in the recruitment, selection, training, promotion, and dismissal of workers. It also falls to persons supervising the activities of vulnerable groups engaged with the club. If an individual feels that they are being discriminated against in any way, or if they are aware of any cases of discrimination affecting others, then they should raise the matter with a Supervisor or the General Manager who will consider the necessary action to be taken.

## **Harassment/Discriminatory and Offensive Behaviour.**

The club values the individuality and contribution of all its staff and persons engaged in club activities and is committed to ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity, respect, sensitivity, and fairness and seeks to ensure that the working environment is free from harassment, bullying and victimisation, discriminatory or offensive behaviour. The club will not tolerate this type of behaviour, whether intended or accidental, and will respond seriously to any situation or complaint where it is apparent that it has taken place.

Harassment is physical, verbal, or non-verbal behaviour which is unwanted and personally offensive to the recipient, and which has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It often causes the recipient to feel threatened, humiliated, intimidated, patronised, denigrated, bullied, distressed or harassed.

This Policy applies to all permanent full and part-time staff and temporary staff who are employed by the club and all contract staff who are contracted with the club. It also applies to all other individuals whom employees come into contact with during the course of their employment, including clients, suppliers and job applicants.

The club aims to ensure that all forms of harassment are prevented from happening.

## **The way in which complaints of unlawful discrimination and harassment will be handled**

Discrimination and harassment are often complex matters, and there is no single way of dealing with every suspected or alleged instance. In some cases, employees, may be able to deal satisfactorily with an issue by raising it with their immediate manager.

If an employee wishes to make a formal complaint, he or she should use the club's Grievance Procedure which is set out in the Employee Handbook.

## **If an employee is accused of unlawful discrimination or harassment**

If an employee is accused of unlawful discrimination or harassment, the club will investigate the matter fully.



In the course of the investigation the employee will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation and provide an explanation of his or her actions.

If the club concludes that no unlawful discrimination or harassment has occurred, this will be the end of the matter.

If the club concludes that the claim is false or malicious the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action.

If on the other hand the club concludes that the employee's actions amount to unlawful discrimination or harassment he or she may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

**Please refer to the club's Disciplinary Policy & Procedures document for further guidance.**

## **Monitoring**

The club will not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind in the working environment and will take positive action to prevent its occurrence.

In this connection, the club will monitor its policies and will implement changes in order to improve them as social attitudes and legislation change. This commitment applies to all the club's employment policies and procedures, not just those specifically concerned with Equal Opportunities.

## **Equality Act 2010 – 9 Protected Characteristics**

**Age** – Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or a range of ages (e.g. 18-30 year olds).

**Disability** - A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

**Gender reassignment** – The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

**Marriage and civil partnership** – In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman, but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple. Same sex couples can also have their relationships recognised as a 'civil partnership'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

**Pregnancy and maternity** – Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

**Race** – Refers to the protected characteristics of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

**Religion and belief** – Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

**Sex** – A man or a woman.

**Sexual orientation** – Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

## **Recruitment of ex-offenders**

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to complete criminal record checks (CRC) to assess applicant's suitability for positions of trust. AFC Bournemouth complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a CRC on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

- AFC Bournemouth is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff, or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- The club has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- The club actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills, and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. The club will select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience.
- A CRC is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a CRC is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a CRC will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position. Where a CRC is to form part of the recruitment process, the club will encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. The club will request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within AFC Bournemouth and the club will guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- Unless the nature of the position allows AFC Bournemouth to ask questions about the applicant's entire criminal record, the club will only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Those in AFC Bournemouth who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. The club will also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, the club will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.



- The club will make every subject of a CRC aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
- The club will undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a CRC with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

The club is committed to ensuring Vitality Stadium is as inclusive and welcoming to all as it can be and we will rely on our staff to uphold this principle and encourage our supporters to do the same.

**TOGETHER, ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.**

**Other Applicable Club Policies:**

- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Code of Ethics, Conduct & Behaviour.
- Disciplinary Policy.
- Guidance for the Employment of U18's
- Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy.
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy & Procedures.
- Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures.
- Safe Recruitment Policy.
- Whistleblowing Policy.