

AFC BOURNEMOUTH EQUALITY POLICY JANUARY 2023

AFC Bournemouth is committed to providing an environment in which all employees, potential employees, supporters and participants in club activities are able to realise their full potential, are protected from harm and are treated with dignity and respect, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

To create conditions in which this goal can be realised, the club is committed to identifying and eliminating all forms of discrimination and everyone involved with the club is expected to share this commitment and to act in accordance with it, and with our Equality Policy.

This commitment extends to recognise additional vulnerabilities and the additional barriers some individuals may face, including but not limited to, young carers, those in care, looked after children, and those from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Further to this, the club will strive to make itself, its environs and its activities such that all individuals and groups will feel welcomed, comfortable and safe. The power of football, sport and community is strong, and we want to give anyone who wants to share our future the opportunity to do so with no barriers. Our club motto is 'Together, Anything is Possible' and there can be no possible reason or benefit to exclude anyone from AFC Bournemouth's interpretation of together.

About this policy

This policy applies to all people connected with the activities of AFC Bournemouth and AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust, including permanent, part-time and fixed-term employees and workers, board members, volunteers, supporters, outreach participants, suppliers and contractors.

Throughout this policy "we" and "our" means AFC Bournemouth or "the club", which includes AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust.

Implementation

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

- 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;
- Selection for redundancy. If an individual feels that they have been 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 Operations Director who will consider the necessary action to be taken.

Legal obligations

AFC Bournemouth is committed to avoiding and eliminating unfair discrimination of any kind and will not, under any circumstances, condone unlawful discriminatory practices.

Discrimination refers to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the 'protected characteristics'. Under the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are defined as;

Age – 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 they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and 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 – Marriage is a union between a man and woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationship legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act 2010).

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 characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Religion or belief – Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. 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.

Complaints and Compliance

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected by law from discrimination 'on the grounds of' having one or more of these characteristics, being assumed to have one or more, associating with someone who has one or more, or being with someone who is assumed to have one or more (excluding pregnancy and maternity, which does not include protection by association or assumption; a woman is also protected from discrimination on the grounds of her own pregnancy).

Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

Direct discrimination – Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one or more protected characteristics.

Indirect discrimination – Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion, or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

Discrimination arising from disability – It is unlawful if a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected to their disability and such unfavourable treatment cannot be justified.

Harassment – Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Victimisation – It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because they have made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

Bullying – Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise humiliate or undermine an individual.

Antisemitism

AFC Bournemouth has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism. The IHRA’s working definition of antisemitism states: “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.” For more information on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s working definition of antisemitism:

<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working/definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>

Declared disabilities

The Equality Act 2010 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) adverse effect of the individual’s ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

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

Harassment, discriminatory and offensive behaviour

The club recognises and values the diversity, 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.

This Policy applies to all permanent full-time, 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, supporters and job applicants.

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

All reports of EDI incidents will follow the relevant procedure highlighted in the respective EDI Incident flowchart (appendix 1 and 2).

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

AFC Bournemouth regards all forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour as unacceptable and is committed to ensuring that individuals feel able to raise any grievance or complained related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so.

There is no single way of dealing with every suspected or alleged incident of discrimination and in some cases, employees may not be able to deal satisfactorily with an issue by raising it with their immediate manager.

Any employee who wishes to make a formal complaint 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 their 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, they may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

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

Hate incident and Hate Crime

The Club supports the work of Dorset Police in tackling hate crime. Dorset Police define a hate incident as *"any non-criminal incident perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate towards a person's protected characteristics.:*

- *Disability*
- *Race*
- *Religion*
- *Transgender identity*
- *Sexual orientation*

A hate crime is any criminal offense, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate towards a person's protected characteristics.

Dorset Police reporting process

You are able to report incidents of this nature through a number of measures:

- Dial 999 for emergency matters
- Dial 101 for non emergency matters
- [Report online](#) to Dorset Police
- Report through [True Vision](#)

EDI Reviews

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

In this connection, the club will regularly assess the equality impact of its policies and will implement changes to reflect changes to legislation, make them more inclusive and reduce any potential disadvantage. This commitment applies to all the club's employment policies and procedures, not just those specifically concerned with equal opportunities.

Recruitment of ex-offenders

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to complete criminal record checks (CRC) to assess applicants' 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, offending background or other information revealed.

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.

Recruitment and selection

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person if possible.

Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements, job descriptions and person specifications should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, except in the very limited circumstances allowed by law: for example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, which must not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.

Part-time and fixed-term work

Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

Positive action and training

The principle of equality goes further than simply complying with legislation. The club is committed to taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers, whether real or perceived, that restrict the opportunity for all sections of the community to participate or engage equally and fully with the club. The Club understands the importance of raising awareness and education as well as promoting diverse role models and is committed to providing those involved with the Club the opportunity to learn from a rolling programme of training.

AFC Bournemouth is a signatory of the Football Leadership Diversity Code, which focuses on increasing equality of opportunity with recruitment targets, developing talent as well as principles for overall recruitment, which will be based on merit from diverse talent pipelines.

For more information on the Football Leadership Diversity Code:

- <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/inclusion-and-antidiscrimination/football-leadership-diversity-code>

Club Campaigns

Everyone, Together

Everyone Together is part of the club's identity that uses the positivity that football brings to people's lives to celebrate diversity, tackle prejudice and promote understanding. For more information on Everyone Together:

- <https://www.afcb.co.uk/news/club-news/club-launch-everyone-together-campaign>

- <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDSAlkBZMWj6v2B9Z4ZAiuUhMlf4pJno>

- <https://www.afcb.co.uk/news/club-news/everyone-together-campaign-wins-awar>

Hate Hurts Everyone

Hate Hurts Everyone will tell powerful stories about the effects that abuse, discrimination and hate have on people in our community to help us highlight the change needed in our society.

- <https://www.afcb.co.uk/news/club-news/club-launch-hate-hurts-everyone-campaign/>

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUck2mfKJcs>

Responsibility, monitoring and evaluation

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility in all the club's operations. The Operations Director will oversee the implementation of the club's policies and procedures whilst the EDI Manager will take responsibility for the implementation of the club's policies and procedures

Individual managers will have responsibility for the practical application of this policy in the recruitment, selection, training and promotion of workers. All employees are expected to support this commitment and assist in its realisation in all possible ways.

The Club will implement regular audits, surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in the Club and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance diversity and inclusion.

The Club will review its Equality Policy annually, or sooner where new developments in legislation necessitate such a review, by the equality working group. Any changes will be reviewed and approved by the CEO/Board.

The club will consult with its internal and external equality groups, and other community stakeholders to achieve its equality objectives.