



AFC BOURNEMOUTH

SANCTIONS POLICY

**Prepared by:**

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Approved by:

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read "Neill Blake".

Neill Blake, Chief Executive

October 2023

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

Review Date: October 2024

Version – V1

Introduction

AFC Bournemouth is committed to providing an environment in which everyone is able to enjoy watching football across the Men's, Women's and Youth Teams. Cautions, temporary or full club banning orders are dependent on the infringement and whether a supporter has been subject to a matchday disciplinary process before. In instances whereby banning orders and suspensions have to be issued, the below information can be used as guidance for how and when they may occur. The policy must be applied fairly, equally, and consistently to all person's irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

These sanctions are a guidance document only. The Club retains discretion to impose alternative sanctions depending on the circumstances. Sanctions are independent of any other investigation and/or sanctions that may be imposed by third parties. Where appropriate the Club may provide relevant details to the Police or other relevant authorities. The Club reserves the right to change this guide without prior notice. In the event that any changes are made, the revised guide will be updated through www.afcb.co.uk.

Investigation Process/Referral to Incident's Panel

If an allegation is made against a supporter of breaching AFC Bournemouth's rules and regulations, the supporter will be notified of the allegation in writing (or if necessary and appropriate, another means of communication) and asked for their own observations regarding the allegation. In addition, the club may communicate with other supporters/staff/police to build a comprehensive picture of the alleged incident and review any CCTV. If the alleged incident is one that may lead to a club ban, then it may be necessary to invoke a temporary ban of their season ticket and/or ability to purchase home/away/cup tickets for any AFC Bournemouth team whilst the investigation process is undertaken. The decision to utilise a temporary ban, rests with the Operations Director.

Any offences shown within the matrix will be referred to the Incidents Panel who will normally consist of:

- Operations Director (Chair)
- Chief Ticketing Officer (Vice-Chair)
- Operations Assistant
- Head of EDI and Engagement
- Head of Team Operations
- Club media representative

The incidents panel will normally convene once every two weeks during the season and all meetings are recorded by the Operations Assistant. The details of any incident along with supporting evidence will be presented to the panel and a decision re guilt will be made via a majority verdict. In the event of no majority verdict being reached, the Operations Director will make the final decision. AFC

Bournemouth has set the burden of proof for incidents reported to the panel as being 'on balance of probabilities.' This means the panel must be satisfied that the alleged incident is more likely than not to have occurred.

Where appropriate, other relevant representatives may be invited onto the Incidents Panel. In addition, and where necessary, the supporter in question may be invited into a meeting with representatives of the Incidents Panel, relevant representatives will be decided by the subject of the report. Anyone under the age of 18 or deemed to be a vulnerable adult, must be accompanied by an appropriate adult.

A letter will be sent within 14 working days of the incident panel meeting, informing the supporter of the panel's decision.

Fan Education Programme and Club Conduct Contract

Where supporters are involved in an equality and diversity related incident or where supporters are young, the fan education programme will be offered. Participation in this process may reduce or remove the need to impose a suspension/ban. (see appendix 1)

As a follow up from a fan education programme, a Club Conduct Contract is an agreement made between the club and a supporter which outlines specific measures the supporter will agree to abide by.

The contract sets out the consequences for breaching the contract, length of the contract and a date for review. (see appendix 2)

Appeal Process

All sanctions are subject to an appeals process. Following an offence, the Club will determine the sanction to be imposed and will communicate this sanction in writing to the relevant individual, who will have 14 days to appeal the initial decision. This appeal should be submitted in writing to the chair of the Reported Incidents Panel via ops@afcb.co.uk. Any appeal must outline the reasons for the appeal and give all relevant information to allow the panel to make the correct decision.

If an appeal is made, it will be referred to a member of the AFC Bournemouth Senior Management team who is independent of the incidents panel. Their judgement as to the process used and sanction applied will be final at this point, if the individual remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal, they should refer to the Complaints Policy and Procedures document which provides details of how a supporter can contact the Independent Football Ombudsman.

Other Applicable Club Policies:

- Persistent Standing Policy.
- Reporting and Preventing Abuse on Social Media Policy.
- Complaints Policy and Procedures.
- Equality & Promoting Diversity Policy & Procedures.



- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy & Procedures.
- Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures.
- Ticketing Terms & Conditions

SANCTIONS POLICY



Offence	1 st Incident	2 nd Incident	3 rd Incident
Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Drinking alcohol in view of the pitch b) Drunkenness in and around the stadium c) Persistent standing d) Smoking/Vaping in the stadium e) Purchasing concession type ticket without meeting the qualifying criteria 	Written warning	Minimum 3 game suspension	3 – 6 game suspension and Club Conduct Contract
Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Abusive, foul or aggressive language/behaviour b) Damaging property or disorderly behaviour c) Use of any prohibited item (s) d) Reselling or transferring tickets through the use of third party sites 	Written Warning or 1 – 6 game suspension	3 – 6 game suspension	Minimum 6 game suspension
Level 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Missile Throwing b) Pitch encroachment (actual or intended) c) Racist, homophobic or discriminatory language (including sexual harassment) d) Use or possession of 'pyrotechnics' 	Indefinite suspension, pending investigation		
Level 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Abusive or aggressive language towards AFC Bournemouth staff, Police or anyone else in a working capacity b) Any other criminal activity 	Indefinite suspension, pending investigation		
Other A Police sanction at a home or away match, any other offence, or a breach of applicable Terms and Conditions, Supporters' Code of Conduct, or ground regulations	Reviewed on an individual basis		

Appendix 1

Discrimination and abuse education programme

The education programme is in place to offer an alternative solution in response to an EDI incident within the Club. Predominantly this is targeted at supporters however, the programme can be adapted to be delivered to staff members involved in EDI incident. The education programme has been designed to incorporate AFC Bournemouth staff, supporters and members from relevant local community groups who will be vitally important in providing knowledge and learning allowing those involved to thoroughly understand the impact of discrimination/abusive language and behaviour. All sessions will be facilitated by a relevant member of AFC Bournemouth staff alongside someone with lived experience within the protected characteristic group.

Sessions will be delivered as follows:

- 2 or 3, 30-minute sessions with Head of EDI and Engagement and relevant member/s of staff.
- Delivered online or in person at Vitality stadium.
- Involvement from relevant person with lived experience (further details below)
- Follow up report (from Head of EDI and Engagement) and personal statement (from supporter) to be made on completion of programme.

The nature of the incident the supporter has been involved in will shape the sessions, attention will be paid to whether the incident took place in person or online and the type of discrimination; direct, indirect, harassment or victimisation.

Sessions will follow the following format:

- Session 1 – Focus on understanding Equality Act, Protected Characteristics, Discrimination
- Session 2 – Focus on specific type of discrimination that the supporter was involved with, education around the topic
- Session 3 – Opportunity for Q&A with person involved with relevant protected characteristic group

Where relevant, supporters who take part in the education sessions will be invited to complete a short training course through Kick It Outs academy as part of their learning on the topic. (<https://theacademy.kickitout.org/>)

Protected Characteristics

Due diligence will be carried out to ensure those with lived experience, involved in the sessions from Club, Community Sports Trust and supporter groups. This will create an assurance that their inclusion is relevant and they do not have any connection to the supporter involved in the fan education programme.

Racism

Sessions will involve a member of staff from AFC Bournemouth's Community Sports Trust with relevant lived experience. Where necessary and appropriate, sessions will involve a representative from Kick It Out who will support delivery.

Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and Gender Reassignment

Sessions will involve a representative from AFC Bournemouth's LGBTQ+ supporters Proud Cherries who will reference their lived experience to provide insight into the impact of discrimination/abuse of this nature.

Disability abuse/discrimination



Sessions will involve a representative from AFC Bournemouth's Disabled Supporters Association (DSA) who will reference and share knowledge of their own lived experience to provide insight into the impact of discrimination/abuse of this nature.

Religious Abuse

AFC Bournemouth works in close connection with a wide range of Religious groups and sessions will involve a representative from the relevant Religious group. This person will be able to share their own lived experience

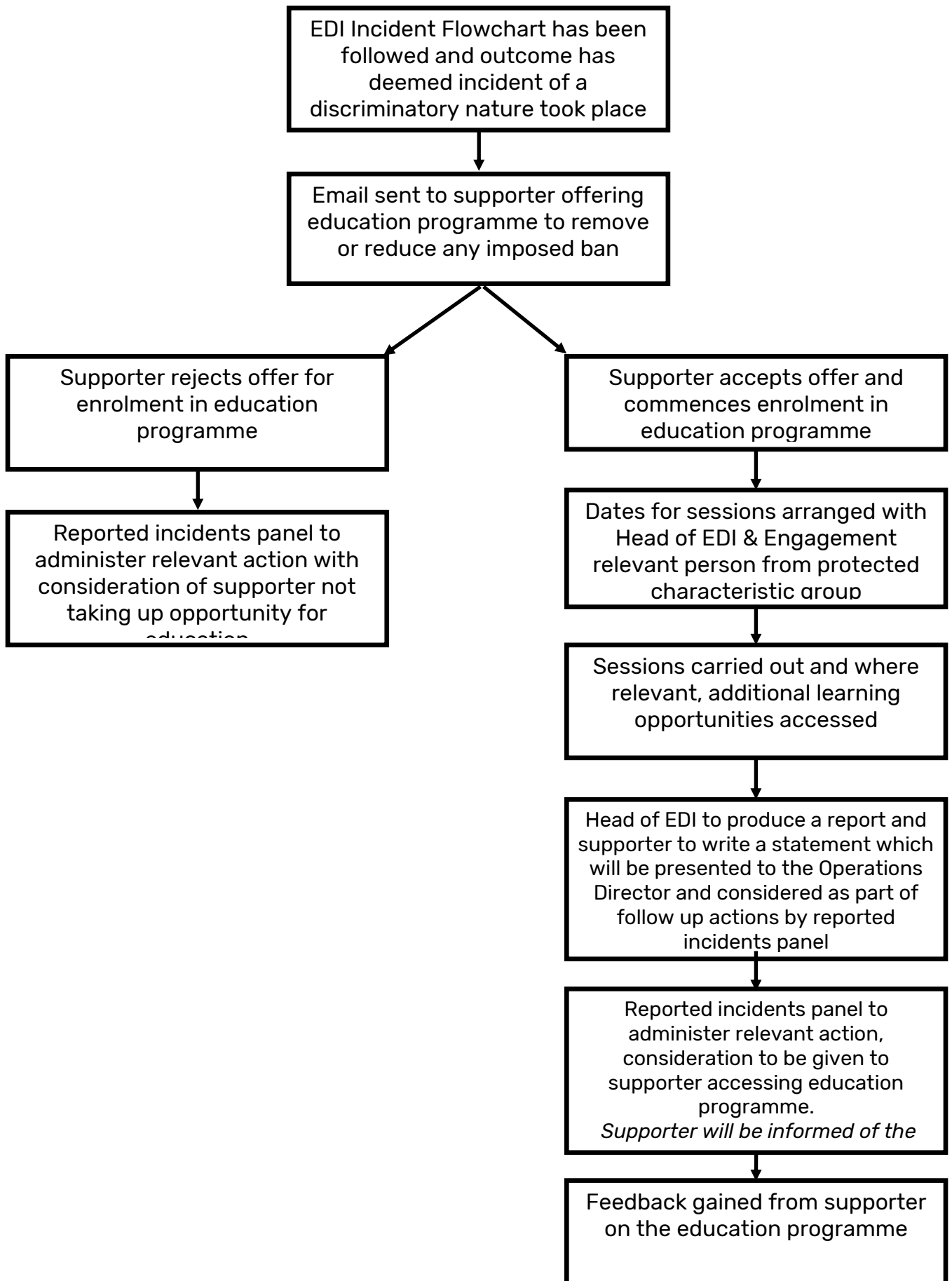
Sexism

Sessions will involve AFC Bournemouth's Her Game Too ambassador who will attend sessions and will reference and share knowledge of their own lived experience to provide insight into the impact of sexist discrimination.

Ageism

Sessions will involve a member of AFC Bournemouth's Equality Focus group and a member of staff from AFC Bournemouth or AFC Bournemouth's Community Sports Trust.

Education programme flowchart



Appendix 2

Club Conduct Contract

This Club Conduct Contract is made on:

Between:

1. (The club)
2. (The supporter)

The terms of this club conduct contract end on _____ unless certain circumstances change and will be reviewed in _____.

The club is willing to reinstate the supporter's attendance on the condition that the supporter agrees, whilst attending any match in which AFC Bournemouth participates (including, but not limited to, home and away matches for any of its teams, matches played at neutral venues and when travelling to and from such matches) to abide by the following conditions:

1. *Conditions dependent on incident, to be decided by the club.*

If the supporter is under investigation by any other associated organisation, i.e. the Police, British Transport Police, another football club, AFC Bournemouth reserves the right to suspend attendance (as defined above) until such time as that investigation is complete.

Failure to comply with the terms of this agreement may result in the withdrawal or cancellation of the supporter's season ticket, other matchday tickets and/or the withdrawal of any other rights the supporter may have in relation to purchasing tickets and/or attending matches in which the club participates. In such circumstances, the club reserves the right, and the supporter gives their permission, to make any report (including sharing details of the existence and content of this Contract) to Dorset Police, British Transport Police and/or any other relevant Police authority as it deems appropriate in the circumstances for the purposes of event security, public comfort and safety or the prevention or detection of crime (or suspected crime).

Declaration

By signing, I confirm that I acknowledge and agree to the terms of this contract and I understand the consequences in breaching this contract.

Signed:

Witnessed by:

Print Name:

Print Name:

Date:

Occupation: