



# Scunthorpe United Football Club

## Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

**Date Prepared:** July 2020

**Date reviewed:** July 2021

This policy was written in to address the need to provide a framework for the academy and to assist players, parents and staff when addressing mental health and wellbeing issues.

### **Policy Statement**

At Scunthorpe United Academy we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our players and staff and where appropriate the wellbeing of parents.

We have a supportive and caring ethos within the academy and our approach is respectful and understanding where each individual and contribution is valued.

At the academy we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

At the academy we will:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- promote self-esteem and ensure academy players know that they count.
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our Academy values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting player voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating non-academic achievements alongside academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole Academy approaches that encompasses every individual.
- Support for players, parents and staff going through recent difficulties including Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at with more complex or long-term conditions if we have the facility to support the individual.

## **Multidisciplinary.**

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy. The policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

## **Lead Members of Staff**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of our academy players staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Designated child protection / safeguarding officer.
- Head of Medicine and Sports Science.
- Head of Education and Health and Emotional wellbeing Lead.
- Academy Manager.
- Academy Chaplain.

## **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our academy players to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental Life-Skills and personal development programme.

The specific content of the workshops will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're delivering to, but we will also use the Guidance given by the government agencies and football authorities to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

## **Targeted support**

- The academy will offer support through targeted approaches for individual players or groups of players which may include:
  - Peer group time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
  - Targeted use of resources that target mental health issues.
  - Managing feelings resources e.g. 'Problem boxes' and 'It's good to talk'
  - Managing emotions resources such as readiness to train.
  - Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups in our carousel delivery.
  - Staff support group.
  - Therapeutic activities including quizzes and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

The Academy will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile: an invaluable resource for the assessment of children and young people's social, emotional and behavioural development.
- Emotional literacy scales: A standardised assessment measuring an individuals' emotional literacy and providing ideas for intervention.

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, players and parents are aware of what support is available within our Academy and how to access further support.

### **Identifying needs and Warning Signs**

All staff will complete 6 and 12 weekly wellbeing trackers on their players aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance: issues/problems arising from poor attendance.
- Punctuality: State of mind.
- Relationships: In and out of their peer group.
- Approach to learning: Concentration during sessions.
- Physical indicators: Are there any factors that show a worrying pattern.
- Negative behaviour patterns: Possibly Symptomatic of deeper issues.
- Family circumstances: Negative contributions or recent separations.
- Recent bereavement: Negative spiralling emotions.
- Health indicators: Continuing impact of health issues on an individual and any indications of possible physical or emotional abuse

These are colour coded Red, Amber, Green to aid identification.

Staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate that an individual within the academy is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

## **Working with Parents**

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our Academy website
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forum/voice.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in Life-skills or personal development workshops and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.

## **Working with other agencies and partners**

As part of our targeted provision the Academy will work with other agencies to support a players emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The medical staff
- Sports psychology services
- Behaviour support through advice about referrals
- Doctors
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service) appropriate to post code.
- Counselling services
- Academy Chaplaincy

## **Training**

As a minimum, all staff will receive training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of the child protection training in order to enable them to keep players safe.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue. [www.minded.org.uk/](http://www.minded.org.uk/)

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more players, parents or staff.

### **Conclusion**

As stated previously the Academy takes the issue of mental health and wellbeing very seriously and are committed to trying to uphold the highest standards when dealing with any issues should they be identified. We are determined to ensure that the standard of delivery and assistance given when dealing with this sensitive issue will be professional.

*(This policy also meets the guidance given from the EFL rules 202.203.)*