# MENTAL WELLBEING

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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**References**

Safeguarding Children's Policy

Safeguarding Adults Policy

Mental Health Act 2010

**Date of Policy: June 2023**

This policy supersedes any other Mental Wellbeing Policy.

Notts County Football Club Academy

# POLICY STATEMENT

The "Company" is committed to providing a caring, friendly, safe environment for all of its members so that they can participate in any sport in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

# PRINCIPLES

Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society. Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing and productivity.

Many factors in the workplace influence the mental wellbeing of individual players and employees, particular departments, or organisations. Understanding and addressing the factors which affect people's mental wellbeing at work have a wide range of benefits, both for individuals and the organisation.

Mental wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all players and employees. Everyone can contribute to improved mental wellbeing at work. Addressing workplace mental wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems and support them once they are at work.

This workplace mental wellbeing policy covers the following aspects of mental health and wellbeing:

Promoting the mental wellbeing of all staff through:
• providing information and raising awareness about mental wellbeing.
• providing opportunities for employees to look after their mental wellbeing.
• promoting policies and practices that promote wellbeing.

# HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

**Mental health** - Everyone has mental health, just as everyone has physical health, and how we feel can vary from good mental wellbeing to difficult feelings and emotions, and to severe mental health problems.

**Mental wellbeing** - Mental wellbeing is the ability to cope with the day-to-day stresses of life, work productively, interact positively with others and realise one's own potential.

**Poor mental health** - Poor mental health is a state of low mental wellbeing where a person is unable to realise ones' own potential, cope with the day-to-day pressures of life, work productively or contribute to a community.

**Mental health problems –** Everyone has times when they struggle with mental health, but when these difficult experiences or feelings go on for a long time and affect ability to enjoy and live life in the way one would want to, this is a mental health problem. That person may receive a specific diagnosis from a doctor, or just feel more generally that you are experiencing poor mental health.

**Common mental health problems** - These include depression, anxiety, phobias and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). These make up many of the problems that lead to one in four people experiencing a mental health problem in any given year. Symptoms can range from the comparatively mild to very severe. Less common mental health problems like schizophrenia or bipolar disorder can have a big impact on people's lives: it may be harder to find appropriate treatment and, as understanding tends to be lower, people may face more stigma. However, many people can live with and recover from these diagnoses and manage the impact on their life successfully.

**Work-related stress** - Work-related stress is defined by the Health and Safety Executive as the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them at work. Stress, including work-related stress, can be a significant cause of illness and is known to be linked with high levels of sickness absence, staff turnover and other issues such as increased capacity for error. Stress is not a medical diagnosis, but severe stress that continues for a long time may lead to a diagnosis of depression or anxiety, or more severe mental health problems.

# SCOPE OF POLICY

Mental health problems and stress can affect anyone, regardless of their position in the organisation. This policy applies equally to all players and employees.

The implementation of this policy will also be supported by other health and safety policies, for example, sickness absence, alcohol, drug and substance abuse, and bullying and harassment. The mental wellbeing policy covers:

**Management skills**

Developing skills for managers and supervisors to:
• promote the mental wellbeing of players and employees
• deal with issues around mental health and stress effectively.

**Support**

 Providing support to players and employees through:
• providing a work environment that promotes and supports mental wellbeing for all.
• helping, advice and support to anyone who experiences a mental health problem while in employment.

• support for staff and players returning to work after a period of absence due to mental health problems.

**Employment**

Helping people get back to work after a period of absence due to mental illness through:
• recruitment practices
• making reasonable adjustments
• retaining staff/ players who develop a mental health problem.

**Aims**

To create a workplace environment that promotes the mental wellbeing of **all** players and employees.

<u>Objectives</u>

**1) Develop management skills to promote mental wellbeing and manage mental health issues effectively.**

Key actions

Give players and employees information on and increase their awareness of mental wellbeing.
• Provide opportunities for players and employees to look after their mental wellbeing, for example through physical activity, stress-buster activities and social events.
• Offer employees flexible working arrangements that promote their mental wellbeing.
• Give all staff the opportunity to influence how they do their jobs, scope for varying their working conditions as far as possible, and opportunities to develop and fully utilise their skills.
• Set employees realistic targets that do not require them to work unreasonable hours.
• Ensure all staff have clearly defined job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities and provide staff with good management support, appropriate training and adequate resources to do their job.
• Manage conflict effectively and ensure the workplace is free from bullying and harassment, discrimination and racism.
• Establish good two-way communication to ensure staff, player involvement, particularly during periods of organisational change.

**2) Develop a culture based on trust, support and mutual respect.**

**Key actions**

Give non-judgemental and proactive support to individual players and staff who experience mental health problems.
• Deal sympathetically with staff. players suffering from mental health problems due to circumstances outside the workplace, and who consequently find it difficult to do their jobs properly.

- Give new employees a comprehensive induction programme providing an understanding of the organisation, the established policies and procedures, and the role they are expected to carry out.

### 3) To provide support for players and employees experiencing mental health issues.

**Key actions**

Ensure individuals suffering from mental health problems are treated fairly and consistently and are not made to feel guilty about their problems.
• Encourage staff to consult their own GP, or a counsellor of their choice.
- Investigate the contribution of working conditions and other organisational factors to mental ill health and remedy this where possible.
- In cases of long-term sickness absence, put in place, where possible, a graduated return to work.
- Make every effort to identify suitable alternative employment, in full discussion with the employee, where a return to the same job is not possible due to identified risks or other factors.
- Treat all matters relating to individual players and employees and their mental health problems in the strictest confidence and share on a 'need to know' basis only with consent from the individual concerned.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) see the "Company" Safeguarding Children Policy and Safeguarding Adults Policy.

### 4) To ensure non-discriminatory recruitment procedures

**Key actions**

Show a positive and enabling attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues. This includes having positive statements in recruitment literature.
- Ensure that all staff involved in recruitment and selection are briefed on mental health issues and the Disability Discrimination Act,2010 and are trained in appropriate interview skills.
- Make it clear, in any recruitment or occupational health check undertaken, that people who have experienced mental health issues will not be discriminated against and that disclosure of a mental health problem will enable both employee and employer to assess and provide the right level of support or adjustment.
- Do not make assumptions that a person with a mental health problem will be more vulnerable to workplace stress or take more time off than any other employee or job applicant.
- Ensure all line managers have information and training about managing mental health in the workplace.

### 5) Acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

**Key actions**

- Identify all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed. (Appendix 1 Wellbeing Action Plan)
- Provide training in good management practices, including those related to health and safety and stress management.
- Provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- Provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the organisation's agreed workplace mental wellbeing policy.

# RESPONSIBILITIES

**Managers** have a responsibility to:

- Monitor the workplace, identify hazards and risks and take steps to eliminate or reduce these as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Assist and support players and employees who are known to have mental health problems or are experiencing stress outside work – for example due to bereavement or separation.
- Ensure staff are provided with the resources and training required to carry out their job.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not over working and monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- In addition, senior management will ensure that staff performing a management or supervisory function have sufficient competence to discharge that function in a manner consistent with the maintenance of mental health in the workplace.

**Human resources** staff have a responsibility to:

- Organise training and awareness courses on workplace mental wellbeing in conjunction with suitable experts.
- Provide advice and support to employees and managers in relation to this policy.
- Monitor and report on levels of sickness absence which relate to mental health problems including stress-related illness (in conjunction with departmental managers).

**Players and employees** have a responsibility to:

- Raise issues of concern and seek help from their line manager and/or human resources
- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended.

# KEY CONTACTS

Safeguarding team Josh.bradshaw@nottscountyfc.co.uk and Greg.tempest@nottscounty.co.uk

**External agencies that offer support:**

https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/getting-help

https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support

| Date reviewed | Position | Owner |
|---|---|---|
| 14/02/24 | DSL | T Burton |
| August 2023 | Academy Head of Safeguarding | J Bradshaw |

**Appendix One – WAP**
Wellness Action Plan (WAP) Template

1. What helps you stay mentally healthy at Notts County Football Club and Home?

[blank box]

2. What can we as staff (including coaches and a AMT) do to support you to stay mentally healthy at Football? (For example: regular feedback and support both on and off the pitch?)

[blank box]

Are there any situations at Football or in your home life that can trigger poor mental health for you? (For example: conflict, change, performance, something not going to plan)

[blank box]

How might stress / poor mental health difficulties impact on your performance? (For example: find it difficult to make decisions, hard to prioritise training, college and match day performance)

[blank box]

Are there any early warning signs that we might notice when you are starting to feel

stressed/ mentally unwell? (For example: changes in normal working patterns, withdrawing from teammates)

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What support could be put in place to minimise triggers or to support you to manage symptoms? (For example: extra catch-up time with Greg/Coach/Gavin Mee)

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If we notice early warning signs that you are feeling stressed or unwell – what should we do? (For example: talk to me discreetly about it, contact someone that I have asked to be contacted)

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Please include contact names and numbers if you would like your us to get in touch with someone if you become unwell.

Contact name 1: _____ Number _____

Contact name 2: _____ Number _____

What steps can you take if you start to feel unwell at while at Notts County Football Club?

**Player Signature: _____ Date _____**

**WAP Support Signature: _____ Date _____**

**Date to be reviewed _____**