



## Crewe Alexandra FC Academy

### Mental Health and Emotional Well-being Plan

Version 2.0 – April 2023

## Crewe Alexandra FC Academy

### Mental Health and Emotional Well-being Plan

#### Introduction

The mental health, emotional well-being and safety of staff and players at Crewe Alexandra FC Academy is extremely important to the Club and is everyone's responsibility. Crewe Alexandra FC is committed to the well-being of adults and children. This document will provide an overview of the Club's Mental Health and Emotional Well-being strategy and Action Plan to demonstrate this commitment and highlight the importance of this. This document will also set out the Club's aims, strategy, advice, referral pathway and contact details if support is required.

#### Definitions

Mental Health is defined by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention as 'our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.' ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) March 2023)

NHS England states: 'Mental ill-health is very common. It affects one in four people in the course of their lives. The impacts start early as the onset of mental ill health often starts in childhood, adolescence and young adulthood.' ([www.england.nhs.uk](http://www.england.nhs.uk), March 2023). The Anna Freud Centre says that 'Everyone has mental health, and it is normal for mental health to change during times of stress. Positive mental health does not mean always being happy, but feeling empowered to talk about, cope with and overcome the things we might encounter in life. That way, we recover from our downturns and learn to take care of our minds in the same way we do our bodies.' ([www.annafreud.org](http://www.annafreud.org), March 2023).

#### Aims of the Mental Health and Emotional Well-being Plan

Through this plan, Crewe Alexandra FC Academy is committed to:

- Respond to all concerns surrounding mental health in its players and staff in a timely manner.
- Have regularly trained Mental Health First Aiders available
- Promote and operating a psychologically informed and safe environment demonstrating an openness and awareness of mental health and emotional well-being across its players and staff.
- Ensure all players and staff understand the process to report if there is a concern about their own or someone else's mental health.

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- Devise, maintain and communicate a clear referral process to suitable external providers (e.g. counsellors) which is available to both staff and players across the Academy.
- Provide annual workshops on mental health to academy players and staff as well as distribute educational material to staff, players and parents of players on the subject of mental health.

	<b>Players</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Parents</b>
<b>Educate</b>	<p><b>Psycho-educational Programme</b> – as part of the Sports psychology programme, workshops are delivered to players to help develop and improve skills and introduce strategies to help promote healthy thinking patterns (relevant to football performance and wider life).</p> <p><b>Life Skills</b> – the Academy designs and delivers a bespoke life skill programme each season to U9's to U18's, covering current and topical issues as well as compulsory topics such as mental health and equality, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p><b>External Organisations</b> – as part of the Academy Life Skills programme, external organisations and speakers are invited in to deliver workshops and presentations on a variety of areas.</p>	<p><b>Staff training</b> – specific staff members and roles complete training which is relevant to their areas of expertise and job duties. All staff are required to complete annual training on mental health and equality, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p><b>Mental health First Aiders</b> – a portion of staff across the Academy are trained in Mental Health First Aid to spot the early signs and symptoms that someone may be struggling with their mental health or emotional well-being.</p>	<p><b>Workshops</b> – annual workshops are provided to parents around various mental health topics. Information is also shared via emails and online webinars.</p> <p><b>Life Skills</b> – as part of the Academy Life Skills programme, parents are invited to attend various workshops across the season. Parents are also notified of any online training available, such as online gambling and gaming workshops provided by YGAM.</p> <p><b>Email / PMA</b> – educational material is shared with parents through email and or PMA.</p>
<b>Support</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b> – players have access to and how to report any safeguarding concerns to at the Academy. This information is refreshed annually through Inductions and during ongoing education and training events.</p> <p><b>Player Care</b> – players have access to and how to request 1:1 support from the Player Care Coordinator</p>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b> – staff have access to safeguarding staff, working across the Club and are able to advise and support on any safeguarding matters.</p> <p><b>Player Care</b> – staff have access to the Player Care Coordinator, who is able to provide support and guidance to staff.</p>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b> – parents have access to safeguarding staff, working across the Club and are able to advise and support on any safeguarding matters.</p> <p><b>Player Care</b> – parents have access to the Player Care Coordinator, who is able to provide support and guidance</p>

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	<p>at the Academy. This information is refreshed annually through Inductions, player progress meetings and during ongoing education and training events.</p> <p><b>Sports Psychology</b> – players have access to and how to request 1:1 support from the Sports Psychology Support at the Academy. This information is refreshed annually through Inductions, player progress meetings and during ongoing education and training events.</p> <p><b>External support</b> – the Academy has links with external organisations, including local and national agencies, who can provide specialist support to players.</p>	<p><b>Sports Psychology</b> – staff have access to Sports Psychology support, who is able to provide guidance to staff.</p> <p><b>External support</b> – the Club is partnered with Go Again, a mental health charity, who can provide external and confidential mental health support to staff at the Club.</p>	<p>or can signpost to external support.</p> <p><b>Sports Psychology</b> – parents have access to Sports Psychology support, who is able to provide guidance or can signpost to external support.</p>
<p><b>Monitor</b></p>	<p><b>Mental Health Questionnaires</b> – U12-U21 players complete Well-being Scale twice per season. U9-U11 are sent well-being surveys to parents twice per season.</p> <p><b>Injured players</b> – injured players within the academy complete well-being measures throughout injured and recovery period.</p> <p><b>PDP Sleep &amp; well-being</b> – daily sleep &amp; well-being monitoring is undertaken for U18s &amp; U21s.</p> <p><b>Additional</b> – more frequent monitoring is put in place for players receiving additional support</p>	<p><b>Reviews</b> – annual formal reviews with supervisors.</p> <p><b>Meetings</b> – regular informal meetings with supervisors.</p> <p><b>Supervision</b> – safeguarding supervision for staff with specific safeguarding responsibility.</p>	<p><b>Parent meetings</b> – Parents are encouraged to share any concerns / updates for their own mental health and emotional well-being and the Club can signpost to external organisations for support.</p>

How to support an individual struggling with their mental health

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Crewe Alexandra adheres to the framework as defined by Mental Health First Aid England (MHFA) when supporting someone, this could be players, staff or parents, who may be struggling with their mental health

- Lookout for and be aware of the early signs and symptoms of someone's mental health deteriorating, this could be a change in someone's usual behaviour or presentation, such as a lack of self-care, difficulty managing emotions.
- Provide a safe space and time for someone to discuss any concerns or worries that may be affecting them.
- Utilise the resources within the Club, such as Mental Health First Aiders, Safeguarding and Player Care support.
- Consider external organisations who can provide support, such as PFA, LMA, Go Again, ChildLine, Samaritans.
- Encourage an open and honest environment where people can talk about their difficulties and ask for help.

### Use the ALGEE Action Plan Approach

- A Approach; Assess for crisis / assist with crisis
- L Listen and communicate non-judgementally
- G Give support and Information
- E Encourage appropriate professional support
- E Encourage other forms of support

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#### Relevant Club Contacts

Dr Austin Doherty (Club Doctor)

[adoherty@crewealex.net](mailto:adoherty@crewealex.net) |

Paul Antrobus (Designated Safeguarding Officer)

[pantrobus@crewealex.net](mailto:pantrobus@crewealex.net) | 0788 432463

Emma Keyte (Player Care Coordinator)

[ekyte@crewealex.net](mailto:ekyte@crewealex.net) | 07467 526445

Jordan Brookes (Sports Psychology Support)

[jbrookes@crewealex.net](mailto:jbrookes@crewealex.net) | 07467 526557

#### Crisis Action Plan

If someone is assessed to be in immediate danger and at risk of imminent and significant harm due to their mental health, the following plan should be adhered to **by all staff**

- Contact 999 and ask for Emergency Services / Ambulance and or Police
- Take person to the nearest A&E (this is Leighton Hospital, Crewe 01270 255141)
- Contact 111 for professional health advice 24/7
- Contact Samaritans 116 123 for mental health support 24/7
- Contact the Local Authority Social Care Service – Children’s 0300 123 5012 (Monday-Friday 9am-4.30pm) or Emergency Duty Team 0300 123 5022 (Weekends and Evenings); Adults 0300 123 5010
- Where possible, inform the Safeguarding Officer at the earliest available opportunity.

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#### Internal Referral Process

Players and staff are able to self-refer for support with their mental health and emotional well-being, to the Player Care Coordinator (contact details as detailed earlier in this document). Players and staff can also discuss concerns about their mental health, general health and well-being, with the Club Doctor or the Designated Safeguarding Officer (contact details as detailed earlier in this document).

#### Potential signs and symptoms of poor mental health

##### Thoughts:

- Negative self-view or of the world in general
- Very self-critical and or heavily critical of others
- Struggling with concentration, decision making, focus, attention and memory.
- Displaying thoughts of hopelessness
- Focusing upon perceived mistakes or failures

##### Emotions:

- Mood swings and unpredictable emotional changes
- Persistent sadness, hopelessness, anger, irritability or anxiety
- Emotionally blunt, displaying a lack of emotional expression or not reacting to situations as they would usually

##### Behaviour:

- Evident lack of self-care or changes to the usual level of self-care
- Loss of energy and or motivation
- Social withdrawal or isolation
- Significant weight loss or gain
- Engaging in risky behaviours including financial and relationships
- Relationship changes

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#### Action required

- Person seeking support speaks with the relevant member of staff (Club Doctor, Player Care Coordinator, Safeguarding Officer)
- Concern to be reported on MyConcern (online Safeguarding tool)
- Meeting is arranged between individual and relevant member of staff to assess needs and plan support
- The person is provided support within the Club (if appropriate)
- If needs change or if the needs assessed are deemed to require specialist intervention or support, then an appropriate referral will be made to the relevant external agency (e.g. NHS, PFA, LMA, local mental health provisions)

#### External Referral Process

Players (aged 15 years and above) are able to refer themselves to external mental health support through the PFA and staff registered with the LMA, are able to access mental health support through this agency. Where appropriate, the Academy can refer players onto external organisations, such as the PFA or local (Cheshire East) charitable organisations such as Visyon and Mind.

Crewe Alexandra FC are proud to be partnered with Go Again (<https://goagain.co.uk/contact-us/>; Tel: 07590 595879), a mental health charity who can provide mental health support to Crewe Alexandra's coaching staff and 1<sup>st</sup> Team players.

An overview of the process that the Academy follows when a situation occurs when someone requires a referral to external support is detailed below:

#### Potential signs and symptoms that someone may require an external referral

- Player, staff member or parent / guardian (on behalf of their child) requests support for a mental health or a well-being issue that is assessed to be outside of the expertise within the current Academy staff.
- Staff member reports concern for a player's or other staff members mental health or well-being that falls outside expertise within Academy staff.
- Medical and psychology team identify a mental health or well-being issue with an individual that is beyond their scope of practice.
- Player well-being questionnaire responses/data flag the need for follow up conversation/consistently highlighting cause for concern.



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- Person seeking support speaks with the Academy Player Care Coordinator, Safeguarding Officer or Club Doctor (dependent on the specific issue being reported).
- Concern is reported using “MyConcern”, the Clubs online Safeguarding reporting tool.
- If further action is needed and the issue is outside the Club personnel’s expertise, then the decision is made with support of the Club Doctor to refer for external support.
- Academy Medical Lead, Safeguarding Officer, Player Care Coordinator and Academy Manager are made aware of this (for Academy players). If the issue affects a First Team player or member of staff, then this can be kept confidential, at the person’s request, or they are able to self-refer, without informing the Club, if they wish.
- If issue falls out of scope of these providers (or they are not available), or is specific in nature (e.g., substance abuse, family counselling, financial management), then suitable provision can be sought by the Club, based on the following criteria:
  - The person responsible for treating the player or staff member, holds the required qualifications and is licensed under HCPC (or equivalent).
  - Have experience of and credential for working with elite athletes and or children and young people.
  - The Club and Academy will continue to support the player / staff member within the departments’ relevant scope of practice and remain in contact with external provider to ensure progress is being monitored.

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#### External resources / local community organisations

Who	Organisation	Contact Details	Description
U15, U16, U18, U21 + First Team Players	Professional Footballers Association (PFA)	Web: <a href="https://www.thepfa.com/players/wellbeing">https://www.thepfa.com/players/wellbeing</a> Email: <a href="mailto:wellbeing@thepfa.com">wellbeing@thepfa.com</a> 24/7/365 CONFIDENTIAL COUNSELLING HELPLINE: 07500 000 777	The PFA Wellbeing department provides support services to all professional football players in the English leagues. We deliver mental health workshops to all clubs and discreetly assess and support players. We also operate a confidential 24/7 wellbeing helpline, so any player in crisis can access immediate support.
All	Samaritans	Web: <a href="http://www.samaritans.org/">www.samaritans.org/</a> Email: <a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a> Phone: 116 123	Free, confidential, anonymous, listening support available 24/7, 365 days a year
	Mind	Web: <a href="http://www.mind.org.uk">www.mind.org.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:info@mind.org">info@mind.org</a> Phone: 0300 123 3393	National mental health charity, which offers an excellent range of materials. It also provides details of local mind associations
	Anxiety UK	<a href="http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk">www.anxietyuk.org.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:support@anxietyuk.org.uk">support@anxietyuk.org.uk</a> Phone: 03444 775 774 Text Service: 07537 416 905	Provides self-help leaflets and contact lists, self-help groups, counselling, phone self-help groups and email support
	Cheshire and Wirral NHS Partnership Crisis Line	Tel: 0800 145 6485	If your mental or emotional state quickly gets worse or deteriorates, this can be called a 'mental health crisis'. In this situation, it is important to get help quickly. Dedicated local staff will support you to access the help you need. The phone line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is open to people of all ages, including children and young people.
	Shout	Text 'BLUE' to 85258 to	Contact to start a conversation, via text, with a trained volunteer, who will provide free and confidential support.
Children and Young People (Cheshire & Wirral areas only)	Cheshire and Wirral NHS Partnership – Advice Line	Tel: 01606 555 120 (available 1.00pm and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays)	The Children and Young People (CYP) Wellbeing Hub acts as a gate keeping service and aims to improve referrals into specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, where a moderate to severe mental health condition is indicated by a health professional.
Children, Young People	Visyon	Web: <a href="https://www.visyon.org.uk/">https://www.visyon.org.uk/</a>	Visyon is a charity that supports the emotional health of

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and Parents (Cheshire East Only)		Email: <a href="mailto:administration@visyon.org.uk">administration@visyon.org.uk</a> Tel: 01260 290000	children, young people and their families in Cheshire EAST. Visyon can help improve mental health so that you feel better about yourself and the things that happen in your day-to-day life. If you are a parent, grandparent or carer, you can come to us to gain the skills to give your child the support they need.
Young People (Under 25)	The Mix	Web: <a href="http://www.themix.org.uk">www.themix.org.uk</a> Email: contact form on website Phone: 0808 8084994 Crisis text line: Text THEMIX to 85258	Support is offered to anyone aged under 25, a free crisis text service is available 24/7 as well as free web chat services open 4pm-11pm, 7 days a week. Free short-term counselling is also available.
Active and Retired Sports Professionals	Sporting Chance	Web: <a href="http://www.sportingchanceclinic.com">www.sportingchanceclinic.com</a> Email: <a href="mailto:support@sportingchanceclinic.com">support@sportingchanceclinic.com</a>	Specialist support is offered to current and ex sports professionals, providing counselling, education, training and rehabilitation clinics. Specialising in addiction and mental health services.
Parents, children and young people	Young Minds	Web: <a href="http://www.youngminds.org.uk">www.youngminds.org.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:parents@youngminds.org.uk">parents@youngminds.org.uk</a> Tel: 0808 8025544 Urgent help: Text 85258	Provides mental health and emotional well-being support to children and young people. Services are offered to empower parents and carers. Free text service and live web chat also available for parents.
	ChildLine	Web: <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a> Email: Contact via form on website Tel: 0800 11111	Provides a counselling service for parents, children and young people (aged under 19). There is online access to counsellors and help and advice is free and confidential. Multilingual services available for South Asian communities in the UK, including languages spoken; Bengali, Sylheti, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu and English.

Author and Approval

**Crewe Alexandra FC Academy**

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