

VERWOOD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Supporting the wellbeing of players, coaches and volunteers

Version	Version 1.0 – April 2026
Date of issue	April 2026
Review due	Annually, or following any significant incident or change in FA guidance
Policy owner	Club Welfare Officer / Club Secretary (as applicable)

1. COMMITMENT

Verwood Town Football Club recognises that mental health is as important as physical health. We are committed to creating an environment where players, coaches, volunteers and parents feel safe, supported and able to seek help without fear of stigma or judgement.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the club including youth players, adult players, coaches, managers, volunteers, committee members and parents/carers.

3. OUR APPROACH

3.1 Reducing stigma

VTFC will not tolerate language or behaviour that stigmatises or trivialises mental health conditions. Coaches and managers should model positive attitudes to mental health in their communication with players and parents.

3.2 Early identification

Coaches and managers are often well-placed to notice changes in a player's behaviour or demeanour. If a coach is concerned about a player's wellbeing, they should:

1. Make a note of the specific changes observed
2. Speak sensitively to the player in an appropriate setting (not 1-to-1 — refer to the Lone Working Protocol)
3. Inform the Club Welfare Officer
4. Where the player is under 18, notify the parent or carer

3.3 Player wellbeing

Football should be enjoyable. VTFC coaches are expected to prioritise player wellbeing over results at all times. Coaches must not berate, belittle or place excessive pressure on players. The club's Ethos and Codes of Conduct set out behavioural expectations in detail.

3.4 Volunteer wellbeing

Volunteering should be rewarding, not overwhelming. Committee members and the Club Chairperson will take reasonable steps to ensure that volunteer workloads are manageable and that volunteers feel supported in their roles. Any volunteer struggling with their duties should speak to the Chairperson or Secretary in confidence.

4. SIGNPOSTING

VTFC signposts the following resources for mental health support:

Key Contacts	
Childline (under 18)	0800 1111 (free, 24/7) childline.org.uk
Young Minds	youngminds.org.uk Text YM to 85258
Dorset Mind	dorsetmind.uk 01305 250925
Samaritans	samaritans.org 116 123 (free, 24/7)
Sporting Chance	sportingchanceclinic.com – for athletes
Club Welfare Officer	Clare Nixson – welfare@vtyfc.co.uk / 07758 246452

5. SERIOUS CONCERNS

Important: *If you are concerned that a player or volunteer is at immediate risk of harming themselves or others, call 999. Do not leave them alone. Notify the Club Welfare Officer as soon as it is safe to do so.*

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Mental health concerns will be handled sensitively and in confidence. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and, where a child is involved, in accordance with the club's Safeguarding Policy.

7. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Club Committee.