


<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Mental Health and Wellbeing</b>
<b>School Lead</b>	Head Teacher
<b>Governor Lead</b>	FGB
<b>Date of last Review</b>	11.03.2024
<b>Date of Approval</b>	11.03.2024
<b>Date of next Review</b>	May 2025
<b>Links to other policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy</li> <li>- Behaviour Policy</li> <li>- Staff Code of Conduct policy</li> <li>- SEND Policy</li> <li>- CPD Policy</li> <li>- Appraisal Policy</li> <li>- Capability Procedure</li> <li>- Supporting pupils with a medical condition Policy</li> </ul>
<b>Head Teacher sign off signature</b>	 11.3.24

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### ➤ Policy Statement

- Mental Health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community; pupils, staff, parents, carers and other stakeholders.
- This policy has been written in consultation with staff and the Governing body.

### ➤ Scope

- This policy is intended to:
  - Provide guidance on our approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.
  - Inform the school community about support they can expect in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

### ➤ Policy aims

- To promote and support positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Provide an emotionally supportive environment and a culture of wellbeing and inclusion.
- To increase understanding of common mental health issues and the school's specific challenges.
- Identify early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing.
- To provide support to all members of the school community.
- To recognise and respond to need as it arises.

### ➤ Legal basis

- This policy has been written with regard to:
  - The Equality Act 2010 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>
  - The Data Protection Act 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>
  - Articles 3 and 23 of the UN Convention of the rights of the child <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-uncrc-how-legislation-underpins-implementation-in-england>

### ➤ Roles and responsibilities

- Lead staff in relation to wellbeing are:
  - Bev Lee (staff and pupil focus) – Executive Assistant Head Teacher.
  - Helen Garrett (staff focus) – School Business Manager.
  - Vicki Steadman (staff and pupils focus) – BACP counsellor.
  - Pastoral Support and Welfare Specialists Team (pupil focus).
- Staff are encouraged to seek out these staff if concerned about their own or others' wellbeing. However, should it be preferred, staff should speak to whomever they feel able to in order to manager their own wellbeing, with consideration for those they identify. If a member of staff does not feel they have a supportive colleague in school

then they should seek to share concerns with their line manager so that appropriate support can be offered.

- All staff are expected to:
  - Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the school.
  - Understand risk factors.
  - Model hope.
  - Report concerns about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing to the link pastoral support and welfare specialist and or the DSL.
  - If there is a fear that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the usual child protection procedures should be followed.
  - If a pupil represents a medical emergency then the usual procedures for this should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting emergency services if necessary.
  - Support and collaborate with parents/carers.
  - Consider the individual workload pressures and stresses of all staff members.
  - Be honest about their own wellbeing.
  - Participate in CPD related to wellbeing.
  - Record concerns on Edgen database.
- Senior staff are expected to:
  - Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff.
  - Ensure appropriate recording and onward referral systems are in place.
  - Take any complaints or concerns seriously and manage them appropriately in line with the school policies.
  - Ensure new staff are inducted thoroughly and feel able to ask for help.
  - Keep in touch with staff if they are absent for long periods.
  - Monitor staff absence and conduct return to work interviews to support staff back to work.
  - Conduct exit surveys with resigning staff.
  - Monitor the wellbeing of all members of the community via surveys, reviews and coaching.
  - Encourage pupil/staff/family voice in relation to processes and changes.
  - Celebrate successes.
  - Have effective QA measures in place.
- The Governing body is expected to:
  - Ensure the school is fulfilling its duty of care.
  - Monitor and support the wellbeing of the Head Teacher.
  - Ensure that resources and support services are in place.

- Consider the format and quantity of information requested.

### ➤ **Warning signs**

- Warning signs that indicate someone is experiencing mental health or wellbeing issues should be taken seriously and communicated to relevant staff. Possible signs for pupils/staff may include:
  - Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
  - Changes in eating/sleeping habits.
  - Sudden weight loss/gain.
  - Lack of personal care.
  - Difficulty sleeping or constant tiredness.
  - Increased isolation from friends/colleagues, becoming socially withdrawn.
  - Changes in activity/mood.
  - Lowering of productivity.
  - Talking or joking about self-harm/suicide.
  - Abusing drugs or alcohol/increased consumption of caffeine, cigarettes or sedatives.
  - Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
  - Changes in clothing.
  - Secretive behaviour.
  - Increased absence.
  - Repeated physical pain/nausea with no evident cause.
  - Irritability, aggression or tearfulness.
  - Increased conflict with others.
  - Indecision/inability to concentrate.
  - Erratic behaviour.
  - Loss of confidence.
  - Difficulty remembering things.
  - Loss of humour.
  - Increased errors, missing deadline or forgetting tasks.
- Pupils:
  - Many pupils within the cohort are already supported by CAMHS or have a pre-existing mental illness. As such we are often already aware of what may affect their wellbeing or if they engage in harmful behaviours or have suicidal ideation. This does not mean that things will not change and we should remain vigilant to any identified concerns or changes in behaviour or disclosures.
- Staff:
  - Staff model hope throughout the school and there is a strong ethos of unconditional positive regard and support. As such, particular attention should be paid if a member of staff begins to behave in a way, which is out of character or out of sync with the school values. Any low-level concerns/observations should be reported to line manager/DSL/Head Teacher in line with the school policies.

## ➤ Challenges

- We recognise the unique position of our setting in relation to mental health and wellbeing and the potential impact this could have on staff. Factors impacting workforce wellbeing may include:
- Nature of cohort.
  - Complex dynamics.
  - Exposure to trauma narratives.
  - Health demands.
  - Balance of meeting pastoral and academic needs.
  - Attendance/missing learning.
  - Processes and depth of information required for each pupil.
    - Pupil passport.
    - Pastoral plan.
    - Risk assessment.
    - Healthcare plan.
    - ILP.
- Multiple staff having multiple job 'hats' or unique standalone roles.
- Relatively small team and potential negative impact on pupils if source supply staff – a desire to manage things 'in house'.
- Logistics of three bases and home working across a large county area.
  - Travel.
  - Reliance on technology.
  - Volume of email communication.
  - Moving resources around bases.
- External pressures.

## ➤ Managing disclosures

- In the event of a disclosure, staff should remain calm, non-judgemental and reassuring. The focus should be on establishing emotional and physical safety rather than trying to find out why or offering advice.
- Any disclosure should be reported on Edgen (pupils) or to appropriate staff (staff). Records should include date, details of individuals involved, main points from discussion/observation and any action taken.
- Any information may be shared with external agencies and may be viewed by pupil/staff members/police. As such, there should be an approach of unconditional positive regard, neutrality and objectivity.
- Confidentiality:
  - We should be honest with regard to confidentiality.
  - **Pupils:** If we need to pass concerns on about a pupil, we should tell them and ideally receive consent (although there are occasions when information must be shared regardless of this).

- It is essential to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the linked PSWS and DSL. This helps to safeguard staff wellbeing as we no longer hold sole responsibility for pupils. It ensures continuity of care in the event of absence and provides an extra source of support.
- Parents should be informed if there are concerns about pupil mental health but we should always give pupils opportunity to tell parents themselves or staff member sharing information for them or with them.
- If there is reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues and/or informing parents places a child at risk then this should not be communicated with family and Children's Services should be informed – 01522 782111 (Mon-Fri 8am – 6pm) or 01522 782333 (outside office hours).
- **Staff:** If staff have concerns about the presentation of a colleague but do not feel able to check in personally, they should speak to the line manager or DSL.
- Concerns about staff wellbeing/behaviour will be handled discreetly and logged in a confidential database.
- If we need to pass concerns on about the safety of staff, we will tell them and ideally receive consent.

## ➤ Managing wellbeing

- **Pupils:**

- The basic philosophy, which underpins the work of the school, is that we are child-centred. We see academic learning and emotional wellbeing as mutually enforcing of education and preparing pupils for life.
- Supportive measures include but are not limited to:
- Raising awareness of mental health during tutor times, time to talk and general practice.
- Comprehensive PSHE curriculum teaching about:
  - Mental health
  - Physical health
  - Coping strategies
  - Healthy relationships
  - Personal safety
- Comprehensive Personal Development curriculum incorporating:
  - Self-concept
  - Emotional regulation
  - Experiences that challenge
  - Balanced lifestyles
  - Understanding relationships
  - Safe, secure base
  - Aspiration and goals
  - Community engagement
  - Independence and life skills
- Signposting to sources of support in school, online and in the local community.
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons.
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback about the school:

- Pupil forum
- Surveys
- Reviews
- Monitoring pupils wellbeing via holistic data checks:
  - Hope scale
  - Signs of safety
  - Personal development
  - Attendance
- Allocating each pupil a linked Academic Link and PSWS
- BACP School Counsellor
- Otto (school dog)
- Having worry boxes/post it boxes available
- Referring to specialist support such as MHST or CAMHS
- Reviewing provision in line with health need
- Communicating with parents/carers
- Supporting peers and being mindful of 'over sharing':
  - Knowing how to access support
  - Recognising and respecting boundaries
  - Healthy coping strategies
- Displays around school with information about wellbeing and support available
- Individual pupil passport and pastoral plan
- Promoting Hope via implicit and explicit curriculum keys
- **Parents/Carers**
  - As a hospital school, we support young people with illness and this often means that families have faced challenges and adversity. We must work collaboratively to support and empower our young people and their parents/carers to develop the skills, agency and confidence to move forwards with hope.
  - We will:
    - Explain and outline the support and provision offered by the school during initial contact
    - Invite family to school base to begin familiarisation and hopefully alleviate some anxiety
    - Maintain regular contact to provide opportunities to discuss concerns, provide support, satisfy safeguarding responsibilities and share information
    - Hold regular reviews to assess and address what is going well, what we are worried about and what needs to happen
    - Attend multi-agency meetings as appropriate
    - Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website and send out relevant information
    - Ensure all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child or a friend of their child
    - Make our wellbeing policy accessible to parents
    - Inform parents about our PSHE curriculum
    - Refer to external agencies if required
    - Offer support via School Counsellor if it is believed there will be a positive impact on the pupil



- **Staff**

- The school will support and discuss options with any staff that raise wellbeing issues in relation to stressors at school or in their personal lives. At all times the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.
- Supportive measures include but are not limited to:
  - Group supervisions for teams
  - BACP counsellor
  - Hope led Performance management
  - Flexibility to meet childcare/family needs (where possible within the operational needs of the school)
  - Various expertise within staff teams
  - Staff meetings/team days for all departments
  - Strong relationships
  - Infrequent late nights/lower number of pupils
  - Social groups
  - Travel policy
  - Opportunity to work from home occasionally if agreed by SLT
  - Otto (school dog)
  - MHST/external agency support
  - Celebrating success and job satisfaction – making a difference
  - Shared understanding of different pressures across teams
  - Strong school values and ethos and shared goals
  - Generous leave of absence/family leave policy
  - Coaching
  - Dedicated CPD/development time
  - Dedicated PPA/planning time
  - Collaborative working
  - Minimal emails sent outside of work time and no expectation to respond
  - LA health service offer
  - Morning and end of day briefings for opportunity to debrief
  - Smile Friday
  - Levels of autonomy
  - Designated areas for breaks/lunchtimes in the absence of staff room
  - Visible leadership team across all bases
  - Wellbeing tokens
    - Valid from April until April (wellbeing inset)
    - To be used for two half days a year either together or separately for an activity that supports personal wellbeing
    - To be requested four weeks in advance via usual leave of absence form (specifying this is a wellbeing request)
    - Will be offered on a first come first serve basis – if multiple requests are made for the same day, the operational needs of the school will be considered.

## Training

- At induction, all staff will receive CPD, which enables them to have a good understanding of pupil's mental health needs, know how to recognise and respond to distress and processes to report. This also includes sessions about boundaries and safeguarding.

- Training for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of the performance management process and additional CPD will be offered throughout the year where it becomes apparent due to developing situations with one or more pupils.
- Hope Smith is our Training and Development Officer and offers MHFA one- and two-day courses as well as bespoke training specific to the needs of our school and signposting to relevant wellbeing training and support.
- Wellbeing is a regular feature at inset days.
- Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Steve Lingard (Assistant Head).