Mental Health Policy

Policy

Mental Health Policy

Headteacher

Chris Stokes

Policy Review Dates

Review Date	Changes made	By whom	Date shared with staff
Oct 20	Full Review	A Knight	
Sept 22	Review	V Clayden	
Nov 23	Review	A Knight	
Oct 24	Review	V Clayden	
Oct 25	Updates to members of staff now in post.	CST	October 25

Date ratified by Governors	Review Date
October 2025	October 2027

Policy Statement

> *Mental health is a state of well-being 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 her or his community. (World Health Organization)*

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our child protection policy and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff and students to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

Lead Members of Staff

While all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Ms Nugent – DSL
- Miss Shannon Bradbury – SENDCO
- Mr Andy Childe - Assistant Headteacher: Attendance
- Mr Chris Stokes - Headteacher

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the DSL, form tutor, pastoral team manager in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection officer or the Headteacher. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a further referral to an external agency is appropriate, this will be led and overseen by Val Clayden - DSL.

Individual Provision Maps/ Health Care Plans/ Risk assessments.

It is helpful to draw up an Individual Provision Map (and or a HCP and Risk assessment) for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency

- The role the school can play

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. The Wellbeing in Mind Team also support with delivering our PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. The support that is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined towards the end of this policy.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as form rooms and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum and school communication. Whenever we highlight sources of support (either physically or virtually), we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs, which indicate a student 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 appropriate staff within school.

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgmental. The established safeguarding processes and protocols should be carried out by staff.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach.
It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you are sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Supporting Pupils

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings.

Supporting Staff

- Staff wellbeing team – feedback from team to SLT
- Staff wellbeing on whole school development plan
- Calendared staff wellbeing time/events
- WBiMT in school every week for students and staff
- Headteacher continues to be transparent around school development
- Return to work processes
- Signposting to Employee Assistance Programme
- Headteacher liaison with unions
- Signposting to PSHE and SEMH training

Training

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

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 students.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Andy Childe/Chris Stokes or Val Clayden who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

School Based Support

- Form tutor support
- Year 7 Transition support
- Referral to Wellbeing in Mind team
- Referral to Emotional Health and Resilience team
- Referral to Compass Phoenix
- Referral to CAMHS
- Referral to Prouder Communities
- Signposting to ‘Buzz Us’
- Suggestion of Peer Mentor
- Social skills intervention
- Early Help Assessment
- 1:1 support from alcohol/drugs trained counsellors coming into school
- Signpost to other services/support using Early Help Signposting resources