



North Westminster Federation

Working Together to Grow Our Future

Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health Policy

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Policy Statement

According to the **World Health Organisation**:

***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 her or his community. Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life. On this basis, the promotion, protection and restoration of mental health can be regarded as a vital concern of individuals, communities and societies throughout the world.*

***Wellbeing** is also described as “a positive state experienced by individuals and societies. Similar to health, it is a resource for daily life and is determined by social, economic and environmental conditions. Well-being encompasses quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose.”*

The Equality Act (2010) declares that, “A mental health condition that adversely affects behaviour amounts to a disability”. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) has a requirement which states that schools must “Prevent the impairment of children’s mental or physical health or development.”

We aim to provide an environment supportive and conducive to positive mental health and wellbeing, rooted in respect. We define respect as that of **unconditional positive regard**. Unconditional positive regard is the basic acceptance of the person, regardless of their behaviour. It is underpinned by the assumption that, although the person will need guidance and support, they have the answers within them and can undergo personal growth. *This will underpin our approach to every interaction we have.*

We also aim to identify and provide timely and appropriate support for all members of the school community affected both directly and indirectly by mental health problems. These problems can include: a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health difficulties, death, and loss such as the loss of friendships, a family breakdown and bullying. Our staff also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, positive communication, developing problem-solving skills, a sense of worth or belonging and emotional literacy.

Policy Aims

By developing and implementing practical, effective and positive policies and procedures relevant to our school and developed in conjunction with students and their parents and carers, we can promote a safe and supportive environment and ethos which is conducive to the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school community.

Our Commitment to Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health

We believe in an ‘open door’ policy and strive to be a ‘talking school’ in recognition of the stigma surrounding mental health.

Specifically, we will:

- Support students to understand their emotions through PSHE and linked content throughout the curriculum;
- Help children to manage change and adversity and develop resilience, and to support this in our staff and within the community;
- Provide an environment which is conducive to pupils and staff sharing concerns about themselves or others.

We will promote a mentally healthy school environment by:

- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing;
- Raising awareness in the whole school community of the signs and symptoms of mental health problems;
- Supporting staff to manage their own mental health and wellbeing: providing PAM Assistance and ensuring access to this support is available to all staff, referring to Occupational Health for further support when needed;
- Supporting staff to respond swiftly and effectively to any signs of an emerging mental health problem, contacting the most appropriate support, working alongside external providers such as CAMHS, Mind and Family Hub;
- Engaging in activities which promote mental health and wellbeing and a sense of belonging in the whole school community;
- Nurturing and celebrating neurodiversity, ensuring all students feel valued and respected as individuals;
- Valuing and celebrating non-academic achievements by participating in sporting competitions and clubs.

Roles and Responsibilities

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems. The federation's Mental Health Well-Being Team are responsible for:

- leading and working with other staff members to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health
- providing advice and support to staff and organises training and updates
- keeping staff up-to-date with information about what support is available
- liaising with the PSHE Leader on teaching about mental health
- being the first point of contact and communication with mental health services
- leading on and making referrals to services.

While all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, staff with a specific remit include the following:

- **Nick Seymour:** Deputy Head and SENDCO for Essendine, SMHL for Hallfield and Essendine
- **Gina Frascogna:** Head of Inclusion and SENDCO at Hallfield
- **Nabila El Ahmadi:** Welfare Office/Safeguarding at Hallfield
- **Nairuz Breich:** Welfare Officer/Safeguarding at Essendine
- **Will Jacobs:** Link Governor

Any member of staff who has a concern over the wellbeing or mental health of a pupil should speak to the DSL based in their school in the first instance. In the event any concerns are that a child may be at risk of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which may 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 to the DSL, safeguarding team or Nick Seymour, the mental health and emotional wellbeing lead. It is important to emphasise that for some students experiencing

distress, there may not be any apparent warning signs, or the student may actively be trying to hide their distress.

Potential warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Evidence of any changes to eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family; becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Evidence of use of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol
- Expressing thoughts and feelings of failure, hopelessness or worthlessness
- Unsuitable clothing (for example, long sleeves in warm weather)
- Secretive or unusual behaviour
- Avoiding attendance at PE or getting changed secretly
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Expressing unusual ideas or beliefs.

Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health in Our Curriculum

We want our children to be self-aware and informed about what constitutes wellbeing and positive mental health. We aim to equip our pupils with the capacity to identify within themselves the indicators of poor mental health and strategies to promote their own wellbeing.

The 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 identify when mental health problems may be emerging, and to seek appropriate support when needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#) statutory guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. This is also in line with our RSE policy. Our PSHE covers six key themes of content across the year in a spiral curriculum. These six key themes are: **Resilience, Respectful Relationships, Caring Friendships, Mental Wellbeing, Health Education and Living in the Wider World.**

Support and Signposting

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking. We will ensure that staff, students, and parents and carers are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community, including outlining:

- The help that is available
- Who the help is for
- The reasons for accessing the support
- When to access the support
- How to access the support
- What is likely to happen once the individual has accessed the support

There are clear links with the Behaviour Policy because we believe that behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, is likely to be related to an unmet mental health need. **We consider behaviour to be a message.**

A Trauma- Informed Approach

Our approach to promoting positive behaviour and understanding our children's needs is informed by the principles of Trauma-Informed practices. A Trauma-Informed approach to behaviour will:

- Place relationships and a child or young person's sense of safety and security at the heart of classroom management.
- Encourage nurture, warmth and empathy, even when a child or young person is presenting with behaviours that feel challenging.
- Promote a sense of community and belonging.
- Take individual circumstances into account

The school recognises that pupils' behaviour may be impacted by a mental health or special educational need or disability (SEND).

Any preventative measures will consider the specific circumstances and requirements of the pupil concerned. If you have any concerns, record your concerns on CPOMs and report them to the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team.

Tiers of Support

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to pupils with mental health needs and their families. To identify the waves of support, we use the following graduated model:



Adapted from Levels of Intervention Model, O'Connell, Boat and Warner, 2009 (appendix)

Universal provision is part of our daily routine for all children. This includes:

- Checking in with our children
- Trauma informed approach
- Mindfulness
- Inclusion Manager, weekly inclusion meetings
- Safeguarding/Child protection Team and Attendance Officer
- Behaviour policy which is clear and equitable for all
- Attendance officer to support with difficulties coming to school
- SENCO who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including pupils whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision
- Quality First Teaching across the federation.

Targeted interventions such as Brain Buddies and Lego or Music Therapy support additional needs, as well as learning plans for identified needs. When a child's need cannot be met through targeted support, a greater focus on specialist support will be put in place. This will be child-centred, planned with the individual in mind and based on their unique need – see [SEND policy](#).

Individual Care Plans

An **individualised** Care Plan will be the first step in providing support to a student experiencing a period of mental ill health or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. A Care Plan will be completed with a member of the safeguarding team and, with the consent of the young person, will be shared with their classroom teachers, any relevant support staff including first aiders, SLT and the student's parent/ carer. See safeguarding policy.

Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the social emotional mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular, supporting their children with mental health needs. To support parents and carers:

- we organise a range of Mental Health workshops and coffee mornings on subjects such as wellbeing, sleep hygiene and parenting, run internally or by external agencies;
- we provide information and signposting to organisations on our websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes;
- have an Open-Door policy.
- supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs through sensitive and supportive regular meetings and signposting.

When a concern has been raised the school will always inform parents or carers. We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Pupils are our primary concern, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

Creating a Supportive Environment

Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

Pupil-led Activities

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health Transition Support
- Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST) Transition Workshops across Year 6 in the Summer Term and other opportunities for relevant mental health workshops for pupils / staff / parent / carers throughout the year
- Transition meetings with parent/carers, pupils and relevant staff
- Transition Passports for vulnerable children
- Transition Passports available for all staff to be aware of vulnerable children's needs
- Key Adults might support secondary school visits with vulnerable pupils
- Speech and Language Transition groups

Class Activities

- Gratitude boxes
- Kindness / Compliment Boards

- Mindfulness and breathing/meditation in class
- Classroom scripts and signposting Gordon Primary School 6
- Sporting activities Whole School
- Mental Health Wellbeing focus threading throughout the school ethos and PSHE curriculum
- Social & Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) resources
- Anna Freud Schools in Mind resources
- Encouraging positives relationships so children can be aware of Trusted Adults around them and where to find support
- Assembly and calendar of Mental Health and Wellbeing themes
- Daily Mile
- Using the Power of Reading to explore themes and learn about emotions, difference, loss, bullying, change, resilience, etc. - the whole school will explore the same PHSE themed book
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school and outside the school
- After school clubs e.g. yoga, drama, football, netball Small Group Activities • Small friendship, social skills groups
- Lunch Club support
- Calming room to help children regulate

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. Under common law, information given in confidence should only be passed to a third party with the agreement of the person disclosing it. This applies to the student/teacher relationship. NWF staff cannot, however, offer absolute confidentiality. Where there are child protection issues, the staff member should refer the matter to the Designated Child Protection Lead within the school and follow confidentiality procedures which are outlines in the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy. Staff should make clear the level of confidentiality that can be given, before the disclosure is made. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to;
- What we are going to tell them;
- Why we need to tell them.

We should never share information about a student without first telling them.

Links to Other Policies

This policy has been created with regard to the following DfE guidance:

- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2016) 'Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice: 0 to 25'

This policy also has due regard to the school's policies including, but not limited to, the following:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Exclusion Policy
- Privacy Notice for Pupil and Parent/Carer

Appendix

- [ten-ways-to-support-school-staff-wellbeing.pdf \(d1uw1dikibnh8j.cloudfront.net\)](https://d1uw1dikibnh8j.cloudfront.net/ten-ways-to-support-school-staff-wellbeing.pdf)
- [Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2023)
- [Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing)
- [Mental health and behaviour in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools)
- [Mental health and emotional wellbeing teacher guidance.pdf \(hubspotusercontent00.net\)](https://hubspotusercontent00.net/mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing-teacher-guidance.pdf)
- [ncb framework for promoting well-being and responding to mental health in schools.pdf](#)
- [Mental health resources for children, students, parents, carers and school/college staff - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://blog.gov.uk/mental-health-resources-for-children-students-parents-carers-and-school-college-staff/)
- [MindEd For Families](#)
- https://www.corc.uk.net/media/1506/primary-school-measures_310317_forweb.pdf
- [https://www.sdqinfo.org/py/sdqinfo/b3.py?language=Englishqz\(UK\)](https://www.sdqinfo.org/py/sdqinfo/b3.py?language=Englishqz(UK))
- <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/professional/resources/>
- <https://www.mindsahead.org.uk/the-school-mental-health-hub/>
- [A system mapping approach to understanding child and adolescent wellbeing \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/a-system-mapping-approach-to-understanding-child-and-adolescent-wellbeing)
- [THRIVE-Framework-for-system-change-2019.pdf \(mightynetworks.com\)](https://mightynetworks.com/THRIVE-Framework-for-system-change-2019.pdf)
- [Levels of Intervention.pdf \(mightynetworks.com\)](https://mightynetworks.com/Levels_of_Intervention.pdf)