



KINGSWOOD HOUSE SCHOOL

POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

This Policy relates to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage, and is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations and law and must be read in conjunction with other relevant Kingswood House School policies.

Related Policies:

- Occupational Stress Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Low Level Concern Policy
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines Policy
- E-Safety Policy

This list is not exhaustive.

Policy reviewed by: K.Timothy

Dated: August 2022

Policy next review: August 2023

Policy Statement

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every pupil and staff member. 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.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue 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 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 or carers

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Liam Clarke – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Ian Mitchell – Deputy DSL
- Harriet Wilson – Deputy DSL
- Zoe Smith – Deputy DSL
- Fiona Swift – Deputy DSL
- Robbie Hendry – Deputy DSL
- Katey Timothy - Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA), Youth and adult Mental Health First Aider and SFAUSI
- Jane Chandler – Catering Manager and Mental Health First Aider
- Emma Darbishire School Nurse and trained Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
- Nicola Parsons – LSA and trained Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to a DSL and the ELSA 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, the headmaster or the designated governor. 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 referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Designated Safeguarding Lead. Please refer to the Schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan 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:

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- 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

The ELSA will develop student passports alongside some senior pupils who attend ELSA. This document helps them to have some ownership regarding their wellbeing journey. The ELSA may also use Well Being Action Plans wherever necessary, this is a document to record the help a child will receive and a plan going forward.

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 developmental 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.

We will follow the [PSHE Association Guidance](#) to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner, which helps rather than harms.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as common rooms and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. All pupils will have access to a Red letter box in a communal hallway where they can leave a message for the ELSA should they want to contact her. Whenever we highlight sources of support, 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 the school's DSL and ELSA. Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in 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
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Managing disclosures

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-judgemental.

Staff should listen rather than give advice. Remembering the phrase "90 seconds is the difference between a reaction and a response". Our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing, added to CPOMS and held on the student's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps
- Remembering the 7Rs: Receive, Reassure, Respond, Report, Record, Remember and Review.

This information should be shared with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head of Pastoral care and they will share with the ELSA who, will store the recorded information appropriately and offer support and advice.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. 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. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and/ or a parent such as students who are in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually DSL or ELSA. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence; and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed if they are in danger of harm and students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the student should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed immediately.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral.
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

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 give them leaflets to take away where possible, as 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 steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Working with All Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

Supporting Peers

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 and will be guided by conversations with the student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend may need help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

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 to enable them to keep students safe.

There will also be online learning via Educare for staff to learn about mental health.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more students.

Useful APPS:

- www.combinedminds.co.uk- Advice and strategies to help friends and families struggling with their mental health.
- www.clearfear.co.uk –Help advice and strategies to manage those moments of anxiety.
- www.calmharm.co.uk –Distraction techniques hints and tips to manage those difficult moments

Useful websites:

- www.youngminds.org.uk –Mental health charity offering help and advice 24/7 for children and young people. Also offers advice 24/7 to parents – via web chats ,articles and offering training as well
Also text services text: YM to 85258
- www.kooth.com Online mental health support ages 10-25.No waiting lists no referrals needed. BACP accredited

Telephone organisations:

- **Childline: Call free: 0800 1111. Speak to someone at child line about how you're feeling no matter the issue**

Attached useful references

- Healthy Young Minds – 2 page booklet titled Self-Injury: why it happens and how to handle them.
- Having the first conversation – tips and advice on having the first conversation with a pupil about self-harm.
- Young Minds – 7 page booklet titled No Harm Done which gives advice for staff working with young children on recognising and responding to self-harm

<https://healthyyoungmindspennine.nhs.uk/media/1048/self-injury.pdf>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/resources/school-resources/self-harm-having-the-first-conversation/>

https://youngminds.org.uk/media/2936/no_harm_done_professionals_pack.pdf

