Hampton Court House

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Last Updated: February 2026

Next Review: February 2027

Updated by ACB / TBA

Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community. (*World Health Organisation*).

Mental health and wellbeing are not simply the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to

- Feel confident in themselves.
- Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- Be able to make and maintain positive relationships.
- Cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.
- Learn and achieve.

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole community: pupils, staff, and parents. We recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches for individuals. This policy helps aid consistency of approach and equality of provision for our pupils.

We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By the age of 14, half of all mental health problems are established in a person. By developing and implementing practical, relevant, and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff and governors. This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

Aims

This Policy aims to set out:

- How we promote positive mental health.
- How we increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent mental health problems getting worse.
- How we identify and support pupils with mental health needs.
- Provide key information about some common mental health problems where parents, staff, and pupils can get advice and support.

Key Members of Staff for mental health and inclusion

Amy Burgess	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Deputy Head Pastoral	Direct line: Mobile: 07927 585200 Email: acb@hchnet.co.uk
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Mental Health Lead and Champions

All staff should be mental health champions, but it is important for the community (staff, students, and parents) to have a named person to maintain the importance of mental health issues and to champion their interest. The new role of the School Lead on Mental Health (Sept 2024) has been created to champion mental health for the school community, not to be solely responsible for it. The role will include promotion of well-being materials; being a 'listening ear'; acting as a signpost for other services and professionals; relaying ideas and information to senior staff that could further improve wellbeing in school; having oversight of school improvement plans to ensure that mental health promotion has a key place; helping to reduce

barriers to mental health in school by promoting positive language in relation to mental health. The School Lead on Mental Health also trains and works with pupil Wellbeing Champions in Year 10 and Year 12 to enable them to provide peer support where appropriate.

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils requiring additional support or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, their parents/carers, and relevant health professionals. This may include:

- Details of the pupil's condition
- Specific 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 pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. Emotional Literacy is an essential part of our PSHE curriculum throughout the school. Mental Health and Wellbeing lessons outside of this curriculum are age appropriate and supported by form time activities with their form tutor and school assemblies. There will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language, and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves and others.

We use guidance and resources from Jigsaw, Heads Together; Mentally Healthy Schools; and YoungMinds to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Signposting

We ensure that staff, pupils, and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community, who it is aimed at, and how to access it.

We display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as form rooms, classrooms, and the staff common room and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we increase the chance of pupils seeking help by ensuring pupils 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 receive annual training on mental health warning signs. They may become aware of signs which indicate a pupil, or a parent/carer, is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing

any of them should log their concern on CPOMS and then speak to a member of our Safeguarding Team. Staff are reminded that they cannot diagnose mental health issues.

Possible warning signs include:

- physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- changes in eating/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 secretively
- lateness to or absence from school
- repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Managing Disclosures

A pupil or parent 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. In this case, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive, and non-judgmental. Staff should listen, rather than advise, and not ask leading questions. Our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than exploring "Why?" For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures see the Safeguarding Policy.

All disclosures should be recorded in writing in CPOMS. This written record should include: the date; name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made; the pupil or parent's words as much as is possible; agreed next steps.

This information will be shared with the Safeguarding Team, who will maintain the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. All actions taken will be recorded on CPOMS. The person who brings the disclosure to the SG team also has that right to know the outcome for the pupil, or parent (where appropriate). This may just be an assurance that help was sought, or that the child is now receiving some support in school.

Confidentiality

Staff members should always be honest with regards to confidentiality. It is necessary to be upfront with the pupil about passing on a concern or disclosure by discussing with them: who will be told, what will be told to them, and why there is a need to tell them.

It is always advisable for staff members to share disclosures with a colleague, usually a member of the Safeguarding team or School Counsellor, this helps to safeguard their own emotional wellbeing as an individual is no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures

continuity of care in an individual staff member's absence, and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. The staff member should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful (outside of the Safeguarding Team) to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed if a child is self-harming, talking about self-harm (including suicidal ideation), saying they are being bullied, bullying others, or expressing low mood.

The school will always give pupils the options of informing their parents for them or with them. The staff members involved in this meeting should be determined with a member of the Safeguarding Team. This is especially important if there may be underlying child protection issues. If the member of Safeguarding Team is concerned that telling the parent would put the pupil at a higher risk of harm, then the parents will not be informed, and the DSL will contact SPA for advice.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, staff members need to be sensitive in their 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 in the school?
- Who should be present? This is determined with a member of the safeguarding team considering the parents, pupil, and the member of staff the disclosure to whom the disclosure was made.
- 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. Staff members should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

Staff members 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 information being shared. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

Staff members should always provide clear means of contact for 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. Each meeting should finish with agreed next steps and a note of the meeting logged on the pupil's record in CPOMS.

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their child's emotional and mental health. To support parents, the school 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 contact them, 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 termly 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.

Sources of Support

Sources of Support for children with mental health needs, outside of school professionals include:

- YoungMinds
- Childline
- Kingston and Richmond Single Point of Access: 020 8547 5008 or spa@richmond.gov.uk

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is struggling with their mental health, it can be a challenging 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. General information on how to support a friend will be incorporated into the PSHE curriculum, assemblies, and talks. To keep peers safe, the school 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 discussions with the pupil who is suffering and their parents, with whom we will discuss:

- What is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing/saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs help.

Additionally, the school will 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 in Peer Support (e.g. Anna Freud Centre resources and 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 pupils safe.

Pastoral Care Programme

The importance of mental health and wellbeing is also covered within our year-long pastoral programme. Planned to incorporate form time and assemblies, each week of the year is assigned a different theme, such as anti-bullying, keeping safe online and body positivity. Form tutors plan discussions and short activities around the themes; assemblies are based on the themes and tailored to either the Lower Years, Middle Years or Upper Years and Sixth Form. We also encourage teaching staff to incorporate the theme into their subject, when possible, to allow for wider discussions.

Place 2 Be

We provide two options of in-house counselling free of charge available to pupils two days a week - on a Tuesday and Wednesday when Place 2 Be are in school. All referrals for counselling must go through the Deputy Head Pastoral or the School Mental Health Lead.

Parental consent is required for a student to attend a series of sessions; however, students are permitted to attend 15 minute 'drop in' sessions without parental consent. Counselling sessions are confidential, but any information passed on by the child which may indicate they are in immediate danger must be reported to the Safeguarding team. Our counsellors both meet weekly with the Safeguarding team.

Further Resources

- YoungMinds
- Childline
- MindEd
- Mentally Healthy Schools
- Anna Freud Centre
- Charlie Waller Trust
- NSPCC: Emotional Wellbeing of Children in Care

Adoption UK

Concerns for immediate welfare of a parent and/or child

All members of the Safeguarding Team can be contacted through the email address safeguarding@hchnet.co.uk. If the DSL and Deputies are not available, then contact the Single Point of Access for Kingston and Richmond: 020 8547 5008 or spa@richmond.gov.uk. Organisations such as Samaritans, Childline, and NSPCC can also help in urgent matters. If there is a threat to someone's immediate safety, dial 999 to speak to the police.

Appendix 1: Wellbeing Action Plan

Wellbeing Action Plan

A wellbeing action plan can be useful when you are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, anxious, or just need some help with regulating all your emotions.

This action plan is **yours**.
You can decide how to use and who to show it to.
You decide who you would like to be involved or help you write it.
You decide whether you want someone to work with you.
You decide how much time to spend on it and when to do it.

My one-minute safety plan
Your one-minute safety plan is something to keep nearby for those times when things

seem hard, and you feel completely overwhelmed. It is something you can get to quickly and can help you begin to feel calmer and safer in a short time.

My favourite calming activity:

People who can help me:

Something to distract me?

5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Grounding Technique

When you are feeling overwhelmed, find:

5 things you can see:

4 things you can feel:

3 things you can hear:

2 things you can smell:

1 thing you can taste:

Take a deep breath.

What potential triggers or challenges are there for you?

What activities can you avoid to support your mental wellbeing?
(e.g. scrolling through social media, being alone all day, being hard on yourself, comparing yourself to others, etc)

If you need support:

1. Write down what is bothering you and show it to someone.
2. Talk to an adult you trust: your form tutor, a teacher, your parents, a doctor, etc.
3. Email, call a hotline, or use a website if you are not ready to talk
    a. Email: safeguarding@hchnet.co.uk
    b. NSPCC: help@nspcc.org.uk or call 0808 800 5000
    c. Childline: 0800 1111
    d. www.KOOTH.com
    e. www.youngminds.org.uk

Appendix 2: 5 Important tools for mental health and wellbeing

Connect - Connecting with others can make us feel happy, whether this is spending time with family, chatting with friends, playing games or sports with others, or spending time with our pets. It is also important to think of a trusted adult in your life who you would feel comfortable speaking to if you are struggling - this could be a family member, someone at school, or a sports coach.

Ways I can connect at home	
Ways I can connect at school	

Be Active - Research has shown that being active and doing exercise increases our happiness. This could be playing your favourite sport, dancing, or even just getting outside for a walk. The important thing is to do something you enjoy.

Active activities I enjoy:	

Take Notice - Life can be busy, and if we are not careful, we can worry about things that have happened or that are going to happen. Taking time to live in the moment, and take notice of how we feel, is an important skill to develop. You might like to try mindfulness or just take time to sit quietly in your favourite spot and do some deep breathing. Some people like to

keep a positivity journal, or a gratitude journal, writing down three things each day that made them feel good that day or that they are grateful for from that day.

What ''take notice'' activity would you like to try:	

Keep Learning - The world is full of opportunities to learn new things and develop new skills, which will also help you learn more about yourself. You could learn a language or how to code, develop your artistic skills or read books about something that interests you. It's up to you. Remember - everyone who is good at something was once a beginner! It is usual not to be good at something new!

Something new I would like to try:	

Give to Others - Helping others can make us feel good about ourselves. Why not offer to cook a meal for your family, or do something nice for a friend? You might like to raise money for a charity that is important to you, or do a litter pick or a beach clean.

How I help others (this could also be something new you would like to try!):	
