

The Kingsley School

Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Monitoring and evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy is monitored by Wellbeing Committee, and the Deputy Head (Pastoral), and reviewed annually at Wellbeing meetings and by SLT.

This policy is reviewed annually.

Last review: Summer 2020

Review date: Summer 2022

Mrs C McCullough – Deputy Head

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 Organisation).

At Kingsley, we aim to promote positive mental and physical health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable individuals who are known to us or made known during their time at Kingsley. This includes our approach to the physical and musculoskeletal elements of wellbeing, by offering opportunity for exercise and outdoor activities for pupils and staff including access to the school gym. We are a non-smoking school with longer than statutory lunch breaks, when pupils and staff have access to carefully monitored catering which supplies a varied menu of healthy food.

In addition to promoting positive mental and physical health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. We recognise that in an average UK classroom, three children may be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health strategies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils and staff affected both directly, and indirectly, by mental health and wellbeing.

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 first aid and pastoral care 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.

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- 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 pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents

Lead Members of Staff

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

T Ball – School Nurse

P Thomas - Counsellor

C McCullough DSL Lead – Pastoral Deputy

M. Gamble - DSL – Head of Prep

D Morgan - DSL – Head of Sixth Form

We also have a number of Mental Health Champions within the staff body. These individuals have attended a one day course on Mental Health Awareness.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Head of Year in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the DSL/DDSL or the Headteacher. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the school nurse is contacted or a first aider if the nurse is unavailable and normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to EWMHS (Emotional and Wellbeing Mental Health Services) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the mental health lead and the Head of Year or Head of Learning Support.

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:

- 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

Individual Care Plans will be kept securely by the nurse and Pastoral Deputy Head.

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 PSHCE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort being taught but 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 or others.

We make use of the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which aims to help rather than harm.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined on the pupil welfare page of our website.

The pastoral team will display relevant sources of support in communal areas both for pupils and staff. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of an individual seeking help by ensuring all stakeholders 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 pupil 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 mental health lead.

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 secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Managing disclosures

An individual 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 pupil 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 advise and our first thoughts should be of the individual's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held by the pastoral deputy headteacher. This written recording should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps – at each level of discussion

This information should be shared with the pastoral deputy headteacher who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality in dealing with pupils

Staff should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If they feel it is necessary for them to pass their concerns about a pupil on then they would normally, if age appropriate, discuss this with the pupil:

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

Staff should never share information about a pupil without first telling them, although an age-appropriate approach is required. Ideally, the staff member should receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and/or a parent.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the pastoral deputy head, as this helps to safeguard the staff member's emotional wellbeing as they are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. This should be explained to the pupil and discussed with them whom it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed but pupils should be urged to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. Pupils should always be given the option of a staff member informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents may not be informed depending on the individual case, but the DSL must be informed immediately.

Working with parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, staff need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents staff 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 pupil, other member 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. Staff should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

Staff should always highlight further sources of information and give them further information to read as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news being shared. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

Staff should always provide a clear means of contacting school 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 very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents staff will:

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

Supporting peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends, who often want to support but do not know how. In order to keep peers safe, staff should consider on a case by case basis what support is appropriate.

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 pupils safe.

The school will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. [The MindEd](#) learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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 pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, the school will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Pastoral Deputy Head and Assistant Head Academic who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every year.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to our mental health lead.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the pupil welfare page on the school's website.