

Heathfield Schools' Partnership Wellbeing Policy



This policy was adopted:	Autumn Term 2023
This policy to be reviewed:	Autumn Term 2026

Policy Statement

At Heathfield Schools' Partnership, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines mental health as '*a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.*'

This directly links with our school vision: Heathfield is a place where every child feels important, succeeds and aspires to something greater.

Emotional health and wellbeing promotes school improvement and success in a various ways:

- Pupils are happy and engaged with their learning
- Pupils and staff have high esteem and resilience
- Improved standards in every subject
- Effective teaching
- Positive behaviour
- High attendance of staff and pupils
- Respectful relationships between pupils and staff

Aims

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children are valued.
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying in any form is not tolerated.
- PSHE is taught regularly and consistently and gives children opportunities to understand emotions, feelings and learn key skills in how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties.

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding policy and our SEND policy in cases where pupils' mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Bullying, Medical Conditions, Positive Behaviour Management and RSE policies.

Lead Members of Staff

- Nikki Allman- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Ruth Levin – Nursery and Infant School Inclusion Manager and Mental Health Lead
- Jessica Fisher – Junior School Inclusion Manager and Mental Health Lead

We also have five trained ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) across our school partnership.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support.

Targeted support

The school offers support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils, which may include:

- Circle time approaches
- 'Circle of Friends' groups
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters'
- Managing emotions resources such as 'Zones of Regulation' and 'the incredible 5 point scale'
- 1:1 or small group work with an ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)
- 'Drawing and Talking' therapeutic intervention
- Mental Health Support Team (MHST) interventions such as music therapist and EWP (Education Wellbeing Practitioner)
- Nurture groups including Forest School

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire (SDQ)
- The Boxall Profile
- Coping in School Scale (CISS)

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or wellbeing issues.

Possible warning signs include: (this is not an exhaustive list)

- 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
- Reduced academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Noticeable changes in appearance/behaviour/attitude
- 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

Any warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated safeguarding lead.

Working with Parents

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website or through Parent Hub
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through our the Mental Health Support Team or Achieving for Children

- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children
- Offer regular parent workshops which support their own and their children's mental health and wellbeing
- Invite specific parents to work with our allocated EWP (Education Wellbeing Practitioner) so help them support their children with their emotional wellbeing.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Primary Mental Health Support Team (MHST)
- Counselling services
- Early Help Practitioners
- Occupational Therapists
- Education Wellbeing Practitioner
- Education Inclusion Support Service

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.

Staff Insets will be delivered by the Inclusion Managers or other agencies such as MHST and EP to support emotional health and wellbeing.

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.

Additional CPD will be delivered throughout the year where it becomes appropriate.

Staff Support

We support the mental health and wellbeing of all staff through a culture that recognises and celebrates effort and success based on an honest and open reflection of our impact on the children's learning and development. Supportive relationships and collective responsibility are paramount. We also provide:

- PPA time (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) as a year group
- Whole school training events, including Safeguarding and MHST insets
- Work life balance regularly reviewed and acted upon i.e. reduction of unnecessary paperwork, streamlined written reports.
- Termly 'low profile' weeks when there are no meetings, minimal marking of work and staff are encouraged to leave the school site earlier than usual
- Annual Wellbeing days to raise awareness of the importance of mental health
- Social events
- Regular supervision for our DSL and ELSAs
- Two members of staff (Nikki Allman and Jessica Fisher) have completed the mental health first aid training and are available to staff to support their mental health needs.
- Both schools subscribe to an employee assistance provider called 'Health Assured' that all staff have access to in order to support their mental health.

Helpful Websites

Richmond Mental Health Support Team <https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/health-services/emotional-health-service/mental-health-support-teams-mhst>

Emotional Health Service (AfC): <https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/health-services/emotional-health-service>

Young Minds: http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents

Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk>

Mind: <http://www.mind.org.uk/>

NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/>

Mental Health Foundation: <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

Anna Freud website: <https://www.annafreud.org/> Heads together: <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/>