



Hestia School

Wellbeing Policy

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Introduction

It is widely recognised that children's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing into adulthood. At Hestia School we are committed to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing amongst our students, their families, our staff members and governors.

Scope

This policy acts as a guide to all staff, including non teaching staff and proprietors, of Hestia School and outlines the approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing throughout the schools activities.

Definitions

CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
WMIM	With Me In Mind
EMHP	Education Mental Health Practitioner

Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental problems in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

Key Staff Members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Counsellors/life-coaches
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- SENCO
- Mental Health First Aid Lead
- PGW (Personal Growth and Wellbeing) Coordinator

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of students, in the first instance they should speak to the Key workers.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed and the Designated Safeguarding Lead informed.

If the child presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

This is flagged on ARBOR which enables staff to support the students correctly.

Mental Health on the Curriculum

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PGW, which incorporates the PHSE curriculum.

We will follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote students' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of students' own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons and assemblies as a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their peers who are facing challenges.

Sources of Support for Students

School Based Support

- Life Coaches
- Counsellors
- QoL
- Keyworkers
- DSL
- Safeguarding Lead
- WMIM workshops (these can be group based, corridor workshops or targeted 1:1s)

Local Support

There are a range of local services and organisations offering support to children and young people and their families.

- Educational Psychology
- CAMHS
- WMIM
- Complex Behaviour Team

Warning Signs

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 alert Keyworker who will make a referral to the wellbeing team.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits, feeling tired or falling asleep in school
- Increased isolation from friends and family
- Changes in usual activity and mood including reduction in class participation
- Lowering of usual academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self harm and / or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure or hopelessness
- Secretive behaviour
- Absence from school or regularly arriving late
- Repeated illness or physical pain with no known cause
- Loss on concentration in class

Targeted Support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with other professionals involved in the child's life such as social workers, caregivers and medical staff in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;

Working closely with local agencies and services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;

Identifying and assessing in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;

Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers.

Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective.

According to the child's needs;

Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including CAMHS, so that emotional, social, and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur.

Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality.

Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it;

The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

Managing Disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or peers, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on the student's personal file CPOMS, including:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with Wellbeing lead and DSL.

Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student.

We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we're going to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the student first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm. This also includes post16 students up to the age of 19.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

Parents must always be informed, but students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, a timescale of 24 hours is recommended to share this information before the school makes contact with the parents/carers.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

Whole School Approach

We are committed to embed a Whole School Approach to improving mental health and wellbeing, based on evidence about what works alongside our experiences and knowledge about how best we can support our children, families, staff and communities. Such an approach moves beyond learning and teaching to pervade all aspects of our school life and has been found to be effective in bringing about and sustaining health benefits.

Our policy has been guided by 9 key principles in promoting emotional health and wellbeing that will support us developing our whole school approach.

We believe that by promoting positive mental health in Hestia School we will:

- Have a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to mental health, underpinned within all policies and practices
- Raise awareness of how the whole school community can look after their own mental health and that of others
- Help to de-stigmatise mental health
- Support people and provide opportunities that enable everyone to reach their potential
- Strengthen relationships and provide opportunities for different ways of working
- Provide foundations for life-long learning
- Promote and strengthen resilience throughout the whole school community and empower everyone to face life's challenges

Source:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414908/Final_EHWP_draft_20_03_15.pdf

Working with Parents / Carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents there are questions to consider first:

Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?

Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.

Who should be present – students, staff, parents etc.?

What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent/carers, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents/carers to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agreed are documented.

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents/carers are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which peers may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for peers to know and what they should not be told
- How peers can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their peer needs 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 peers 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. A nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent.

We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The Mind Ed learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue. **Mind Ed** - <https://www.minded.org.uk/>

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be signposted for additional CPD and supported. WMIM are accessible for our school to work with for training for CPD for staff.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Wellbeing Lead who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

STAFF MENTAL HEALTH and WELLBEING

At Hestia School we recognise, prioritise and promote staff health and emotional wellbeing as an integral part of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Therefore, training and signposting to materials about mental health and emotional wellbeing will be made available for all staff via the Health and Wellbeing board in the staff room. This will be continually updated with up-to-date information.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing, such as:

- Supervision
- Celebrating Staff Achievements
- Friday wellbeing raffle
- Staff craft sessions
- Staff also have access to a confidential counselling service (on site counselling available)
- CPD specific training sessions (on mental health / behaviour / mindfulness)
- Supervision and appraisal will allow for mutual communication about personal health and emotional wellbeing if both felt it is necessary
- An open-door policy to our senior leadership team is always made available if staff want to speak to someone.
- A supportive governing body.
- These numerous opportunities allow for staff to connect and raise any concerns with the Mental Health Lead.
- Links to online resources such as - <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>

(Please note that this list is not exhaustive and it is recommended that you undertake additional research on resources available to you to meet your own needs).

Involving Staff

- We seek staff views and feedback about our approach and whole school mental health activities through staff wellbeing surveys and open door policies and staff's preferred communication (examples include digital, verbal, written or their own chosen platform).

Our policy is underpinned by the Government's Guidance contained within the: 'Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools and Colleges' document;

'Making a coordinated and evidence-informed approach to mental health in schools and colleges leads to improved pupil and student wellbeing, which, in turn, can improve learning.

The [guidance outlining a whole school or college approach](#) describes the areas to consider to enable good mental health and wellbeing practice:

[Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

