



SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING POLICY

This Policy was approved by:

Pastoral Committee of the Governing Body: 6th June 2022

Signed **Chair of Governors**

Date for Review: June 2024

POLICY STATEMENT

At Fred Longworth High School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

At our school, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us will need help to cope with them at some time. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. At our school, positive mental health is everybody's responsibility. We all have a role to play.

POLICY SCOPE

This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers, governors, and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach to promoting student mental health and wellbeing. It should be read and understood alongside our other relevant school policies.

POLICY AIMS

The aim of our policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our staff and students.

At our school, we will always:

- Help students to understand their emotions and experiences better.
- Ensure our students feel comfortable in sharing any concerns and worries.
- Help students to form and maintain relationships.
- Encourage students to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem.
- Help students to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks.

We will always promote a healthy environment by:

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all students and staff.
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
- Promoting our students' voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making.
- Celebrating each student for who they are and making every student feel valued and respected.
- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to any student who needs it.
- Raising awareness amongst staff and students about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms.
- Celebrating individual differences and never compromising in our belief that this is how we should treat each other.

- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in students.
- Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health.

WHAT IS MEANT BY 'MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTY?'

The term 'mental health' describes 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. A mental health difficulty is one in which a person is distracted or unable to engage with ordinary life due to upsetting, disturbing thoughts and/or feelings. These problems may distort or negatively impact a person's view of the world and produce a variety of symptoms and behaviour likely to cause distress and concern.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989

This policy has been created with regard to the following DfE guidance:

- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2016) 'Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice: 0 to 25'

This policy also has due regard to the school's policies including, but not limited to, the following:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behavioural Policy

- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Exclusion Policy

KEY STAFF MEMBERS

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process.

These are:

- **Mental Health Lead and SENCO:** Mrs Waring
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Mr Whalley
- **Designated Safeguarding Officer:** Mrs E. Bailey
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Co-Ordinator:** Mrs Naylor
- **Designated Governor:** Mrs Gradwell
- **Pastoral Staff:** Mrs Brook, Mr Fallows, Mrs Regan, Mrs Hyslop and Mrs Turner
- **Inclusion Staff:** Mrs Gannon, Mrs A. Bailey, Mr Potkin and Mrs Homer
- **PSHE Co-Ordinator:** Mr Thomson
- **School Counsellor:**

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student, then in the first instance they should speak to Mrs E. Bailey, Mrs Waring, Mr Whalley or the relevant Head of Year.

Mrs Waring and Mrs Bailey have undertaken the comprehensive ASIST training to support students who are feeling suicidal.

If a student presents a medical emergency then relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

INDIVIDUAL CARE PLANS

When a student has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is recommended that an Individual Care Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the student, parents, and relevant professionals.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the student's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

TEACHING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

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 PSHE curriculum. This includes resilience techniques and training.

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 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 friends who are facing challenges.

We regularly review our PHSE curriculum and lesson content to ensure that they are meeting the aims outlined in this policy. We also implement this into our curriculum at all stages to provide students with strategies to help keep them mentally well.

We also teach about mental health through assemblies and form time activities.

SUPPORT AT SCHOOL

We have a range of support available in school for any students struggling. The students are made aware of the service through HoY or a referral to the Inclusion Centre.

Provision
Nurture Small group classes
Mentoring
Counselling
Resilience Coaching
Transition Support
Tutoring
Anger Management
Mindfulness and wellbeing
Lego Therapy
Peer mentoring
Mental Health Support Team

There are a lot of support networks available for children in the local community and online. These include:

CORE Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
CAHMS school link worker
The school counsellor
The school nurse
GP

Relevant websites – Kooth.com; Childline.org.uk; Papyrus-uk.org,
www.mind.org.uk/ www.annafreud.org/

SIGNPOSTING

We ensure that all staff, students, and parents / carers are aware of the support and services available to them to support mental health, and how they can access these services both inside and outside of school hours. Within the school (noticeboards, toilets etc) and through our communication channels (websites, social media), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why should they access it
- What is likely to happen next

IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND WARNING SIGNS

All of our staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems. This means that they will be able to offer help and support to students who need it, when they need it.

These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs will communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Staff as appropriate.

Staff will be able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:

- Physical signs of harm.
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in mood and behaviour.
- Appearance – unkempt and/or neglected.
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide.
- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer.
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:

- Attendance and absenteeism.
- Punctuality and lateness.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.
- Family and relationship problems.

Finally, staff will be well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a student's mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement and health difficulties.

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 school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

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

MANAGING DISCLOSURES

If a student discloses concerns about themselves or a friend, to any member of staff, then all staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner.

All disclosures will be recorded confidentially on CPOMS and only shared with the appropriate authorities if it is necessary to keep the child safe, in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

The disclosure record will contain:

- The date of the disclosure.
- The name of the staff member to whom the disclosure was made.
- The nature of the disclosure and the main points from the conversation.
- Agreed next steps.

CONFIDENTIALITY

If a member of staff thinks it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student, either to somebody inside the school or somebody outside it, then this will first be discussed with the student. They will be told:

- Who the staff member is going to tell.
- What the staff member is going to disclose.
- Why it's necessary for somebody else to be told
- When the contact will be.

However, it may not be possible to gain the student's consent first, such as in the case of students who are at immediate risk. Protecting a student's safety is our main priority so we would share disclosures if we judged a child to be at risk.

It is important to also safeguard staff's 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 student 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 take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our students. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary.

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

We aim to support parents as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and offering our support at all times. To support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school.
- Share and allow parents to access further support.
- Ensure that parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.
- Give parents guidance about how they can support their child's positive mental health.
- Ensure this policy is easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health training our school staff receive and how mental health is covered in our school curriculum.

WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND PARTNERS

As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our students' emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- The school nurse.
- Paediatricians.
- CAMHS.
- Counselling services.
- Therapists
- Family support workers.
- Behavioural support workers.

SUPPORTING PEERS

We understand that, when a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. In response to this, we will consider, on a case by case basis, any peers that may need additional support.

We will provide support in a one-on-one or group setting. These sessions will be guided by the student, but they will discuss how peers can help, how peers can access support themselves, and healthy ways of coping with any emotions they might be feeling.

STAFF MENTAL HEALTH

Staff wellbeing is very important to us. Fred Longworth High School has a family feel and staff support each other well. Good staff well-being is essential for cultivating a mentally healthy school, for retaining and motivating staff and for promoting student wellbeing and attainment. We endeavour to help our staff to have a work life balance to ensure good mental health. We support staff mental health through:

- Staff welfare group – held every term, staff are able to raise genuine concerns with school leaders which are then discussed.
- Developing outstanding student behaviour which enables staff to be able to teach. Where there are issues staff are supported and a restorative approach to behaviour is part of our culture.
- Active encouragement for staff who wish to provide activities to promote well-being (eg. yoga, staff choir, pamper sessions).
- Exercise e.g. school gym use at low cost, yoga sessions, fitness training.
- Provision of some CPD time for developing well-being.
- Access to a counsellor if requested by staff funded by the school, where appropriate, and where there is availability.
- A school assessment and feedback policy that recognises the potential impact that marking can have upon staff; not all pieces of work need to be marked.

Strategies to reduce the time spent marking have been shared which maintain the use of high quality feedback.

- Encouraging new learning through the use of Action Research.
- Encouraging staff to buddy up with colleagues to support each other in providing opportunities for reflective practice and problem-solving school-based challenges through action research.
- Creating a sense of belonging to the school 'Freddie's Family' (eg. through team development opportunities).
- Staff recognition and praise. This is part of the school's culture eg. briefings, personal situations celebrated – significant birthdays/weddings/birth of children.

Fred Longworth High School acknowledges that staff who are working closely with distressed students exhibiting mental health problems can themselves be placed under emotional strain.

Support will be provided to all staff who request it in terms of supervision.

TRAINING

All staff will receive training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of their regular safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep students safe. Training records will be held with the DSL for safeguarding.

We will post all relevant information, and additional information, on our school website so staff can learn more about child mental health. We will consider additional training opportunities for staff and we will support additional CPD throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with students.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every two years. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.