



ORWELL PARK SCHOOL
Nacton, Ipswich IP10 0ER

Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

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CSB
Mental Health Lead
September 2023

Policy statement

At Orwell Park School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school community; pupils, staff, parents and carers.

Scope

This policy is intended to:

- Provide guidance to school staff on our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across all communities in the school
- Inform pupils and parents about the support that they can expect from the school in respect of supporting mental health and wellbeing

Read this policy in conjunction with:

- Learning Support Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Life Skills Policy
- RSE Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Complaints Procedure for Pupils
- Supervision of Pupils and Missing Child Policy
- The Staff Handbook

Policy aims

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where pupils feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly
- Celebrate all of the ways pupils achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Allow pupils to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice

- Give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Spread awareness of the varieties of ways mental health issues can manifest
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues
- Provide support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

Legal basis

This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Mental Health Lead.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

G Musson - Headmaster
 Mrs SE Skillern – Head of Pre Prep
 MM O'Brien – DSL
 Mrs HL Carrington – DSL
 Mrs VM Hughes-Wiggins – DSL
 Mrs SH Howell – DSL
 Mrs CS Brunt – Mental Health Lead
 MI Middleton – Head of Boarding
 Ms A Ntiri-Akuffo – Head of Girls Boarding
 Mrs M Rawson – School Nurse

Warning signs

- All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:
- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment

- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Mental Health Lead.

All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file on My Concern.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

- The full name of the member of staff who is making the record
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

Confidentiality

There are no circumstances under which a disclosure should be kept secret or a promise made to a pupil to keep it secret. Staff will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school

Staff should always share disclosures with at least one appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL. If the DSL is not available, staff should inform one of the DDSLs and follow the Safeguarding procedures. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the safeguarding policy will be followed.

Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with the DSL
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who you will share the information with and explain why you need to do this
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the chosen elected member of staff
6. The DSL will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

Supporting pupils

Baseline support for pupils

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, the school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time, Life Skills and Mental Health Awareness Week
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on the school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the school that is negatively impacting on mental health
- Monitoring of all pupils' mental health through assessments e.g strengths and difficulties questionnaire
- Appointment of a Mental Health Lead who has a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support through tutors
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
 - Worry boxes
 - Circle time

Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the Senior Mental Health Lead will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support, further to the provision of the baseline support as detailed in the previous section. The school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

- Wellbeing Ambassadors
- Reduced timetable
- Time out pass

- Counselling

Individual healthcare plans

A pupil will be offered an individual healthcare plan alongside other education provision if required.

IHPs are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carer, and any other relevant professionals.

The pupil's IHP will contain the following details:

- The mental health issue (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)
- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer the school provides, the school will make, or encourage parents to make, a referral for external support, in conjunction with the DSL, the school nurse and the Head of Learning Support.

- GP or paediatrician
- CAMHS
- Mental health charities (e.g. [Samaritans](#), [Mind](#), [Young Minds](#), [Kooth](#))
- Local counselling services

Supporting and collaborating with parents and carers

We will work with parents and carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child

- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing in our OrWellbeing newsletter on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in Life Skills, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face to face.

These meetings can be difficult, so the school will ensure that parents are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

If appropriate, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be created in collaboration with parents/carers (see previous section).

Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

Signposting

Sources of support will be displayed around the school and linked to on the school website, so pupils and parents are aware of how they can get help.

The Mental Health Lead will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

Whole school approach to promoting health and wellbeing

Mental health and Wellbeing is taught in Life Skills

We will follow the [PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing](#).

Pupils will be taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

For more information, see our Life Skills curriculum.

Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging pupils to disclose when they think their mental health or that of another pupil is deteriorating

The Wellbeing Hub

Orwell are members of the Wellbeing Hub which provides many benefits for the school community including:

- CPD Training – pupils benefit from staff trained to understand and meet their social and emotional needs
- 24/7 Support – for staff, parents and pupils
- Pupil Wellbeing – pupils gain tools to manage their own mental health and wellbeing
- Staff Wellbeing – helps staff cope with the pressures of the job
- Staff Confidence in their pastoral role

- ISI Inspections – evidences careers, Wellbeing, Parental Engagement, CPD and Community Engagement
- Parental Engagement – parents feel supported and encouraged
- Aligned school/ home messaging
- Careers & PSHE – delivers valuable resources to support the work of your teams
- Community Engagement – the sponsorship programme has provided access to the Wellbeing Hub for our local primary school

Training

All staff will be given regular training/updates from DSL/MHL so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Offer staff supervision sessions
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Provide staff with details of independent mental health support via the EAP programme at AXA Insurance
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment

Good websites for staff who wish to learn more about mental health are:

<https://www.minded.org.uk/>

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/>

<https://www.annafreud.org/training/>

<https://www.cwmt.org.uk/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/children-incare/emotional-wellbeing-of-children-in-care/>
<https://www.adoptionuk.org/campaigns>

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, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

For support on specific mental health needs

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk

OCD UK www.ocduk.org

Depression Alliance www.depressoinalliance.org

Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com

National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk

Self-Harm www.selfharm.co.uk

Suicidal thoughts Prevention of young suicide UK – POPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

For general information and support

www.youngminds.org.uk champions young people's mental health and wellbeing

www.mind.org.uk advice and support on mental health problems

www.time-to-change.org.uk tackles the stigma of mental health

www.rethink.org challenges attitudes towards mental health

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Caroline Brunt, Mental Health Lead, annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the safeguarding governors and the Headmaster.