

Positive Mental Health Policy

The Sittingbourne School



Approved by: Lynn Lawrence

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1. Introduction

At The Sittingbourne School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students and staff. Our culture is supportive, caring, and respectful. We encourage students to be open and we want each student to have their voice heard.

We know that everyone experiences different life challenges and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. 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.

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), along with governors and parents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

Policy Aims:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all students and staff.
- Increase awareness and understanding of mental health issues.
- Provide early intervention and support for students experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Create a safe and supportive school environment where students feel comfortable seeking help.
- Develop students' resilience and coping strategies.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies to support students' mental health.
- Ensure staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support student mental health.
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues.

- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health, along with their peers and parents or carers.

Lead Members of Staff:

This policy applies to all students, staff, governors, volunteers, and visitors to The Sittingbourne School.

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

Senior Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead	Mrs Wheeler
Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead	Mrs Sherwood
Wellbeing Team	Ms Gruber, Ms Mannouch, Ms Stores
DSL	Mrs Wheeler
Head of Year 7	Mr Ball
Head of Year 8	Ms Moss
Head of Year 9	Miss Whiting
Head of Year 10	Mr Barnes
Head of Year 11	Mr Dengate
Post 16	Mrs Webb, Ms Jones, Mr La Haye
SENDCO	Ms Jewiss
RESET Manager	Ms Harvey
KS3 Lead: Behaviour and Attitudes	Ms Allum
KS4 Lead: Behaviour and Attitudes	Mr Mendes Anderson
Deputy Headteacher	Mr Southall, Mrs Sapp, Mr Campbell
School Counsellor (KCS)	Ms O'Sullivan

Staff members who have concerns regarding a student's mental health or wellbeing are required to initially log an incident on Bromcom in the safeguarding area. In situations where there is an immediate risk of harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL must be contacted without delay, and established safeguarding protocols implemented. In the event of a student experiencing a medical emergency, standard medical emergency procedures ([appendix 4](#)) should be adhered to, including alerting first aid personnel and, if necessary, contacting emergency services. Referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) will be coordinated and managed by the Safeguarding team/Wellbeing team in collaboration with Year teams.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the Special Educational Needs/Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Policy where a student has an identified special educational need, Behaviour Policy and our Child Protection Policy.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher: Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Senior Mental Health Lead (Mrs Wheeler) is responsible for:

- Provide a strategic direction for the school's mental health and wellbeing provision.
- Responsible for embedding mental health and wellbeing into the school's overall culture.
- Work closely with the senior leadership team to ensure that mental health is considered in all aspects of school life.
- Work to raise awareness of mental health issues and reduce stigma.
- Coordinate and oversee the school's provision for students' mental health needs, including identifying students who need support and ensuring they receive appropriate help
- Monitoring the evaluating the impact of current interventions offered to students to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Ensure that school policies and practices support positive mental health.

Designated Mental Health Lead (Mrs Sherwood) is responsible for:

- Coordinating mental health support within the wellbeing team and school.
- Providing advice and support to staff.
- Liaising with external agencies.
- Developing and delivering training.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy.

All Staff: Responsible for:

- Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in the classroom.
- Identifying and reporting concerns about students' mental health on bromcom.
- Creating a supportive and inclusive classroom environment.
- Attending relevant training.

Governing Body: Responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has an effective mental health policy.
- Monitoring the implementation of the policy.
- Allocating resources to support mental health and wellbeing.

Students: Responsible for:

- Treating others with respect and kindness.
- Seeking help when needed.
- Participating in activities that promote wellbeing.

Parents/Carers: Responsible for:

- Working with the school to support their child's mental health.
- Communicating any concerns to the school.

3. Teaching about Mental Health and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our Character Education and

Personal Development Time curriculums. Key topics included in the curriculum are: types of mental health, the effect of mental health on young people, discrimination, how celebrities deal with mental health and students researching their own mental health.

We will promote positive mental health and wellbeing through:

- Character Education curriculum: Delivering a comprehensive Character education curriculum that covers mental health, emotional wellbeing, and resilience. Whole-school activities: Organising events and activities that promote positive mental health, such as Mental Health Awareness Week, attending trips with external agencies.
- Creating a positive school ethos: Fostering a culture of kindness, respect, and inclusion.
- Providing opportunities for students to develop their social and emotional skills.
- Promoting healthy lifestyles: Encouraging physical activity, healthy eating, and good sleep habits.
- Providing access to extracurricular activities.
- Critical thinking and research: Encouraging students to actively explore and research mental health topics relevant to them.

4. Warning Signs

School 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 log an incident on Bromcom in the safeguarding area. This will be actioned by the Mental Health Lead or a member of the Safeguarding Team/Wellbeing Team.

Possible warning signs include:

Changes in:

- Mood or energy level
- Eating or sleeping patterns
- Attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- 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
- Rapid 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
- Refusing to attend school/lessons

5. Managing disclosures

A student 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 student 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 student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'. 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.

All disclosures should be recorded in writing on Bromcom and held in the student's confidential safeguarding file. This written record should 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

This information must be logged on Bromcom where the Wellbeing/Safeguarding Team will further explore the concern and offer support and advice about next steps.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the DSL team must be informed immediately.

Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure which is logged on Bromcom
2. Wellbeing member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with the safeguarding team/wellbeing team.
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who the information will be shared with and why
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the chosen elected member of staff
6. The relevant member of staff 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

6. Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students 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 school website
- A Guide to Mental Health and Wellbeing accessible for students and parents/carers
- Anxiety workbooks for students
- Drop in parental/carer workshops delivered by the school's Wellbeing Team

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as the library, year team offices, the Medical Room and safe spaces and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

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

7. Confidentiality

Staff will not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret – instead they 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
- Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures with at least one appropriate colleague. This will usually be the Wellbeing team/Safeguarding Team/Year Team. 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/carers will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the child protection and safeguarding policy will be followed.

8. Supporting pupils

Baseline support for all pupils

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

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time, character education and mental health awareness week
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on our school website
- Providing students with anxiety workbooks
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of our school that is negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring all pupils' mental health through assessments, e.g. resilience conversation
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support, e.g. through heads of year
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
 - Worry boxes
 - Safe online button to report concerns

Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the Wellbeing and Safeguarding team will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above.

Our 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 is shown in the provision map. (Appendix 2)

Students will be referred to the wellbeing team for support via a resilience conversation or a student safeguarding concern form.

Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)

A pupil will be offered a medical care plan if there is a diagnosed medical need. Medical care plans are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carer, and any other relevant professionals.

The pupil's medical care plan will contain the following details:

- Adapt this to suit your school's policy/procedure and your school's context:
- 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 our school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

Emotionally Based School Avoidance

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a complex issue characterised by a child or young person's significant difficulty attending school due to emotional distress, rather than deliberate truancy. To effectively address EBSA, we as a school will look to adopt a multi-tiered approach that prioritises early identification, individualised support for your child, and collaborative partnerships with all stakeholders. This includes providing a safe and supportive school environment, implementing attendance plans where necessary, and offering access to on-site or external mental health professionals. We believe regular communication between school staff, parents/guardians, and the student is crucial to develop a tailored intervention plan that addresses the underlying emotional factors contributing to the avoidance, facilitates gradual reintegration, and promotes long-term school engagement.

9. Working with Parents/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, provided students give consent.

- Give parents guidance about how they can support their child's/children'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.

Before disclosing to parents we 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 student, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?
- Does the student give consent for the parents to be informed of any involvement with supportive agencies?

The school will highlight further sources of information that may be helpful and provide clear means of contacting us. We will finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

10. Working with other Agencies

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
- Mental Health Support Teams
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance
- CAMHS
- Mind and Body
- Counselling services
- Therapists
- Family support workers
- Behavioural support workers
- Children's Social Services
- Early Help
- Police

11. Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. Peers often want to support but do not know how to access it. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that peers may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which peers may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations with the student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend may need 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 friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

12. Training

All staff 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. This training is completed during staff development days throughout the year. In addition, training occurs for all staff in weekly morning briefings and bulletins.

Examples of some of the training that takes place may include: Building Resilience for Young People, Introduction to Self Harm, Self Harm Prevention, Dealing with Anxiety, Ways to Wellbeing, Youth Mental Health First Aid.

13. Legislation and Guidance

This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- [Special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) code of practice](#)

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

- We will regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy.
- We will collect data on student mental health and wellbeing.
- We will use feedback from students, staff, and parents/carers to improve our provision.

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every year. This is so that it remains up to date, useful, and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Resilience Conversation



The Sittingbourne School

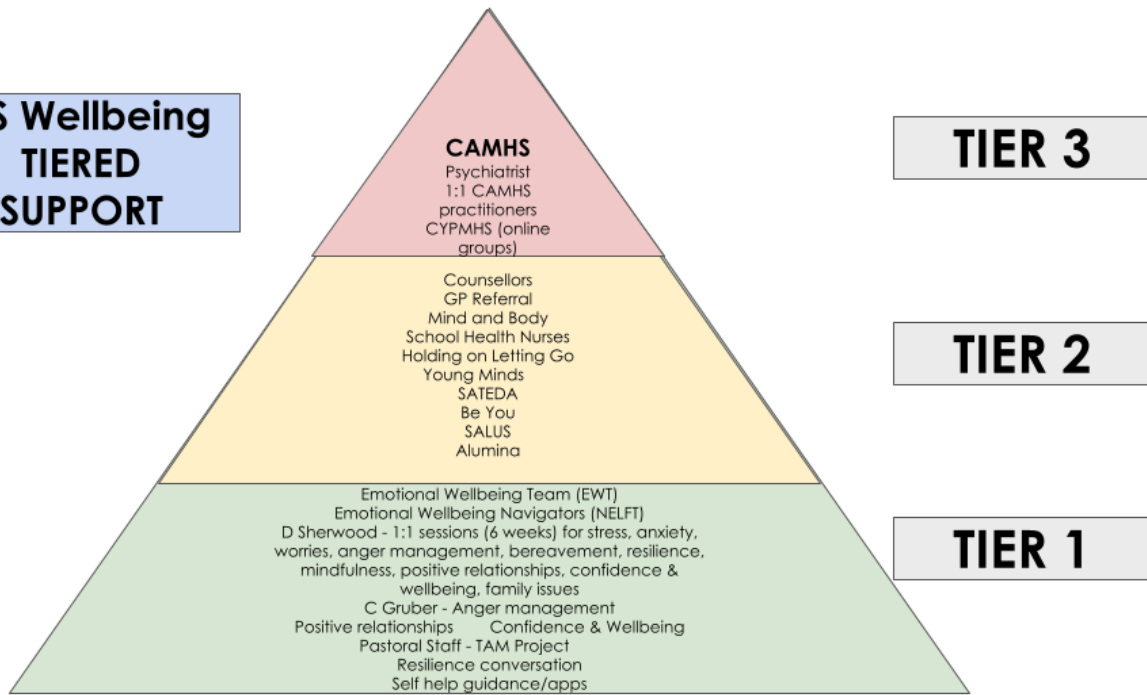
Resilience Conversation

First Name:	Surname:	Community:	Date:
Put a tick in the box reflecting on how you have felt in the past two weeks.			
Feeling Secure (How secure you feel in yourself, in physical places, and with those around you)		Yes	No
I have someone I trust			
I get on with my parent/carer			
I have someone outside of my family to talk with			
I feel safe outside of my home			
I feel safe inside my home			
I use the internet safely and know how to deal with things I see			
I feel like I can keep myself safe			
I think people around me feel safe			
Health (Your health and wellbeing and of those around you)			
I consider myself to have good physical health			
I consider myself to have good mental health			
My family have good health and wellbeing			
My family support each other to remain well			
I know where to go if I am concerned about my health			
I eat at least 3 healthy meals a day			
I access free breakfast from the school			
I know where to go if I am concerned about others			
Emotions & Behaviours (Having the skills to manage your emotions and behaviours as well as feeling positive about the future)			
I feel good about myself			
I am happy with my own identity			
My parent/carer expects me to take responsibility for my actions			
I express my emotions without harming others or property			
I am looking forward to the next few years			
I can manage my worries and anxieties			
Education (Your learning, trying new things, and the support from others to help with these)			
There are subjects I enjoy			
I have someone who helps with my school work if I need it			
I support my peers when they need it			
I can access sites online that support my learning			
I have someone at school that understands my wellbeing and know who to talk to			
I consider my behaviour in school to be good			
Friendships (The importance of having friends, positive peers, and being a good friend)			
I have at least one good friend who I trust			
I have the confidence to make my own choices within my group of friends			
I have friends outside of school			
I have somewhere to be with my friends			
I show respect to my friends			
I treat my friends online as I would face to face			
Hobbies and Interests (Being able to access activities you enjoy, are good at, or want to do)			
I have an activity I like doing			
I would like to start a new hobby or go to a new club			

Appendix 2: Tiers of Support and interventions



**TSS Wellbeing
TIERED
SUPPORT**



Appendix 3: Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis

