



The Governing Body for the
Isle of Wight Education Federation

Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy

Author	Louise Southwell
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POLICY STATEMENT

Mental health is an integral and essential component of health. The WHO constitution states: *"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." An important implication of this definition is that mental health is more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities.*

Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life. On this basis, the promotion, protection and restoration of mental health can be regarded as a vital concern of individuals, communities and societies throughout the world. (World Health Organisation)

In our Federation, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students. We know we are proactive at supporting children with social, emotional and mental health needs, but there is always more we can do. This policy helps aid consistency of approach and equality of provision for our students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By the age of fourteen, a half of all mental health problems are established in a person. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for staff and students who are affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

This document describes the Federation's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff and governors.

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health. their peers and parents/carers

Lead Members of Staff

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

Mr Matthew Parr-Burman - Executive Headteacher and Head of School - Medina College

Ms Karen Begley - Executive Deputy Headteacher and Head of School - Carisbrooke College

Mr David Mumford - Deputy Headteacher and Head of School - The Island VI Form

Mrs Michelle Barnes- Designated Safeguarding Lead - Medina College

Mr Michael Peake - Designated Safeguarding Lead - Carisbrooke College

Mrs Louise Southwell - Assistant Headteacher - Personal Development

Ms Kerie James - IWEF - Mental Health Lead

Ms Madeleine Reilly - Safeguarding Officer

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the DSL, Form Tutor or Head of Year in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures (logging on My Concerns) should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Officer, Headteacher or member of SLT. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary. Where a further referral to an external agency is appropriate, this will be led and overseen by Rachel Bowles - Interventions Coordinator.

Teaching about Mental Health

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 PSHE curriculum. Each year group follows the Jigsaw Programme which covers age specific lessons for the delivery of mental health education. Where required, the specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort responding to local, national and international issues but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

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 towards the end of this policy.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as tutor rooms, corridors, communal areas and toilets. We will promote relevant websites and events through the use of the Federation's social media accounts and school newsletters. We will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum.

Whenever we highlight sources of support (either physically or virtually), 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

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 communicate their concerns with appropriate staff within school.

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. The established safeguarding processes and protocols should be carried out by staff.

Working with Parents/Carers

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents/carers, we need to be sensitive in our approach. It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide a clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Each meeting needs to be finished with an agreed next step and a brief record of the meeting should also be kept on the child's confidential record.

Supporting Students

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

Supporting Staff

- Staff Wellbeing Group
- Staff wellbeing on whole school development plan
- Mental Health First Aid training by MH 1st Alders
- Return to work processes
- Signposting to Employee Assistance Programme
- Headteacher liaison with unions
- Signposting to PSHE and SEMH training

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 students safe.

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 students.

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

- School Based Support
- Form tutor support
- Head of Year support
- Referral to Mental Health Support Team
- Referral to CAMHS
- Suggestion of Peer Mentoring
- Social skills intervention
- Early Help Assessment
- Signpost to other services/support using Early Help Signposting resources