



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Date of Issue: February 2023

To be reviewed: February 2026

1. Policy Statement

“Mental health is 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.” (World Health Organization)

At Jenyns, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff, our children and our wider school community. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students and families. 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 time they reach university, this figure is as high as 1 in 6. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

2. Introduction & Scope

This policy outlines the School’s commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of school leaders and others for identifying, promoting and maintaining psychological health, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues.

This policy sets out how the school fulfils its legal obligations, the responsibilities of different functions and specialists and the range of services available to help employees maintain health and wellbeing. The school recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving employees' ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance.

This policy applies to all employees of the school. It does not form part of any employee’s contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff, pupils and our wider school community.
- 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 and their peers and parents/carers

3. Responsibilities

3.1. School

The School recognises its legal duty of care to employees to promote health at work. The school will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and create a working environment where

potential work-related stressors, as far as reasonably practicable are avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices.

3.2. Leaders

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, staff with specific, relevant remit include: The Headteacher, Senior Teacher and the Senior Mental Health Lead.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the Mental Health Lead or Headteacher. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed led by the designated safeguarding lead. If the pupil presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting parents and contacting the emergency services if necessary. Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Headteacher.

Leaders should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the appropriate information and support to do their job. Leaders should also familiarise themselves with the school's policies on diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support staff. In particular, leaders are expected to ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications;
- keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work, including changes to their roles / responsibilities, and how these might affect their job and workload;
- ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management;
- making sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams; and
- ensuring that workstations are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

3.3. Senior Leadership Team/Governing Body

School leaders in liaison with the governing body will develop school-wide policies and procedures to support the wellbeing of employees. Leaders will assist managers in supporting individuals and liaise with occupational health (OH) as needed, with the objective of helping employees to maintain good psychological and physiological health.

3.4. Employees

Employees must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, exercise and smoking) and must raise concerns with their manager if they feel that there are work issues that are causing them stress or having a negative

impact on their wellbeing. Employees must take responsibility for developing their own coping strategies as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce the risk of stress.

3.5. Occupational Health

The school subscribes to an OH service OH Assist. OH professionals will work with school leaders to provide a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work or to return to work. This will include preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from the school, liaising with GPs and working with schools to help employees to retain employment.

4. Health promotion initiatives

From time to time the school may develop and run a range of health promotion initiatives designed to raise awareness of health and lifestyle issues affecting mental health and wellbeing.

Employees will also be encouraged to establish clubs and groups designed to foster wellbeing, for example, lunchtime walking or dancing clubs, which create a sense of community and inclusion for all. Where possible these initiatives should take place out of core school hours and employee working time.

Other measures available to support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing may include:

- an employee assistance programme;
- a mental health first-aid programme;
- procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour;
- a lifestyle management programme;
- a stress management/handling pressure programme;
- special leave arrangements such as career breaks / sabbaticals
- opportunities for flexible working
- support for workers with disabilities.

5. Training and support

Managers and employees should regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to changing job demands, this will usually be focused on internal support, often relatively simplistic in nature and most commonly developed to cover all staff as new initiatives are introduced.

Managers and employees are encouraged to participate in communication/feedback exercises, including stress audits and staff surveys. All employees are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the communication tool most appropriate to the message, for example departmental/team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications and organisation-wide methods. The school will seek to ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns.

In addition, 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. The MindEd learning portal 2 provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue - <https://www.minded.org.uk/>

6. Occupational health support

If employees believe that their work, or some aspect of it, is putting their wellbeing at risk they should, in the first instance, speak to their manager. The discussion should cover workload and other aspects they find to be a struggle, this may lead to the identification of training/support needs.

A referral to the occupational health team may be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their manager. Discussions between employees and the occupational health professionals are confidential, although the occupational health team will provide a report on the employee's fitness to work. This report will contain any recommended adaptations to the working environment, for consideration by the referring manager.

7. Relationship with other policies

This employee wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with the improving wellbeing guidance and other policies, procedures and guidance covering: health and attendance; special leave; flexible working; bullying and harassment; and the management of work-related stress.

8. Individual Care Plans

For pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health, an individual care plan can be drawn up. This should be done involving the pupil, the parents/carers and relevant health professionals where possible. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

9. Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. We will teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

The skills required for positive emotional and mental health and wellbeing focus on; self-awareness, self-efficacy, self-belief, emotional literacy (recognising and managing emotions), planning, problem solving, resilience, optimism, persistence, focus and social skills; including the ability to make social relationships and feel empathy and compassion.

These skills are extended across the taught curriculum and into activities across the entire educational context. The emphasis will be on developing strength and capacity in a supportive school environment and ethos.

10. Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils, parents, and our wider school community are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as the staff rooms, and in corridors and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum and via nurture sessions. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupils help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at

- How to access it

11. Warning Signs

Early identification and prompt help ensure that problems can be addressed with the least disruption and prevents escalation. School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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 the Senior Mental Health Lead/Headteacher.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Regularly skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain, nausea or illness with no evident cause

Disclosures should follow our school Child Protection procedures; reporting to the DSL and recorded using CPOMs. Staff should listen rather than advise and their thoughts should be with the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than exploring 'why?'.

We will be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality and should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

Parents and carers must be informed and pupils may wish to be part of this discussion.

12. Working with Parents/Carers

When informing parents/carers, we need to be sensitive in our approach. 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.
- Who should be present? Consider parents/carers, the student, and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be concerning 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/carer time to reflect. We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets/information to take away where possible, as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that is being shared.

Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines. Sharing support and advice with the wider parent community should be common practice in order to support all children with their emotional and mental health.

Finish each meeting with an agreed next step, and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

13. The Education Staff Wellbeing Charter

The Education Staff Wellbeing Charter, which was co-created by the Department for Education, Ofsted and various other interested parties, is a declaration of support for, and set of commitments to, the wellbeing and mental health of everyone working in education. All state funded schools and colleges are invited to familiarise themselves with the charter, and to sign up autumn of 2021, as a shared commitment to protect, promote and enhance the wellbeing of their staff. It is voluntary and there is no deadline to sign up.

The aim is for schools to use the charter to:

- show staff that you take their wellbeing seriously
- open a conversation with staff about their wellbeing and mental health
- create a staff wellbeing strategy
- create a wellbeing-focused culture

More information can be found at the link as outlined in Appendix 1.

14. Appendix 1 – links to external organisations

ACAS booklet on health and wellbeing that sets out the components for a healthy workplace

<https://www.acas.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing>

MIND gateway Mental Health at Work: your first stop for better mental health at work

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

Helping you / education support - Independent support for all working in education

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

Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families /Schools in mind

<https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges>

Education staff wellbeing charter Gov.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-staff-wellbeing-charter>

Trade Unions

<https://neu.org.uk/>

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

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

<https://community-tu.org/>

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

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

15. Appendix 2 - Guidance and advice documents

- Guidance and advice documents Mental health and behaviour in schools – departmental advice for school staff. Department for Education (2016)
- Counselling in Schools: a blueprint for the future- departmental advice for school staff and counsellors. Department for Education (2016)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/497825/Counselling_in_schools.pdf
- Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing (2015). PSHE Association. Funded by the Department for Education (2015)
- Keeping children safe in education - statutory guidance for schools and colleges. Department for Education (2018)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. Department for Education (2015)

- Healthy child programme from 5 to 19 years old is a recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing. Department of Health (2009)
http://www.rcpch.ac.uk/system/files/protected/education/HCP_from-5-19-years-old.pdf
- Future in mind – promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing - a report produced by the Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce to examine how to improve mental health services for children and young people. Department of Health (2015)
- What works in promoting social and emotional wellbeing and responding to mental health problems in schools? Advice for schools and framework document written by Professor Katherine We are. National Children’s Bureau (2015)

16. Appendix 3 - Possible, causes, signs and symptoms

Possible causes:

- Friendship problems, peer conflict, bullying, cyberbullying
- Bereavement or a distressing event
- Changing school/home, living in institutional settings
- Poverty, homelessness
- Family/community violence, physical, sexual, emotional abuse
- Parents arguing, living in conflict, divorce, family break-up, feeling rejected
- A family history of depression
- Expressions of hopelessness or helplessness
- A dramatic change in personality or appearance
- Changed eating or sleeping habits
- A serious drop in school, performance
- Finding it hard to concentrate
- Refusal to go to school
- Tearfulness
- Becoming very withdrawn
- Low self-esteem, isolation, irritability and mood changes
- Loss of interest in favourite hobbies or sports.
- Written/spoken notice of intention to end own life
- Feeling useless/unwanted/unneeded/hopeless
- Feeling like everyone would be better off without you
- Urges to self-harm
- Poor sleep
- Weight gain/loss
- Wanting to avoid others
- Unexplained accidents or injuries of cuts, bruises or cigarette burns, on wrists, arms, thighs and chest
- Keeping fully covered, even in warm weather.
- Avoidance of situations where revealing clothing is expected