

# **Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

## **2023-2024**

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**MORE  
HOUSE  
SCHOOL**

KNIGHTSBRIDGE

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# 1. Aims

At More House School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and wellbeing. It aims to:

- Set out our School's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our School;
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about and reflect on their experiences of mental health;
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues, and
- Inform pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources

This policy should be read alongside:

- SEND policy
- Behaviour and Discipline policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

# 2. 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](#)

# 3. Roles and responsibilities

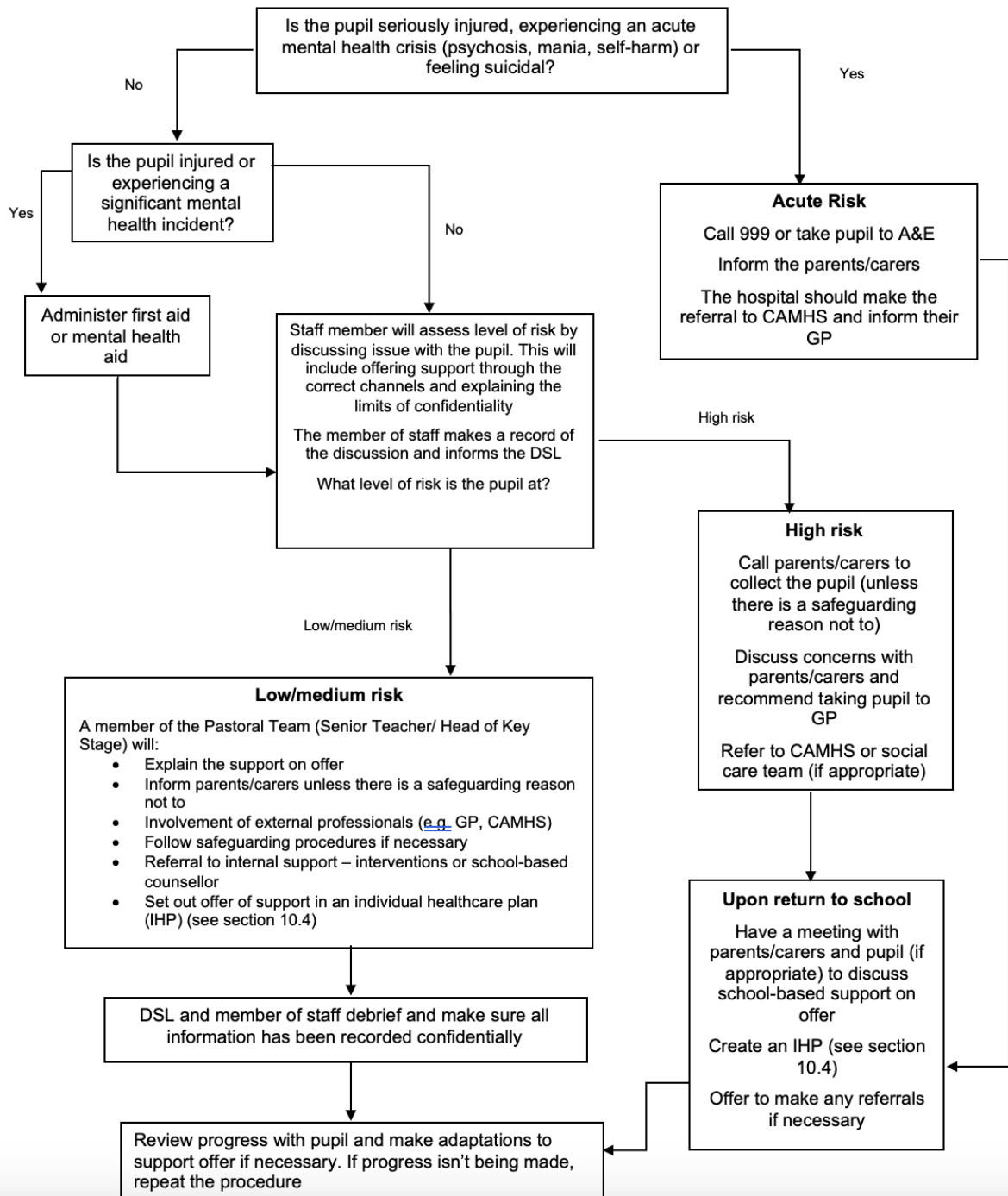
All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or one of the Deputy Designated safeguarding lead (DDSL) .

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

- The Head is responsible for ensuring a member of the Senior Leadership Team is the designated mental health lead and has oversight for the implementation of this policy;
- The Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE)/ Mental Health Lead - is delegated responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy;
- Deputy Head Pastoral (DHP)/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for any safeguarding needs;

- Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) - works closely with the Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE) and the DHP/DSL to ensure that needs of more vulnerable pupils are met, and
- Pastoral Support Officer - works closely with the DHP/DSL in supporting pupils who may be at risk of or experiencing mental health issues

## 4. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



## 5. 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;
  - Eating or sleeping patterns;
  - Attitude in lessons or academic attainment, and
  - 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, and
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

## 6. 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 our School's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file on CPOMS.

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, and
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

If a disclosure is hand written it should be uploaded onto CPOMS as soon as possible.

## 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, and
- 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 1 appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL or a DDSL. 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, and
- 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 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

### 7.1 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 DSL or DDSL;
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 DSL or DDSL will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate), and
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

## **8. Supporting pupils**

### **8.1 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, PSHE and mental health awareness week;
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on our School website;
- 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 (Pupil Concern Form);
- Monitoring all pupils' mental health through assessments, e.g. a strengths and difficulties questionnaire;
- 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 Key Stage, and
- Completing wellbeing journals in form time to monitor mental health of students.

### **8.2 Assessing what further support is needed**

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our School can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above in section 8.1.

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, and
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered.

### **8.3 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:

- Nurture groups;
- Daily check ins;
- Reduced timetable;

- Time-out pass, and
- Counselling.

## 8.4 Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)

A pupil will be offered an individual healthcare plan (IHP) if deemed necessary by the Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE)/Mental Health Lead.

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 our School needs to be aware of the child's condition, and
- What to do in an emergency.

## 8.5 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer our School provides, our School will make, or encourage parents/carers to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

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

# 9. Supporting and collaborating with parents/carers

We will work with parents/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 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/carer forums), and
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents/carers 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 we will ensure that parents/carers 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 section 8.4).

## 10. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be very 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, and
- Signposting to sources of external support.

## 11. Signposting

Sources of support are displayed around our School and linked to on our School website, so pupils and parents/carers are aware of how they can get help.

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

## 12. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

### 12.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE

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

Pupils are taught to:

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

### 12.2 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, and
- Encouraging pupils to disclose when their mental health is deteriorating.

## 13. Training

All staff will be offered training so they:

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

## 14. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously;
- Offer staff supervision sessions;
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves, and

- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment.

## 15. Counselling

Counselling is available to pupils at More House School as part of the pastoral support we offer.

Counselling is described on the NHS website (February 2023) as, “a talking therapy that involves a trained therapist listening to you and helping you find ways to deal with emotional issues... you’ll be encouraged to talk about your feelings and emotions... The therapist can help you gain a better understanding of your feelings and thought processes...”

### 15.1 More House School Counselling Policy:

- Counselling will be available in school during term time;
- The School Counsellor will be fully qualified, registered (with UKCP or BACP) and have over two years of post registration experience working in secondary schools;
- The School Counsellor will work in accordance with the code of ethics and professional practice of the professional body they are registered with (UKCP or BACP);
- Requests for School Counselling can be made by: the pupil themselves, the pupil’s parent(s) and the pupil’s teacher or form tutor, via email or in person to the Deputy Head Pastoral or Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE);
- The parent(s) can contact the Deputy Head Pastoral or Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE) to discuss any concerns they may have about their daughter and request counselling support;
- The Deputy Head Pastoral or Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE) may contact the parent(s) to discuss any concerns raised by their daughter’s form tutor, teachers or peers and recommend a referral for counselling support, and
- The parent(s) will be consulted and their parental consent requested in order for their daughter to be referred and booked in with the More House School Counsellor.

If the pupil or her parent(s) would prefer private counselling/psychotherapy support outside school, then the Deputy Head Pastoral or Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE) would be happy to discuss this and provide guidance.

The Deputy Head Pastoral can also refer a pupil for counselling through CAMHS via her GP.

## **15.2 More House School Counsellor**

Our School Counsellor is Mrs Janine Gayler - Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist (UKCP), Chartered Psychologist (BPS), MA Education (OU). Janine Gayler is available at More House on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

## **15.3 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is a fundamental aspect of Counselling. Trust and the development of a working alliance are essential in Counselling. The one exception to confidentiality is if the pupil were to make a disclosure regarding being harmed (physically, psychologically or emotionally) by themselves, or by another person. Any safeguarding concerns the School Counsellor may have will be passed on to the relevant staff, according to the School's Safeguarding Policy. The pupil is made aware of this at the start of their first counselling session.

# **16. More House School Counselling**

## **16.1 Counselling Sessions**

- Counselling sessions are available two days a week, during term time (see section 15);
- The first counselling session of the day is available at 8:00am and the last counselling session of the day ends at 5:00pm;
- The duration of a counselling session is 45 minutes;
- Pupils referred for School Counselling attend one counselling session a week;
- Counselling sessions are rotated on a weekly basis across the two days, to minimise the impact on academic lessons, and
- The duration of Counselling Support can range from one counselling session to numerous sessions, depending on the pupil's requirement for support. This is reviewed and discussed with the pupil, Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE) and parent(s) towards the end of each term or half term.

## **16.2 Counselling Session Charges**

All pupils are entitled to one free counselling session, per academic year. The options available after the initial counselling session, which would be discussed with the pupil's parents, are as follows:

1. Continue with School Counselling support, at a cost of £50 per session (these charges would be added to the school fees invoiced at the end of each term);

2. Counselling support to be continued, with a private therapist outside of School;
3. An appointment be made with the pupil's GP in order for a referral to be made for counselling support through CAMHS, or
4. No further counselling support required, but the pupil may benefit from a referral for other types of support and assessments, such as Speech and Language Therapy or Occupational Therapy etc.

## 17. The Mentor System

The Mentor system is referred to in **Section B no. 2: SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT**

*"It is our aim to be welcoming to all our visitors and to all members of the School community.... a girl new to the School will be paired up with a L6th Mentor. The L6th Mentor has been in touch with her "mini" during the summer holiday to welcome her and introduce herself. Their first meeting is at the New Pupil Induction at the start of the summer term."*

*(More House School)*

The Head of Sixth Form, together with the Senior Teacher (PSHE and Pastoral) advises in pairing each student with her 'Big and Little Sister'. A program which was a key feature of the Deputy Head Girl's manifesto, and has been implemented by the student leadership team. Year 7 and 11, Year 8 and 12, Year 9 and 13 as well as Year 10's (new and returning students) are paired and take part in multiple activities throughout the year.

### 17.1 Year 7 Mentor Responsibilities

- To welcome new pupils and their parents to the School and give a further forum for questions that they may have;
- To support the work of the form tutor and assistant form tutor in managing the move from primary to secondary School;
- To meet regularly on an informal basis with their 'mini';
- To encourage and provide support for the 'mini' in-House activities;
- To encourage the 'mini' in her academic and extra-curricular activities;
- To provide another ear for any concerns that the 'mini' may have and inform the tutor if appropriate;

- To have lunch with their 'mini' from time to time, and
- To encourage integration between year groups.

## **17.2 KS4 Peer Mentors**

A small number of senior pupils are selected by interview each year and trained to provide support for KS3 pupils in the form of drop in lunchtime sessions. The aim of this scheme is twofold:

- to provide a positive role model and space to discuss concerns (such as friendship issues) and seek advice, and
- to provide a leadership opportunity for the mentor and experience that may support UCAS applications or support the completion of a Duke of Edinburgh award.

The mentors are carefully supported and monitored by the Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE). The mentors will receive a six-week training course from the Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE) which will be based on training advice provided from Childline. The mentors will also have regular meetings with the Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE).

Whilst confidentiality will be maintained where appropriate, the Senior Teacher (Pastoral and PSHE) will liaise with the Deputy Head Pastoral and pass on or address any issues that require further staff support as required. It should be noted that the scheme is not designed to replace any of the existing pastoral systems or procedures.

## **18. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Teacher (Pastoral/PSHE)/Mental Health Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Board.



