

Hartsfield JMI School



Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health Policy and Practice

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Hartsfield JMI Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health Policy and Practice

This document describes the school's approach to positive mental health and wellbeing.

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1. Intent of our policy and practice

Every one of us is affected by our wellbeing and mental health. We recognise that this will change from day to day and across time.

At Hartsfield we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and every pupil. We pursue this aim using both a universal, whole school approach and more targeted, bespoke approaches as they are required by individual.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and well-being, we recognise and respond to mental ill health in pupils or staff. We aim that through our policy and procedure for pupils and staff, we will promote a safe and stable environment for pupils and staff who may be affected directly or indirectly by mental ill health.

As a school, we aim to provide positive leadership on how we manage mental health needs. We:

- Look for opportunities to promote and support positive mental health in staff, pupils and the wider community.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health in themselves or pupils and support them.
- Support pupils with mental ill health, their peers who may be affected and signpost support for parents or carers.

We know that in order for our staff to be working effectively and for pupils to be learning well, it is a prerequisite that the person must first feel both physically and mentally well.

Our ethos is supported by our strong sense of community at our school, our therapeutic approach to behaviour management and our belief in promoting a 'growth mindset'.

Our policy should be read in conjunction with any individual health care plans if mental health needs overlap with physical medical issues and with the SEND policy if a pupil is identified as having special educational needs. Our Behaviour Policy also recognises that there is a strong link between positive mental health and well-being and pro-social behaviour and outlines approaches to support those pupils who are having difficulties. Our Internet Safety Policy, CLA, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies recognise that pupils with mental ill health are likely to be more vulnerable and need our upmost consideration.

School recognises its legal duty of care to employees to promote health at work. We will ensure our practices reflect this duty and create a working environment where potential work-related stress, as far as reasonably practicable, is avoided.

2. Implementation of this policy at Hartsfield- our daily practice

2.1 Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of their pupils, staff with a particular remit include:

Mrs K. Dearn- Pastoral Lead, SENCO, Assistant Headteacher, Mental Health Lead, deputy DSL

Mrs A.Parry -Deputy Mental Health Lead, Mental Health First Aider

Mrs R. Lalli- Curriculum Lead for PHSE and staff wellbeing

Mrs S.Berry- Mental Health Champion for TA team

Mrs R. Lawes, Miss L. Gregory, Mrs R.Williams- PE Lead staff

Mrs P. Smith- Headteacher, Designated Child Protection/ Safeguarding Lead

Mrs A. Gaskell- Governor for Mental Health and wellbeing

2.2 Definitions

We recognise mental health as:

“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 Organisation)

Wellbeing is a broad concept but relates to a person’s comfort, health and happiness. Positive wellbeing is fundamental to having good mental health.

2.3 Promoting Pupil Wellbeing and Mental Health at Hartsfield

Pupil wellbeing and mental health are supported in a number of ways at Hartsfield as a part of our daily practice. These include:

- Explicitly teach interpersonal skills, develop empathy, attitudes and values
- Promote social participation and sense of connection/build relationships
- Promote self-esteem and positive identity
- Provide support to regulate emotions
- Engage in pro-social experiences, feelings and behaviours-be a part of our community.

The provision is available to all pupils, but we recognise that some pupils may need higher levels of support in any or all of these areas from time to time hence our approach will always be bespoke to level of need.

Provision Made	Explicitly teach interpersonal skills, develop empathy, attitudes and values	Promote social participation and sense of connection/build relationships-connections	Promote self-esteem and positive identity	Provide support to regulate emotions	Engage in pro-social experiences, feelings and behaviours-be a part of our community.
Personalised (For a few children)	TAs trained to support mental health needs- eg Nessie “My time.” Play therapy. Time to discuss skills /reflect on successes and difficulties with mentor/ senior teacher/ class teacher. Work with NHS nurses/ CAMHs	Daily opportunity for nominated staff to talk to child. Sensitive, supportive adult. Bespoke arrangements for start and end of day or lunchtime. Supervised social interactions- lunch club/	Bespoke arrangements for favoured activity built into every day. Time with a trusted adult to discuss what is going well/ WOW book. Work with / referral to outside agencies such as CAMHs/play therapist/ NHS nurses/ Nessie /EP etc	Personalised plans with agreed personalised strategies/ scripts. 1:1 check in times (eg- start and end of day) Identified safe space. Time out options breaks in school day. Sensory breaks. Frequent positive acknowledgments from adults. Referral to outside agencies.	Pro-social behaviour strategies/ anxiety mapping throughout day (STEPS). Positive phrasing to direct/ scripts. Time to calm allowed /De-escalating strategies. Sensory breaks/ strategies in place. Co-production of approach with parents/outside agencies
Targeted (For some children)	Small support groups- eg social skills programme “Talkabout/ Socially Speaking” in half term blocks with support of TA to transfer skills learnt to new context. Targeted lunch club. Outdoor learning for targeted pupils.	Encouraged attendance at lunch club/nature citizens. Class monitoring of vulnerable pupils. Nominated staff to check in with pupil. Pastoral team member to build heightened relationship with targeted pupils.	Specific and information based praise carefully used. Support 1-to-1 or group with TA /teacher to improve confidence. Small step reward systems. Jobs/responsibilities given. Staff target positive comments towards child. Possible referrals to agencies	Support provided to use skills learnt in PHSE/time to reflect with adult and discuss issues/ feelings. Enhanced adult monitoring, especially at key times. Possible referrals to agencies. Opportunities for mindfulness. Yoga, targeted Yoga Club. Use of Zones of Regulation strategies 1-to-1 support.	Reinforcement of belonging to our community. Positive characteristics/feelings recognised/ pro-social experiences enhanced (STEPS). More positive rewards- e.g. on Marvellous Me etc. Staff take initiative to repair ruptured relationships.
Universal (For all children)	PHSE/ RE curriculum/assembly content use of SCARF PHSE resources. Broad curriculum where values are discussed in context e.g. in RE “5 Ways to Wellbeing” adopted whole school. Growth Mindset approach. Whole school- Internet safety/antibullying/ Protective Behaviours work	Play leaders/outdoor play club. Strong relationships with teachers/ TAs. Respectful relationships modelled at all times. Well-being week. Daily active/ shake-up. Feeling Good Week- whole school	Modelling of/encouragement for “giving” /kindness/generosity. Golden certificates. Support for charities. Assemblies build awareness. Pupil voice – school council Pupil Ambassadors.	Staff modelling, support with transitions/change, whole class time to respond to key events, time to talk about playground disputes. Pupils taught to recognise own emotions and age appropriate strategies to self-regulate these. Zones of Regulation. Daily activity/shake up. Assemblies.	3 key rules- be respectful, responsible and safe. Adults model this in all exchanges in school. Class discussion/PHSE. Encouragement to take notice of things that need doing around classroom/ people/to be curious. STEPS therapeutic approach to behaviour whole school.

2.4 Promoting Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing through our Curriculum Content

Throughout the curriculum, wherever appropriate opportunities to discuss mental health and wellbeing arise, pupils are encouraged to identify and discuss how the subject content relates to their mental health and wellbeing. This may be through, for example, discussions of character motivation in English. Understanding the nature of our wellbeing is expressly taught and explored through PHSE and RE.

Physical Education is an important area in which we help pupils to develop their social and emotional skills, through team games that teach co-operation and effective communication and activities that promote a collaborative effort. Throughout curriculum PE and participation in the daily active/shake up, pupils are taught about the impact that exercise and physical activity have on mental, as well as physical, health and how even regular short bursts of activity can improve their concentration and general sense of wellbeing. We believe that extra-curricular sport, which Hartsfield encourages as many pupils as possible to participate in, helps promote a sense of community and inclusivity, which is beneficial to good mental health and wellbeing. Where necessary, these lessons are adapted to support individuals with specific needs regarding their self-esteem and wellbeing.

2.5 Promoting Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health at Hartsfield

School leaders will ensure that all employees understand their roles within the team and have appropriate information and training so as to alleviate work-related stress. We do this by ensuring the right people are recruited to the right jobs and all staff are supported with training and kept up-to-date with any changes and developments. Staff know that they can approach the senior leadership team and the Headteacher to discuss any difficulties or the Chair of Governors, if the leadership team were seen to be the difficulty by the individual.

The school subscribes to Education Mutual (EM) who provide healthcare services to staff alongside absence insurance. EM provides a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work or return to it after ill health for example. They provide pro-active service to staff such as online counselling and GP appointments if requested.

We recognise that in order to make best provision for our pupils, our staff need to have the best possible wellbeing themselves first. We will make provision to support all staff as a whole and targeted or personalised support as required.

Provision	Support for staff
Personalised (a few people)	In addition to below- weekly staff supervision/ breaks/reduced timetable or hours as required, at Head's discretion. Bespoke approach applied. Support from EM services engaged by staff member.

Targeted (some people)	<p>Staff made aware of NHS Wellbeing Support for Teachers and EM.</p> <p>Support of SLT/ Pastoral Lead/Phase leaders. Meeting with senior staff to discuss needs- open communication. Clear expectations and route to seek help if needed. Support of colleagues to enhance connection with colleagues.</p> <p>Offer of supervision for an individual as a support means.</p>
Universal (all staff)	<p>All staff encouraged to follow advice linked to ‘5 Ways to Well-being’ https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/ and Daily shake up.</p> <p>Strong internal relationships exist- it is our ethos to support each other.</p> <p>Staff encouraged to use staff room for part of their break time to have down time.</p> <p>Feeling good week. Staff development/ CPD</p> <p>Work load constantly monitored by SLT and support given as necessary. Smart working encouraged.</p> <p>Staff events/ sports fixtures/Staff WhatsApp group to boost sense of community.</p> <p>Feeling Good / Wellbeing Week in February each year.</p> <p>Phase leaders in close contact with all staff, in smaller groups and will raise wellbeing concerns with individual and SLT. Open door policy for all staff with SLT.</p> <p>All staff made aware of our subscription to a EM and what this can offer.</p>

2.6 Identifying needs and signposting support

We all have good times and bad ones; it is when the bad times outweigh the good or when staff or pupils cannot bring themselves out of the bad times that we are concerned that they may be overwhelmed or in fact mentally unwell.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should report this to the pastoral lead using our CPOMS system in the first instance. If there is fear of harm to the pupil then this must be reported immediately, in line with our child protection policy, to the Designated Senior Person (DSP) for safeguarding. Staff may also log any concerns they have about a child’s wellbeing on our CPOMS system. This could be details of their own observations of a child’s behaviours, for example, or a log of a discussion with concerned parents. Information may also be shared with senior staff, class teachers or support staff if this is in the child’s interest. Pupil’s wellbeing can then be supported by the class teacher and their team, in the ways outlined above.

Where a child discloses information that makes us suspect they could be mentally unwell, we will either support the pupil in telling their parents or tell them ourselves after explaining to the child why we need to do this and what we are going to say.

We will highlight further sources of information for parents and support families in dealing with mental ill health. Sometimes this will mean that we advise parents to seek the help of their GP in this matter. If required by the family, referrals to the NHS Nursing team or CAMHS may be made for targeted support for their child. This is more specialised support from medical professionals or councillors/therapists. We always work in partnership with these professionals and will follow advice they may offer to us as a school.

We will also raise awareness with all our parents of who to talk to at school and how to make that contact if they have concerns about their child's mental health or wellbeing. Information and ideas on supporting children's mental health will be made available to parents via newsletter, emailed flyers and our website. We will also ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and the local community. Further support is available for families from our Family Worker and our Pastoral Lead can refer families to her.

We will ensure relevant sources of support are displayed for staff in communal areas such as the staffroom. Our head teacher has an 'open door' policy and invites all staff to share any wellbeing or mental ill health they may be experiencing with her confidentially, so that support can be signposted or bespoke adjustments made. Staff are encouraged to be active in supporting their own wellbeing through the 5 Ways to Wellbeing.

Five Ways to Wellbeing

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

The following are evidence-based strategies to support wellbeing:

Connect: find ways to spend time with other people

Be Active: Plan for daily exercise or time outside with nature

Take Notice: Practise being mindful of your own self and environment

Learn: Try something new and stretch yourself.

Give: Giving practical support, encourage others; be involved in community or charity work

2.7 Staff development and training

As a minimum, our whole staff receive training on mental health and wellbeing through regular staff meetings and INSET 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 pupils safe. Key governors attend training on matters relating to positive mental health and wellbeing, safeguarding or meetings with key staff (Safeguarding Lead, Pastoral

Lead.) All staff have access to online materials such as on the Healthy Young Minds in Herts website. Our RE and PHSE schemes of work provide an abundance of ideas that staff may use in class to support wellbeing in their pupils. Assembly resources are made available to all staff for use in key stage assemblies.

Our Pastoral Lead has Level 2 training in Mental Health and Wellbeing with our local NHS/CAMHS team and our Deputy Pastoral lead has Level 1 training and Mental Health First Aid training from Mental Health England. These staff both attend a yearly, Hertfordshire Pastoral Conference to keep abreast of new ideas that can be then shared with the whole staff.

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 sort for staff if a particular pupil in their care has a particular need, for example on eating disorders or attachment difficulties. Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will deliver further INSET training to our whole staff to promote learning and understanding about specific issues related to mental health. We will also provide training from charities and local organisations such as DSPL (Developing Special Provision Locally) and NESSie (North Herts Emotional Support in Schools Service).

3 Monitoring the impact and evaluating our policy

Our Pastoral Lead monitors the effectiveness of our provision and reports this to our Headteacher. This is based on discussions at staff and SLT meetings, discussions with key subject leaders, working alongside outside agencies who work with our pupil and from analysing patterns of need from our CPOMS records. Our Head teacher informs our governing body of progress with developing positive mental health at school for staff and pupils. This information will inform us to make further plans to support pupils or training needs and make provision or budget for this.

We aim to have a school where considerations of mental health sit equally alongside considerations of physical health and wellbeing and acceptance of mental good health is normalised. We benchmark our practice to this aim.

4 Coping with wellbeing in a world with Covid-19: Special considerations

Everyone- staff, pupils and their families, have been affected in some way by the Covid-19 pandemic. We recognise that it is completely normal for people to respond differently and for people to not feel okay. We anticipate that we could still see any of these responses in staff or pupils:

- Increased tiredness: due to mental workload and additional stress.
- For adults, job stress related to a compromised ability to do their job. Lack of control over work and reduced concentration. In pupils this may result in worry about loss of concentration.
- Post-traumatic stress response as a result of exposure to bad news or actual experiences. This may manifest itself as “brain-fog,” avoidance of certain situations, intrusive thoughts, images or memories.
- Anger, sadness, low mood, shock, numbness, hopelessness and moving between these different emotions.

- Anxieties about cleanliness and infections.
- Over-concern about own physical health or actual physical symptoms resulting from anxiety.
- Disrupted patterns of social interaction resulting in feelings of isolation. Pupils may have difficulties socialising due to disruption to their normal learning of how to socialise. We recognise that social communication may have been so significantly affected by lockdowns and isolation, that the pupils may appear to have similar difficulties to those with actual social communication difficulties due to neurodivergence.
- Positive effects such as renewed commitment to work in a “new” world, increased feelings of gratitude, strength and commitment to making a better, happier life.

For some staff and pupils, a return to more normal and certain times will be enough, and they will have the resilience to adapt quickly. For others we will need to respond as a community and put continued support in place to protect against some of the negative psychological impacts of the pandemic. Support for staff and pupils to have positive mental health will be normalised and be a full part of all our learning implementation and school activities. Recovery from an expected mental ill health legacy will take differing amounts of time for different people. Building structure into the school day and maintaining routine is expected to be a positive factor and we will encourage the 5 Ways to Wellbeing being included in daily school life with staff and pupils.

Strategies to deal with expected mental ill health legacy are likely to focus on:

- Increasing staff and pupils’ feeling of safety
- Promoting a feeling of being connected
- Cultivating calmness and kindness
- Enhanced experiences with nature and the outdoors
- Feeling a sense of having back some control
- Remaining hopeful

We will work alongside outside agencies such as CAMHS/ NHS, NESSie, DSPL, Safe Space and our Educational Psychology service in support of individual pupils to meet their mental health needs, and EM services for staff members.

We will review this policy formally every two years but in addition we will update it in light of new advice or experiences as required.