



Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

At Harrow High School, we are committed to excellent behaviour safety and care for all. We are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all learners, their families and members of staff and governors. We allow learners' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

This Policy sets out:

- How the school seeks to promote positive mental health and well-being for learners
- How the School identifies learners with Mental Health Needs
- Support Provided to learners with Mental Health Needs
- How the school promotes and supports positive mental health and well-being for staff

Agreed By: Safeguarding Committee Autumn 2022

Review: Safeguarding Committee Autumn 2025

Contents

- 1.0 Scope
- 2.0 Policy Aims
- 3.0 Key Staff Members
- 4.0 Individual Care Plans
- 5.0 Teaching about Mental Health
- 6.0 Signposting
- 7.0 Sources of support at school and in the local community
- 8.0 Warning signs
- 9.0 Targeted support
- 10.0 Managing disclosures
- 11.0 Confidentiality
- 12.0 Whole School Approach
 - 12.1 Working with Parents/Carers
 - 12.2 Supporting Parents/Carers
- 13.0 Support Peers
- 14.0 Training
- 15.0 Policy Review

1.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining our approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies including but not limited to:

- Behaviour Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Learners with Health Care Needs

2.0 Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and learners.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in learners.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to learners with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst learners and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and learner welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

3.0 Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of learners, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Pastoral Staff
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Operations Manager
- SENCO
- PSHEe Coordinator
- Ysanne (job title?)

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a learner, in the first instance they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or member of the Safeguarding Team. They can be contacted on safeguarding@harrowhigh.com

If there is a concern that the learner is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures MUST be followed. If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures MUST be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

4.0 Individual Health Care Plans

When a pupil or member of staff has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is recommended that an Individual Health Care Plan should be drawn up. An example is included as Appendix 1. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- Specific Staff who the learner might go to and any safe space needed

5.0 Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our learners need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our Personal Development curriculum.

We will follow the curriculum as outlined in the [Department for Education's Relationships and Sex, and Health education guidance](#) in Years 7-10, and the [PSHE Association guidance](#) in the Sixth Form for the teaching of mental health. Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote learners' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of learners' own emotions as well as those of other people. PD lessons are supplemented with at least 1 annual assembly, and a range of tutor activities focus on mental health.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing learners who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting learners to support any of their friends who are facing challenges. **See Section 14 for Supporting Peers**

6.0 Signposting

We will ensure that staff, learners and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school and through our communication channels , we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure learners understand:

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

7.0 Sources or support at school and in the local community

7.1 School Based Support

7.1.1 Pastoral Support

All year teams have a non-teaching assistant Head of Year. Learners can go to them at any time to discuss concerns they may have about their own or another learner's mental health. These professionals will signpost the learner to other services and inform the safeguarding team of any concerns. They will provide ongoing support as required through Individual Health Care Plans, Risk assessments and the Check In service

7.1.2 Check-In Service

Each year team operates a check-in service for learners in their year group. Learners can be referred to this by their year team, Panel or the safeguarding team. At the start and end of the day, learners will have a brief conversation with someone from the year team who will take a well-being score from them and record that score centrally. Should their score appear unusually low or the learner discloses something during this conversation, the safeguarding team must be informed and must pick the case up. Learners who are absent will receive check-in calls at home. If no contact can be made then referral should be made to the safeguarding team.

7.1.3 See it. Report it Stop it.

The school's anti-bullying reporting tool can be and is used by learners to register concerns they have about the mental health of their friends and colleagues. This is picked up immediately by the safeguarding team

7.1.4 Counselling

The school has an in-house counselling service provided by Rachel Davids . This service is accessible to learners with severe need and referrals are made by Panel and the Safeguarding Team. A number of spots are kept open for emergency cases and the client list together with the waiting list are stored securely at:

7.1.5 Mentoring

Mentoring Services are also available at school. These are designed to help learners coping with Mental Health and other situations to develop higher degrees of resilience and their own strategies for managing mental health. These can be accessed by Year team referral, Inclusive Learning Panel and the safeguarding team

7.1.6 Safe Spaces

Often, learners will need a safe space/trusted adult to go to when they are struggling with a mental health issue. These people/spaces will be identified on a learners' IHP when this is drawn up.

In addition, the school is seeking to create 'sanctuary spaces' for learners with Mental Health issues for use at Break and Lunchtime.

In addition to safe spaces identified in learners, IHPs, our co-curricular clubs programme, provided opportunities for learners to focus on their mental health. We have a Mindful Arts and Crafts Club available most mornings for learners to practise a form of mindfulness , and Plus Club, for those who identify as LGBTQI+ or allies, to celebrate them, but also discuss issues which may be affecting them.

7.2 Local Support

There are a range of organisations and groups offering support, including; Harrow Mind, Kooth and Childline.

7.1.1 The CAMHS partnership, a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health wellbeing. These partners deliver accessible support to children, young people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention, training and participation.

<https://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/camhs/our-services/specialist-camhs/harrow-camhs>

7.1.2 GP and Accident and Emergency Units. Where learners need urgent help, their parents must be contacted immediately and signposted to these sources of support. Social workers and other connected professionals must be informed

7.2 Support for Staff

7.2.1 Off-Site Counselling

This is available for staff through the Employee Assistance Programme. Staff can self-refer to this or may be directed towards it by the Operations Manager. Details are available via the operations manager.

7.2.2 On Site Counselling

In some situations, this may be appropriate. In these cases, partnership arrangements with other schools should be used to provide this service to staff on site whenever possible.

7.2.3 Occupational Health Services

Staff may be referred for an occupational health assessment by the operations manager in consultation with the member of staff. The purpose of this is to identify workplace adjustments that may be helpful in supporting the member of staff

7.2.4 GP & A&E referrals

Where staff need urgent help, their next of kin must be contacted immediately (with their consent) and they should be signposted to these sources of support.

8.0 Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a learner 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 alert the safeguarding team www.safeguarding@harrowhigh.com

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Troubling or worrying content in written work
- Internal truancy
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

9.0 Targeted support for young people

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, previously in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of learners who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely with Children's Services, CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Identifying and assessing children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. An Individual Health Care Plan may be appropriate;
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs (see **section 7.1**);
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Providing young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of all protocols regarding confidentiality, specifically those pertaining to safeguarding;

- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

10.0 Managing disclosures

If a learner chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be referred to Safeguarding - who then record on MyConcern including:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with the safeguarding team

www.safeguarding@harrowhigh.com

11.0 Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a learner to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the learner.

We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we're going to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the learner first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as learners up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the learner. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

Parents must always be informed, unless if a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues. Safeguarding/Child Protection procedures should always be followed.

12.0 Whole school approach

12.1 Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present – learners, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the pupil's record and an Individual Health Plan created if appropriate.

12.2 Supporting parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

13.0 Supporting Peers

When a learner is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the learner 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 / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs 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

14.0 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 to enable them to keep learners safe. A nominated member of staff (usually the DSL) will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent.

We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health.

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 learners.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

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

15.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years as a minimum. In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of the school Mental Health Lead.

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.