

Juniper Hill School

Managing Wellbeing Policy



Kindness Enjoyment Achievement

Written in December 2024

This policy is to be reviewed December 2026

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 Organisation)







At Juniper Hill School, we aim to promote positive mental health for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and working towards embedding the mental health core and enhanced standards ('Thriving at Work – The Stevenson/Farmer review of mental health and employers), we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students and staff affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

Scope







This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. The policy is intended as guidance for all staff, including non-teaching 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 and their peers and parents or carers
-  Provide support to staff suffering mental ill health

Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific remit include :

-  Claire Garnett – Designated child protection/safeguarding officer, Adult Mental Health First Aider
-  Annika Williams -Designated child protection/safeguarding officer and SENDCo
-  Julie Harris – Designated child protection/safeguarding officer
-  Sarah Hunt – Wellbeing Lead, Youth Mental Health First Aider
-  Sally Averill – PSHE Lead, Youth Mental Health First Aider
-  Izzy Stallwood – Youth Mental Health First Aider

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection officer, the headteacher or the designated governor. 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 referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Annika Williams, SENDCo.

Pupil Section







Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included within our whole school JIGSAW curriculum, as well as our 'Resilience and Wellbeing' curriculum (Life Skills). Details of these curriculums, together with the knowledge, skills and progression breakdown from EYFS to Year 6 can be found in our Juniper Curriculum Policy.

At Juniper Hill School we aim to:












-  Help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
-  Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
-  Help children socially to form and maintain relationships
-  Promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they matter
-  Encourage children to be confident
-  Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

-  Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
-  Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
-  Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
-  Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
-  Providing opportunities to reflect
-  Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things from getting worse. We do this in different ways, including:














-  Analysing attendance
-  Tracking punctuality
-  Staff reporting concerns about individual children to the relevant lead person
-  Encouraging children to raise concerns to members of staff
-  Encouraging parents and carers to raise concerns to members of staff
-  Staff Meetings where staff can raise children of concerns
-  Looking for physical indicators
-  Analysing negative behaviour patterns
-  Being aware of changes in family circumstances
-  Being aware of recent bereavement
-  Checking for health indicators

If school staff become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues they should communicate their concerns using the My

Concern online reporting system or with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the wellbeing lead as appropriate.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the School's child protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency then the school's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

Possible warning signs include:

-  Changes in eating/sleeping habits
-  Becoming socially withdrawn and isolation from friends
-  Changes in activity and mood (including eating and sleeping habits)
-  Falling academic achievement
-  Secretive behaviour
-  Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
-  Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
-  Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
-  An increase in lateness or absenteeism
-  Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE
-  Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
-  Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
-  Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause





Managing disclosures

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.

Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'.



All disclosures should be recorded in writing, put on the My Concerns system and held on the student's confidential file. This written record should include:

-  Date
-  The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
-  Main points from the conversation
-  Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the Juniper's Mental Health Lead, Annika Williams / Sarah Hunt, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, then we 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






We should never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent, e.g. if the child is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence; and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed if a child discloses information about their mental health with us and students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the student should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them. If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the school's DSLs (Claire Garnett, Headteacher, Annika Williams SENDCO or Julie Harris, EYFS lead) must be informed immediately.

Individual Care Plans





It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. 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

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.





We will display relevant sources of support around the school and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, 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



Targeted Support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include :

-  Circle time approaches or activities





-  Managing feelings resources e.g. Worry boxes
-  Support groups
-  Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques
-  Whole school Resilience and Wellbeing (Life Skills) curriculum

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate, including:

-  Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
-  The Leuven Scale

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, 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.
-  Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
-  Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, other members of staff.
-  What are the aims of the meeting?






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 give them leaflets to take away where possible as 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 too, e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide 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. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Supporting Parents





In order to support parents we will:

-  Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
-  Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child
-  Make our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy easily accessible to parents
-  Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children
-  Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in Life Skills and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.




Supporting Peers

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 and will be

guided by conversations with the student 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 or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
-  Warning signs that their friend may need 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

Working with Other Agencies and Partners

In some cases, a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm or eating disorders. As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing, including :

-  The school nurse
-  Educational psychology services
-  CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
-  Counselling services
-  Family support workers
-  Therapists

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the SENDCo, following discussions about the level of need for the child. Referrals will be made in consultation with the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Training

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children as well as know what to do and where to get help. Our Mental Health Lead, together with two other members of staff, is a qualified 'Youth Mental Health First Aider'. As a minimum, all staff will receive 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 pupil.









Staff Section

A recent study by Leeds Beckett University revealed that 52% of teachers surveyed had a mental health illness identified by a GP. Teacher burnout is a widespread problem – in 2016 just under 40,000 teachers left the profession. Burnout arises from increased emotional exhaustion, stress, feeling overworked and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment and decrease in energy.









Staff wellbeing is a priority at Juniper Hill School. Our aim is to make staff feel more valued and reduce the pressures and stresses they face, which in turn promotes staff wellbeing and reduces burnout.

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All members of a school community should be able to recognise when a member of the Juniper Team is suffering from burnout or other mental health difficulties. Similarly, our aim is to educate staff so that they recognise these signs in themselves. Common signs to watch out for are:

-  Irritability, frustration and being quick to anger
-  A decrease in desire to attend social events or activities outside work
-  Increased complaints
-  Fatigue and exhaustion
-  Insomnia
-  Change in appetite
-  Forgetfulness
-  Physical symptoms, like headaches, stomach aches, dizziness, chest pains and palpitations

Stress and mental health issues can be triggered by the workplace. Potential workplace triggers can be any of the following:

-  A long hours work culture
-  Unrealistic expectations or deadlines
-  Shifting goalposts that can create high levels of pressure on individuals
-  Unmanageable workloads or lack of control over work
-  Negative relationships or poor communication
-  An unsupportive workplace culture or lack of management support
-  Job insecurity or poor change management
-  Lone working

External triggers may also affect the employee's mental health e.g. Bereavement, divorce, separation, long-term physical health conditions, debt, significant trauma as an adult and historical trigger such as childhood trauma.

Employers have a legal duty to protect employees from stress at work by doing a risk assessment and acting on it.

For further information, refer to the Buckinghamshire County Council 'Mental Health At Work – A Guide for Managers' document, the Juniper Hill Risk Assessment and the School's Stress Policy.

Supporting Staff







If poor mental health or stress is suspected or disclosed, reference should be made to the Buckinghamshire County Council 'Mental Health At Work – A Guide for Managers' document. This sets out procedures to be followed, support to be given and signposts where further support and advice can be obtained.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years as a minimum.






This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:




-  Child Protection Policy
-  Medical Policies
-  SEND Policy
-  Relational Policy / Behaviour Policy
-  Anti-bullying Policy
-  PSHE and SMSC policies.

Further Guidance

Further guidance can be obtained from organisations such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) The following are some examples.

-  HSE
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/>
-  HSE – Preventing Work-Related Stress in Schools
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/assets/docs/talking-toolkit-education.pdf>
-  NASUWT – Information on a whole range of issues related to stress and wellbeing
<https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/>
-  Acas – Information on stress, and employer and employee rights, in the workplace
<https://www.acas.org.uk/>
-  NHS 111 – National Health Service advice and guidance on health matters
<http://www.nhs.uk/111>

Further Resources

-  Education Support
<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>
-  Work Life Balance Centre
<https://worklifebalancecentre.org/>
-  Place 2 Be
<https://www.place2be.org.uk/>