

# HOLLAND HOUSE SCHOOL

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## **Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy** **Applicable to all pupils including those in the EYFS**

For Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing, see The Staff Handbook

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Policy date	September 2021
Review date	September 2022

## References:

- A. Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021
- B. Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018.
- C. [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- D. [www.mentallyhealthyschools.co.uk](http://www.mentallyhealthyschools.co.uk)
- E. [www.annafreud.org](http://www.annafreud.org)
- F. The PSHE Association
- G. [DfE Guidance: Promoting and supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools and colleges](#)
- H. [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

This policy should be read alongside:

- HHS guide to Character Education
- HHS Safeguarding Policy
- HHS Behaviour and Sanctions Policy
- HHS Anti-Bullying and Anti-racism policy
- HHS First Aid Policy
- HHS PSHE and HHS RSE Policies

## Definitions

Mental wellbeing:

One's happiness, life satisfaction and positive functioning.

Mental Health:

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines mental health as '**a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully**, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

## The role and limits of the school

At HHS, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. Staff acknowledge that they are key adults in a child's life and may be amongst the first to see the signs of emerging difficulties. However, it is important for parents to be aware that teachers and staff at the school are NOT mental health professionals, nor can our school provide specialist health services. Teachers can be alert to, but not diagnose, Mental Health disorders. They can sometimes suggest strategies but are not qualified to provide therapy.

At HHS, we see our role as understanding what children are going through, supporting pupils and families where necessary and to assist them in seeking help and continuing our support if they require treatment.

### Wellbeing & Mental Health

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. We believe that the majority of children will have good mental wellbeing most of the time. Our starting point for teaching wellbeing is to recognise this fact and to help pupils understand the factors that contribute to and help us maintain wellbeing. However, we recognise that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. The aim is thus to explain that people may sometimes experience poor mental health, what the contributing factors are, strategies to improve wellbeing and to recognise when help is needed from others.

We uphold that wellbeing is closely linked to resilience, relationships, bullying, physical health and healthy eating: staff are encouraged to consider thematic links which help children to make connections between mental wellbeing and other topics.

We recognise that

We take the view whilst each individual is ultimately responsible for their own wellbeing, positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play to ensure that we are doing our best to support those around us.

### Influencing Wellbeing and Mental Health at HHS

- Whole school approach: every member of staff has a role to play as do each of the pupils
- Our compulsory PSHE and Relationships curriculum
- Encouraging reading "**Children who engage with reading are three times more likely to have high levels of mental wellbeing than those who do not**" - **National Literacy Trust, September 2018**"
- Supportive and inclusive culture, ethos and environment that can serve as a buffer to difficult circumstances outside school
- Through our pastoral care of the children
- Embedded in our system of Character Education around the 4 Virtue Pillars of HHS
- Teaching and learning that help pupils build important life skills through PSHE and relationships education such as learning to learn, growth mindset
- Adopting the *Every Interaction Matters* approach
- Working closely with parents
- 15 mins of wellbeing /day built into timetable

## Character Education and Wellbeing

At HHS we believe that Character Education, Wellbeing and mental health are intrinsically linked. Teaching children about character traits or virtues to which they can aspire promotes good mental health and encourages wellbeing in both the individual and those around us. Children cannot express gratitude until they understand that this is the response to the generosity, compassion and patience of others; they need to understand about tolerance, empathy and respect in order to value difference. They need to develop resilience, self-motivation and ambition in order to overcome the obstacles that may be hindering their own wellbeing and negatively impacting their mental health.

At HHS we believe that children need to learn, from the earliest age to have self-worth, confidence and resilience. They also need self-awareness and a firm understanding of how their behaviours can positively and negatively impact both themselves and others. They also need to develop the resilience to understand how to move on from the poor behaviour experienced at the hand of others and to not become victims of their own negative thinking. We believe again here at that character education is key.

We believe that character can be *caught, taught and sought* and that this pathway automatically impacts wellbeing. Character education is embedded into how staff approach teaching, in their comments to the children and forms part of the daily wellbeing slot.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. Our scheme of work is designed to be both robust in content but flexible enough to meet the specific needs of the class being taught.

Our ethos, PSHE & Relationships curriculum and Character Education embodied by the 4 Pillars:

- 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 count.
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- 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.
- Providing support where required

#### Possible causes of mental health issues in children

There is no clear reason why some children develop mental health issues and others don't. Certain factors or exposure to traumatic experiences can make it more likely. These might include (but are not limited to):

- Poor diet and or insufficient physical activity
- Not having sufficient freedom to play
- Feelings of not being loved, trusted and understood
- Having a long-term illness/ poor health
- Moving home/ changing schools
- A very close friend/family member leaving the school – moving away
- Being bullied
- Parents with mental health issues of their own, including alcoholism
- Over exposure to distressing events in the news
- Witnessing domestic violence
- Being abused by peers or adults
- Parents separating/ divorcing
- The death of someone close to them

#### Possible Mental Health Issues children may face:

- Anxiety
- Conduct disorder
- Depression
- Self-harm
- Eating disorders
- Body image problems
- Suicidal thoughts

#### Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All staff will complete termly Wellbeing Trackers on their pupils as part of their 1-2-1 sessions aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns

- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also become aware of other warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These could include, but are not limited to:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- 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

These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Head and or the DSL immediately. At this point, more targeted support may be required.

#### Targeted support

Parents should be contacted and invited in for a discussion about the teacher's observations, changes the parent may have also witnessed and a "next steps" plan.

In serious cases, outside interventions such as contacting CAMHS may be required.

When deemed necessary, teachers will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Targeted use of SEAL resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes'
- Managing emotions resources such as books & 'the incredible 5point scale'
- Therapeutic activities including, breathing exercises, relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Pulling on/ requesting specific evidence-based resources from Tooled-Up Education.

When deemed necessary, for cases where it is felt that mental health may be suffering, the school may make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- Stirling Children's wellbeing Scale (age 8yrs and above)
- Other instruments such as The Boxall Profile, Bounce Back! Intervention after trauma

### Working with Parents

We firmly believe that the school and our parent body all need to be on the same page, saying the same message when it comes to mental health and wellbeing.

Parents are invited to contact the school either directly via the Form Teacher or the Head if they have a concern or a matter which they wish to discuss.

We hope parents will recognise their own role in the wellbeing of their children and that their own anxieties, particularly around extra work and the 7+/ 11+ can have a detrimental impact on children.

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health 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 PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.
- Subscribe to Tooled-up education

### Training for Staff

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 in order to enable them to keep students safe.

The MindEd learning portal provides valuable, free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue. 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 pupils.

The school recommends the minded training modules:  
MindED Core Content Common problems and First help

The school subscribes to Tooled-Up Education which provides a wealth of CPD materials for staff on building pupil resilience and mental wellbeing.