



Wakefield Grammar School Foundation

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Policy Lead	Emma Gill, James Harris and James Jones
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VALIDITY – Policies should be accessed via Firefly to ensure the current version is used.

CHANGE RECORD - REVIEW PERIOD (2 YEARLY)

Version	Date	Change details
V1.00	May 2025	New Foundation policy created from the former 3 individual school's Mental Health policies

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WGSF Mental Health and Wellbeing of Pupils Policy

1. Policy Statement

At WGSF we are committed to providing a happy, safe and secure learning environment where everyone is valued and shown respect. Our role in schools is to ensure that our pupils are able to manage times of change and stress, be resilient, and are supported to reach their potential and access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to proactively protect and maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health and help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help and support.

Wellbeing is also threaded through the Schools' Development Plans. We know that the emotional health of children is the strongest predictor of happiness in adulthood and we want all of our pupils to grow up to be happy, confident, independent people who can contribute positively to society. Happier children learn better and generally perform better in school.

The Department for Education recognises that, in order to help their pupils succeed: schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.

Wellbeing is defined as: "The state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy."

Emotional Health is defined as: Emotional health is about how we think and feel. It is about our sense of wellbeing, our ability to cope with life events and how we acknowledge our own emotions as well as those of others.

Mental Health is defined as: "Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 Organization 2014)

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all pupils to feel confident in themselves and:

- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- cope with the stresses of everyday life
- manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
- learn and achieve

Conversely, poor mental health undermines educational attainment and life satisfaction. One in eight children and young people aged 5 to 19 have a diagnosable mental health disorder. Wellbeing is a balance between our personal resources and the challenges we face in our everyday life. We strive to ensure that WGSF is a place where everyone can build on these resources and learn how to deal with these everyday challenges. We promote and maintain wellbeing, teach emotional health through our curriculum and have a targeted approach for mental health.

1.1 Links to other policies

This policy links to:

- [WGSF Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)
- [WGSF Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Policy.](#)
- [WGSF Anti-Bullying Policy](#)
- [WGSF Behaviour Management Policy](#)
- [Schools' individual PSHE Policies](#)
- [School's individual RSE policies](#)

Links with the WGSF Behaviour Management Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

1.2 Key Contacts

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

- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Deputy Designated Leads
- Mental Health Lead
- Senior Section Heads of Year
- CPD leads
- PSHE Leads
- School Counsellors
- School Nurses
- SENDCo
- Wellbeing Officers

2. **Policy Aims**

This policy, through a coordinated and strategic whole school approach, aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all pupils.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to the early warning signs of mental health issues in pupils.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to pupils with mental health issues, and ensure staff know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience and self-awareness amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Instil a culture of pupil welfare where everyone is aware of warning signs and symptoms and knows what they can do to help, with effective signposting.
- ensure all pupils are valued
- ensure pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- explicitly teach and uphold that bullying is not tolerated
- be open, collaborative and responsive
- engage and work with parents, carers, and all stakeholders to provide children and young people with positive and formative experiences, which promote and protect their emotional and physical health
- develop arrangements to support emotional and physical wellbeing

3. **WGSF approach to promoting positive mental health**

The culture at WGSF is a whole school approach which promotes children's positive emotional health and wellbeing and avoids stigma. We recognise that stigma can prevent understanding and awareness of mental health issues and we aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues by:

1. Teaching pupils about social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
 - a. Openly talking about and discussing positive mental health in class and assemblies,
 - b. Promoting the importance of sharing difficult feelings and emotions with people we trust.

- c. Explicitly teaching a growth mindset to support the individual resilience and tenacity in all areas of the curriculum.
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to.
3. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands.
4. Early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
5. Ensuring high quality continuing professional development (PLD) for staff and a staff committed to positive emotional health and wellbeing, support and values.
6. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience
7. WGPPS being fully committed to the standards outlined for the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools School Mental Health Award (*Bronze Award achieved in 2024*).

4. Teaching about Mental Health

We incorporate an open and constructive dialogue about mental health from the very start in WGPPS EYFS and KS1 and we believe that the incorporation of this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote pupils' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of pupils' own emotions as well as those of other people.

WGPPS have a trained Senior Mental Health Lead and ELSA trained staff to work 1:1 with children struggling in class with behaviour and/or emotional concerns. ELSA trained staff also run interventions for selected children, using an evidence-based programme to develop their social and emotional skills. Staff across the Foundation schools are trained in the Zones of Regulation and the Zones language is referred to throughout the curriculum and everyday school life. We have multiple Mental Health First Aiders within pastoral teams across all sites. We ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner. The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

Wellbeing-focused assemblies, including celebrating Mental Health Week, Anti-Bullying Week and Wellbeing week take place including providing strategies for children to look after themselves and each other. Bespoke wellbeing sessions are also provided for children identified as needing support with friendships, worries and self-esteem. In Years 3-6, mental health is integrated in the PSHE curriculum and mental health topics are also addressed regularly in form time through a comprehensive pastoral curriculum in Years 7 to 11.

5. Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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 communicate their concerns with the DSL, a senior section pupil's Head of Year, or the Mental Health Lead.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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
- Aggressive behaviour
- 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
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Concerns expressed directly by other pupils or “overheard”. Pupils sometimes deliberately make staff aware of issues that they are concerned about by allowing discussions to be “overheard” by adults rather than telling a member of staff directly.

The Mental Health Lead, together with DSL and pastoral teams, will conduct a proactive mental health intervention with pupils that are evidence-based e.g. use of strengths and difficulties questionnaire etc.

6. Signposting

We will ensure that staff and parents are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services. Within the schools (noticeboards, common rooms, toilets, etc.) and through our communication channels (Firefly, School Post, newsletters, websites etc.) we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure that pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it

7. Support for Individual Pupils

Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. All staff understand possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems; such a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead/DSL in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the Head or the designated governor. If the pupil 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 the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is appropriate, this will usually be led and managed by the DSL, School Nurse and SENDCo.

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) or another organisation, it is recommended that an individual care plan is put in place to manage the safety of the child, and where relevant a risk assessment, will be

carried out. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. Elements that may be a part of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's condition
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact, and how, in an emergency
- The role the school can play

Please see Appendix 1 for the WGSF Mental Health, Wellbeing Support and Intervention and please see Appendix 2 for a list of Support Services, Guidance and Resources.

8. Managing Disclosures

A pupil 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 pupil 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 are trained on how to deal with a pupil making a disclosure and this training will consistently focus on the need to allow the child to speak. Disclosures are covered in the WGSF Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy but the defining principle is that they must be recorded and shared as soon as possible with the appropriate members of staff, typically a pastoral lead, or in more serious cases, directly to the Safeguarding team who will offer support and advice about the next steps.

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMS. This record should include:

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

9. Confidentiality

All staff should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for staff to pass on concerns about a pupil, then this should be discussed with the pupil:

- 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

Information about a pupil should not be shared without first telling them, although there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. If a pupil in school seems to be in danger of harm, a member of the pastoral team would alert an adult who has responsibility for that young person, usually a parent or carer.

Disclosures should always be shared with a member of the Designated Safeguarding Team. This helps to safeguard the emotional wellbeing of staff so that there is no one solely responsible for the pupil, and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. This would be explained to the pupil.

Parents must, in almost all circumstances, be informed, but pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, a timescale of 24 hours is recommended to share this information before the school makes contact with the parents to check on awareness. Where pupils are above the age of 16, pastoral and safeguarding leads may choose to apply some discretion in terms of discussing the situation immediately with parents, but where there is any quantifiable and direct or immediate risk, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make the final decision and typically speak to at least one parent to ensure continuity of care outside school.

Pastoral staff recognise that, in the vast majority of circumstances, working with the parents and pupil together is likely to bring about the best results, irrespective of age.

10. Working with Parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young peoples' emotional health and wellbeing. We will work in partnership with parents to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to information 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 support and advice in school from the School Nurse, School Counsellor, pastoral staff or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners

11. Supporting Peers

When a pupil 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, 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 pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom the following points will be discussed:

- 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
- 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

12. Training

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 pupils safe. In WGHS we have Samaritan trained Peer mentors.

Relevant information will be placed on Firefly for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The provides 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.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, training sessions will take place for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health. Relevant staff and other interested staff will be encouraged to attend training offered by the local authority Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Appendix 1: WGSF Pupil Mental Health, Wellbeing support and intervention

Whole foundation approach	<p><u>Connect with other people</u></p> <p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pupil voice - provides relevant data that informs us about the thoughts, feelings, and views of our school community, thus providing us with the ability to respond accordingly in a range of ways that will support, nurture and encourage all of our stakeholders● Using strategies (such as What I would like my teacher to know) which enable children to request to speak with a member of the pastoral team about a concern.● Emotional literacy skills taught through P4C and PSHE/RSE curriculum● Zones of Regulation - Self-regulation strategies linked to behaviour management● Tailored pastoral interventions 1:1 or paired depending on the individual● Educational visits and Year 2 Residential● Themed Weeks - Wellbeing Week and Feel Good Fridays● Little Leaders - Roles of responsibility● PSHE mentoring programme (KS5 students discussing mental health, wellbeing issues with KS3/2 students)● External visitors (authors, religious celebrations)● ELSA - dedicated are The Snug - calm and comfortable space for dedicated 1:1 or group interventions <p><u>Be physically active</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Physical Education incl swimming curriculum● After school Clubs● House Competitions● Sports Day● Sports Ambassadors <p><u>Learn new skills</u></p> <p>This is something our children are doing every day! EDGE/ QED/ QEGSX and WGSF clubs and societies</p> <p><u>Give to others</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Assemblies● School Council● House Captains● Choosing, supporting and raising money for chosen charities● WGPPS Harvest Festival● Charity Days● PSHE/RSE curriculum- give to others curriculum● Themed weeks - Anti-bullying weeks, It's cool to be kind, safer internet Healthy Brain <p><u>Pay attention to the present moment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Classroom time
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● P4C ● Zones of Regulation ● Teaching about Growth Mindset, Stretch Zones - Comfort and Stretch ● Teaching in outside spaces (especially Summer Term)
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Targeted Support	<p><u>CAMHS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engagement with individuals as when needed ● Educational Psychologist. <p><u>Wellbeing interventions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tailored Pastoral Interventions: self esteem/regulation <p><u>School Counselling service</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pupils referred to services where applicable and necessary <p>All of this support occurs in consultation with parents</p>
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Appendix 2: List of Support Services, Guidance and Resources

Guidance and advice documents

[Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) - departmental advice for school staff. Department for Education (2014)

[Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing A whole school or college approach](#) (Department of Education)

[Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future](#) - departmental advice for school staff and counsellors. Department for Education (2015)

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#) - statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. Department for Education.

[Healthy child programme from 5 to 19 years old](#) is a recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing. Department of Health (2009)

[Future in mind – promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#) - a report produced by the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce to examine how to improve mental health services for children and young people. Department of Health (2015)

[NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in primary education](#)

[NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education](#)

[Mental health](#) (The PHSE Association Mental Health Guidance)

[The Zones of Regulation](#)

Data Sources

[Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing profiling tool](#) collates and analyses a wide range of publically available data on risk, prevalence and detail (including cost data) on those services that support children with, or vulnerable to, mental illness. It enables benchmarking of data between areas.

[ChiMat school health hub](#) provides access to resources relating to the commissioning and delivery of health services for school children and young people and its associated good practice, including the new service offer for school nursing.

[Health behaviour of school age children](#) is an international cross-sectional study that takes place in 43 countries and is concerned with the determinants of young people's health and wellbeing.

Support

There are a wide range of excellent local initiatives that provide support to pupils. Some are specific to particular needs or situations (e.g. bereavement, or the breakdown of the family unit), some dealing with issues that may have multiple causes or triggers (e.g. poor attendance).

We work closely with the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership and the pastoral team receive regular updates from the Partnership on training opportunities and also resources and support that is available. We also encourage pupils to be aware of the self help facilities provided at the Partnership

Hub ([Where can I get help? - Wakefield Safeguarding Children](#)) and we carry a range of leaflets and resources in school in the pastoral bases and with the School Counsellor and School Nurse which provide support for children who are trying to help their friends or others around them.

Kooth - is an online support service for young people in the area. It is open from midday to 10.00pm and gives young people in need speedy access to trained support. <https://www.kooth.com>

The Market Place, Leeds - This is a drop-in centre for young people between 11 and 25. It provides a range of support. <https://www.themarketplaceleeds.org.uk>

Change Grow Live - Support for young people in Wakefield who may have a drug or alcohol problem.

Well Women Centre - Face to face counselling and groups from 16+

[Young Minds](#) - provide young people with the tools to look after their mental health

[Mind](#) - empower people to understand their mental health and the choices available to them

[MindEd learning portal](#)

[Every Mind Matters - NHS](#)

Self-harm support:

[SelfHarm.co.uk](#)

[National Self-Harm Network: www.nshn.co.uk](#)

Books:

Pooky Knightsmith (2015) *Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) *By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self-harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Carol Fitzpatrick (2012) *A Short Introduction to Understanding and Supporting Children and Young People Who Self-Harm*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Depression support:

[Depression Alliance](#)

www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression

Books:

Christopher Dowrick and Susan Martin (2015) *Can I Tell you about Depression?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Anxiety, panic attacks and phobias support:

[Anxiety UK: www.anxietyuk.org.uk](#)

Books:

Lucy Willetts and Polly Waite (2014) *Can I Tell you about Anxiety?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Carol Fitzpatrick (2015) *A Short Introduction to Helping Young People Manage Anxiety*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Obsessions and compulsions:

[OCD UK](#)

Books:

Amita Jassi and Sarah Hull (2013) *Can I Tell you about OCD?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Susan Connors (2011) *The Tourette Syndrome & OCD Checklist: A practical reference for parents and teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Suicidal feelings:

Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

Books:

Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) *By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self-harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Terri A.Erbacher, Jonathan B. Singer and Scott Poland (2015) *Suicide in Schools: A Practitioner's Guide to Multi-level Prevention, Assessment, Intervention, and Postvention*. New York: Routledge

Eating problems:

Books:

Bryan Lask and Lucy Watson (2014) *Can I tell you about Eating Disorders?: A Guide for Friends, Family and Professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Pooky Knightsmith (2015) *Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Pooky Knightsmith (2012) *Eating Disorders Pocketbook*. Teachers' Pocketbooks