



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Policy implemented: September 2020
Last reviewed: September 2021
Next review due: September 2022

1. Summary

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 Organization)

At Ingfield Manor School, we are committed to promoting and supporting positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, young people, staff, parents and carers) as we recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement.

We recognise that everyone experiences different life challenges and that each of us may sometimes need help to cope with them. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support.

Our culture is supportive, caring, and respectful. We encourage students to be open and we want each student to have their voice heard. We use both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

At Ingfield Manor School, positive mental health is everybody's responsibility. We all have a role to play.

2. Aims

The aim of our policy is to describe the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. It is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

At Ingfield we will always support our students to:

- Understand their emotions and experiences better.
- Have the means to share their concerns and worries and feel comfortable to do so.
- Form and maintain relationships.
- Be confident and help to promote their self-esteem.
- Develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks.

We promote a healthy environment by:

- Encouraging positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all students and staff.
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
- Promoting our students' voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making.
- Celebrating each student for who they are and making every student feel valued and respected.
- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to any student that needs it.
- Raising awareness amongst staff and students about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms.
- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in students.
- Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Saludem Group is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any such factors and all will be treated with dignity and respect.

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4. Key Staff

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead – member of school’s senior leadership team
- Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)
- Team Leaders and tutors / teachers.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student, then in the first instance they should speak to one of the DSOs. If a child presents a medical emergency then relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

If a major incident occurs that is likely to impact on the mental health of others ie. death of a service user. The ‘business continuity plan’ should be referred to. The Principal will take the leading role in deciding upon the best person to liaise with the families / students / staff etc, taking into consideration the specific situation.

5. Teaching about mental health and wellbeing

- The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.
- We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.
- The specific content of lessons will be determined by the individual needs of the students we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.
- Our students will also learn the vocabulary they need to express their feelings and ask for help through their communication lessons and will be supported to develop access to both high and low tech AAC (where necessary) through dedicated lessons, as well as practicing their skills throughout the day.
- Opportunities throughout the school year will also be maximized to teach students about mental health and wellbeing, such as assemblies on World Mental Health Day and activities throughout Mental Health Awareness Week.

6. Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

Any member of staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 to one of the DSOs immediately.

Possible warning signs include:

- Being clearly upset and emotional
- Becoming withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Changes in behaviour ie angry outbursts, being unkind to peers
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Lowering of academic achievement and disengagement with learning
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Reluctance for help with personal care
- Expressing dislike of self and/or their body
- Lateness to or absence from school/an increase in lateness and absenteeism
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Abusing drugs or alcohol

7. Support at School and in the Local Community

We have a range of support available in school for any students struggling, as listed below:

- The school's ethos is that every child and young person is empowered to speak to any member of staff about any concerns or worries they may have, and that they know they will be respected and listened to
- All students attend weekly communication lessons, which teaches them vocabulary to enable them to talk about how they are feeling
- All students have an ICT lesson, which, for those reliant on technology for communication, helps them develop the skills needed to access their vocabulary independently
- All students attend weekly PSHE lessons
- All students have the option of having a regular chat session, which provides the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and feelings with a person of their choosing in a quiet, safe space
- Each student has an Assigned Team Member, who works closely with them and is available on a daily basis to notice any signs, to be available to talk to the student and to raise concerns so more structured support can be put in place
- Each student can choose a staff member they feel comfortable talking to to be their advocate. As well as being available to talk to the student, their advocate can act as a link with DSO and/or family
- When available, identified students will have the opportunity to speak to an external therapist/counsellor

There is also a lot of support networks available for children in the local community. This includes places such as:

- YMCA Dialogue, face to face or online counselling with an experienced counsellor, Mon-Fri 9.00-17.00 ages 11-18, 07739 893 707, community.counselling@ymcadlg.org
- Youth Emotional Service (YES) @ Find It Out Centres, 1-2-1 and group intervention, weekdays – 9am-5pm, ages 11-18, Youth Emotional Support (YES), | Referral guidance
- Youth Emotional Support (YES) | Referral form for young people under CAMHS threshold; aged 11-18 emotionalwellbeing.yps@westsussex.gov.uk

- CAMHS, tier 3 multi-disciplinary teams offering therapeutic interventions, care co-ordination and medication, under 18s, www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/CAMHS

8. Managing Referrals

If a student discloses concerns about themselves or a friend, to any member of staff, then all staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgmental manner.

All disclosures will be recorded confidentially and only shared with the appropriate authorities if it's necessary to keep the child safe, in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

The disclosure record will contain:

- The name and date of birth of the student
- The date of the disclosure.
- The name of the staff member to whom the disclosure was made.
- The nature of the disclosure and the main points from the conversation.

9. Confidentiality

If a member of staff thinks it's necessary to pass on concerns about a student, either to somebody inside the school or somebody outside it, then this will first be discussed with the student. They will be told:

- Who the staff member is going to tell.
- What the staff member is going to disclose.
- Why it's necessary for somebody else to be told.
- When the contact will be.

However, it may not be possible to gain the student's consent first, such as in the case of students who are at immediate risk. Protecting a student's safety is our main priority so we would share disclosures if we judged a child to be at risk.

10. Whole School Approach

We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our students, overseen by our Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary.

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

We aim to support parents as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and offering our support at all times. To support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school.
- Share and allow parents to access further support.
- Ensure that parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.
- Give parents guidance about how they can support their child's/children's positive mental health.
- Ensure this policy is easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health training our school staff receive and how mental health is covered in our school curriculum.

WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND PARTNERS

As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our students' emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- The school nurse.
- Paediatricians.
- CAMHS.
- Counselling services.
- Therapists.
- Family support workers.
- Behavioural support workers.

Ingfield Manor school has a visiting psychotherapist and access to this service is made via school referral.

11. Supporting Peers

We understand that, when a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. In response to this, we will consider, on a case by case basis, any peers that may need additional support.

We will provide support in a one-on-one or group setting. These sessions will be guided by the student, but they will discuss how peers can help, how peers can access support themselves, and healthy ways of coping with any emotions they might be feeling.

12. Training

All staff will receive regular training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of their regular safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep children safe. Training records will be held in staff files.

We will consider additional training opportunities for staff and we will support additional CPD throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with pupils.

13. Useful Links

- <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/c/children-and-young-people>
- <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/back-to-school/childrens-well-being-and-mental-health>
- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/north/northern-england-clinical-networks/our-networks/mental-health-and-dementia/network-groups-and-workstreams/cyp-mh-wellbeing/>
- <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/support-for-parents/children-s-mental-health/>
- <https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/fact-sheet-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/>