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Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community. (World Health Organisation).

Policy Statement

We are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students and staff. We aim to promote positive mental health and pursue this using whole school universal approaches and more targeted approaches for those that need them. We know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support to help cope with them. We aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health and to develop and implement practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures, in order to promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health. For any case that requires specialist or long-term, ongoing intervention we will signpost and refer to mental health and medical professionals. This policy outlines our approach to mental health and wellbeing and is intended as guidance for all staff including teachers, non-teaching staff and Governors.

Aims

- To promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all students and staff
- To raise awareness amongst staff and students about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms
- To foster an open culture where students and staff feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries
- To enable staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in students
- To support any student that needs it, their peers and their parents/carers

Teaching about Mental Health

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 PSHE curriculum and also delivered as part of our tutor and assembly programme.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the age and needs of the cohort, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy. There is also a focus on developing resilience and the confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

The Magna Carta School ensures it teaches mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Staff roles and responsibilities for supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing:

In addition to developing positive and supportive relationships with students, staff have the following responsibilities:

Teaching and Support Staff	Be vigilant, listen to disclosure and report concerns
Year Team Leads, Student Support Advisors, Special Educational Needs Coordinators and the Senior Leadership team	As above and in addition; oversee wellbeing services and the school's wellbeing offer
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Ensures all processes to support Mental Health and Wellbeing adhere to sound safeguarding principles. Liaison with Children's Services and the Mental Health Support Team as necessary
Governors	Ensure the practice aligns with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of the support that is available in our school and locally for mental health. This includes how to access further support, both inside and outside of school hours.

Relevant sources of support are displayed in communal areas in school and sources of support are regularly highlighted to students within relevant parts of the curriculum or via tutor time and assemblies.

There is also a list of links on the Edulink Noticeboard to a variety of useful external websites for mental health and wellbeing support. Additionally, there is a QR code on the school website that students can use to complete a form requesting support.

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All of our staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems. This means that they will be able to offer help and support to students who need it, when they need it. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Pastoral and/or Safeguarding Teams.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating and/or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement or attitude towards education
- 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
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly

- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional professional development will be supported where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more students.

Managing disclosures and confidentiality

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, should this happen staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner. Staff will then follow the guidance in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Referring Concerns

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should log this on CPOMS and where necessary complete a referral form and send it to mhwb@mcs-unity.co.uk. Students can self-refer to the Wellbeing service or they can speak to a member of pastoral staff who can make a referral for them.

If a child presents with a medical emergency then relevant school procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

Any referral will be followed up in line with this and the school's [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)

Whole School Approach

We work in partnership with The Mental Health Support Team, adopting a whole school approach towards the mental health of our students and staff. This means working parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary.

Working with Parents and Carers

In order to support parents with their child's positive mental health and wellbeing we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make this policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our information evenings
- Keep parents informed about any mental health topics their children are learning within the PSHE curriculum

Where we identify that a child is in need of external specialist assessment and/or targeted support, we will direct parents to take the appropriate action e.g. urgent GP appointment, CAMHS Crisis Line 0800 915 4644 or accessing the [Mindworks](#) website.

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
- Mindworks Surrey (CAMHS)

- Eikon (or other Level 3 providers)
- Youth Counselling services
- The Mental health Support Team
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) trained Teaching Assistants and Pastoral Staff

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, 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 a one-to-one or group settings. 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.

Children at risk of harming themselves

For a student to be in school, they must be well enough (low enough risk) that they are able to participate in lessons and can be unsupervised at break/lunch/going to the toilets. If the student is considered to be at risk of harming themselves then they need to be referred to a medical professional ([Mindworks](#) Surrey (CAMHS), GP or A&E) by their parents. In case of an emergency, the usual procedure will be taken by school to ensure that the child is safe and is taken to A&E if necessary.

Risk Assessments

For students causing concern or who receive a medical diagnosis pertaining to their mental health that indicates a level of extra care required, a highlighted level of risk or a personal wellbeing plan will be put in place. This will be drawn up with involvement of the student, the parents and relevant health professionals and can include:

- Details of a student's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The support the school can and can't provide

Note: if the risk is too high and we cannot mitigate it, the student will not be able to be in school.

Trips

Where students have a risk assessment or wellbeing plan in place to be in school, an additional risk assessment will be completed to consider whether the risk can be managed to enable that student to attend the trip.

Note: if the risk is too high and we cannot mitigate it, the student will not be able to participate.

Evaluation

The Wellbeing and Mental Health provision at The Magna Carta School will be reviewed annually via surveys, the Student Voice, review of the curriculum and staff training needs.

Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health

At The Magna Carta School, we recognise that our staff are our most important resource and are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring, purposeful learning community.

We recognise that there is a direct correlation between the wellbeing of our staff and the wellbeing of our students, and that the culture and ethos of a school are determined by the extent to which staff work towards a shared vision. We believe that it is essential that all staff feel part of a valued team, have the opportunity to express their views and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that we embrace the many school practices that support staff health and wellbeing, to minimise the harmful effects of stress and ensure that there is cohesion in working towards health and wellbeing for all staff. It outlines some of the ways in which we commit to maintaining staff wellbeing and it recognises that each individual member of staff and their circumstances are different but provides an overview of the basis on which everyone can contribute, and expect to be treated.

1. Aims

We aim to ensure that our school:

- supports staff mental health and wellbeing
- minimises stress
- helps staff to keep a healthy work-life balance
- helps staff to manage their family and work responsibilities
- ensures staff feel valued
- recognises and promotes the importance of a happy team
- involves staff in decision making
- takes account of equality implications

2. Roles and responsibilities

The senior leadership team (SLT), Governors and school staff will work towards an ethos where everyone is valued, where respect, empathy and honesty are the cornerstones of all school relationships and where health and wellbeing are held central to school practice. We expect all staff to show respect and empathy for each other, and to treat confidential information sensitively and according to school policy.

Members of staff are responsible for:

- treating one another with empathy, respect and kindness
- taking care of their own health and safety at work and communicating with key staff where they need support
- being committed to the ethos of staff wellbeing and keeping in mind the workload and wellbeing of colleagues
- valuing all members of staff in the school and acknowledging the important role that everyone takes
- contributing to the ethos and social aspects of school life where possible to build morale and effective team spirit
- developing and respecting shared areas where possible so that there is space to relax as well as appropriate workspaces.

The Head of School and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- listening to the views of members of staff and providing a range of strategies for involving staff in school decision making processes
- monitoring the workload of members of staff and being alert to signs of stress
- ensuring that the efforts and successes of staff are acknowledged and celebrated
- acting as gatekeeper and prioritising reforms and innovations

The Governing body is responsible for:

- ensuring that the resources are in place to keep staff workload at healthy levels
- reviewing this policy and ensuring that other school policies and procedures take account of staff wellbeing
- overseeing that change management is operated in a fair and reasonable way.

The Head of School implements these responsibilities with the support of appropriate staff such as the senior leaders and pastoral staff, who all strive to be positive role models through their own practice.

3. Support in specific circumstances

The school will provide support and discuss options as appropriate to specific circumstances. In some cases, it may be necessary to seek external services but the school will continue to support even when external services are involved.