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Hassocks

Mental Health Policy

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Next Review due: Sept 2025

Policy Statement

At LVS Hassocks, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students' voices to be heard and using effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

Wellbeing can be defined as the quality of our lives – how we are, and how our lives are going. There is subjective wellbeing which looks at how we think we are doing, and objective wellbeing which look at a range of external indicators such as poverty and so on to get an overall measure of wellbeing. Children's Society, 2017 [The Good Childhood Report](#)

Mental Health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to her or his community. World Health Organisation [World health Organisation - Mental Health](#)

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

We endeavour to ensure that students can manage times of change and stress and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to access help when they need it.

We also have a role to ensure that students learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

Strategy Statements and Aims

At LVS Hassocks we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help all to become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a pro-active way to avoid problems arising. We do this by:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.

- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SMT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting student 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.
- Enabling access to appropriate support.

Mental Health, wellbeing and PSHE for all year groups pursue our aims through:

- Whole school approaches.
- Support for students going through recent difficulties.
- Specialised targeted approaches aimed at students with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities, Including those with Specific Responsibility

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

Key staff supporting Mental Health at LVS Hassocks:

- Senior Mental Health Lead and Mental Health First Aider – Sarah Prater
- Safeguarding lead – Alice Brennan
- Team of mental health First Aiders

Our Mental Health Leads:

- Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Work with the Vice Principal re: teaching about mental health.
- Provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates.
- Liaise with mental health services and make individual referrals to them. Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our Social Skills (PSHE) curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Targeted Support

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

- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry jars'
- Managing emotions resources.
- Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups/ELSA support groups/Wellbeing Warriors.
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques, therapy club at lunch time
- Zones of Regulation
- Access to sensory rooms

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

Early Identification and Warning Signs

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a student's poor mental health, including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstance
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also 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 with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits

- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking 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

Assessment, interventions and support

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with SLT, class teachers and DSL, ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

Working with parents and carers.

Parents or carers can approach their child tutor if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the SLT. To support parents and carers we will:

- Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.
- Organise workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and steps to wellbeing.

When a concern has been raised we will:

- Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (Although there may be cases, parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection issues.)
 - Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies.
 - Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
 - Create a chronology of actions and events.
 - Agree mental health care and protection plan where appropriate including clear next steps.
 - Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.
- Working with specialist services

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- Educational Psychology Services
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)

- School Nurse
- Children's and Family Services
- Therapists
- Family support workers

Training

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 pupils safe. We will use the National College to support with this and where available the Mental Health First Aid training.

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.

Monitoring and evaluation

The policy will be reviewed every three years