



**Stretford**  
Grammar School  
*Aspirat primo fortuna labori*

## **Mental Health and Wellbeing(students) Policy**

**Ratified by Governors: February 24**

**Date of Policy:** February 2024

**Governing Body Sub-Committee with reviewing responsibility:** Welfare

## **1. Policy Statement**

At Stretford Grammar School, we recognise that students who are mentally well will be more likely to enjoy success, be happy and achieve better academically. We promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students. All children go through ups and downs through their school career and some face significant life events. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health. We believe that all staff and students are responsible for demonstrating the values of the school and fostering a healthy environment for all. Respect and care for others is at the heart of these values. Students are challenged academically but this is not at the expense of their mental and physical health.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice identifies Social, Emotional and Mental Health as one of the four areas of Special Educational Need

## **2. Purpose of this Policy**

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Supporting Medical Conditions policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with, or is linked to, a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive health including mental health in all students
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

## **2. Definition of Mental Health and Wellbeing**

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing:

*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 Organisation)*

### **3. A whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health.**

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise. This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to
3. Helping pupils to be resilient learners
4. Teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
5. Early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services
6. Effectively working with parents and carers
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience

### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. 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 are trained to understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems.

These can include: a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health difficulties, death, and loss such as the loss of friendships, a family breakdown and bullying. Staff also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, positive communication, developing problem-solving skills, a sense of worth or belonging and emotional literacy.

### **5. Lead Staff**

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

- Mrs H Dolphin: Assistant Headteacher Lead for Student Welfare and Support, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Senior Mental Health Lead. Mrs Dolphin has achieved the Senior Mental Health qualification
- Mr Price: Assistant Headteacher Lead for Personal Development and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- SENCo: Miss Hyde
- The Director of 6<sup>th</sup> Form: Mr Marshall
- Progress Leaders: Miss King, Miss Rawlinson, Dr Nixon, Mr Crowley and Mr Broome

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to pupils with mental health needs and their families.

Support includes:

- SENCo. who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including pupils whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision.
- School Counsellor who provides one-to-one therapeutic sessions and drop in support sessions
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Team who monitor emerging needs and potential risks and make appropriate referrals for support
- Pastoral Managers who provide regular check-ins for students
- Trafford Thrive Mental Health Support Teams who provide one-to one and group therapies through their Mental Health Support Workers in school
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)
- Educational Psychologist

## **6. Supporting Positive Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are taught as part of our PSHCE programme, Tutor Programmes, Assembly Programme and designated workshops throughout the year. Across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 we use the PSHCE Association framework which includes learning around mental health and wellbeing. The Sixth Form Tutorial Programme covers key mental health and wellbeing topics Activities take place during Children's Mental Health Week.

Our school has developed a range of strategies including:

- Trafford Thrive have delivered sessions to students on managing anxiety and specifically about managing anxiety caused by exams.
- Mindfulness sessions delivered by staff who have been trained to deliver the dotbe Mindfulness course
- Anna Freud Schools in Mind resources
- Displays signposting students to sources of support
- Assemblies delivered by Kooth
- A wide range of extracurricular activities
- The #BeeHeard Group focuses on Student Voice
- Student Parliament
- Lego Therapy
- Key Worker Support
- Regular check-ins with a trusted adult
- The Hub as a safe space for students
- Worry boxes in form time
- One-to-one therapy
- Group therapy
- Peer Mentoring
- The Hive for peer support
- An appointment with the School Nurse

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

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

## **7. Identification**

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible and provide a prompt response. We do this in different ways including:

- Using a whole school wellbeing screener
  - Providing an online form for students to alert us to concerns
  - Form group worry boxes
  - Inclusion panel meetings to discuss emerging needs
  - Self-referral
  - Gathering information through liaison with primary schools
  - CPOMS reporting and alerts
  - Thrive parental workshops
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- Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student speaks to the Form Tutor or Progress Leader of the student. A The concern is logged on CPOMS
  - The Form Tutor or Progress Leader will establish at what level the issue needs to be dealt with
  - The student might be discussed at the fortnightly Inclusion meeting where a relevant pathway is agreed
  - If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures are followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a member of the Safeguarding Team
  - If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies are followed, including alerting the First Aid Staff and contacting the Emergency Services if necessary
  - A safety plan might be completed with the student and, or, a risk assessment
  - Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Counsellor, SENCo or the Senior Mental Health Lead

## **8. Warning Signs**

School 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. Staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns to the staff specified earlier in the Policy.

Possible warning signs include:

- non-verbal behaviour
- isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits
- lowering academic achievement
- talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- an increase in lateness or absenteeism
- not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE
- drug or alcohol misuse
- physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

## **9. Managing Student disclosures**

- A student 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 student 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 should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively see Appendix C.
- Staff treat disclosures as they would any other disclosure and safeguarding protocols should be followed. See Safeguarding Policy for guidance
- Students are always signposted towards Kooth when they are experiencing difficulties with their mental health. This is so they can access support out of school hours
- This information should be shared with the DSL who will provide, store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps

## **10. Sharing of Information**

Information is shared with all relevant adults in school to ensure that the student is supported and that any adjustments are put in place.

CPOMs is used to store and share information. A Student Passport might be produced and a School Support Plan devised to coordinate interventions. A review meeting is always held.

It is likely that the following information will be shared:

- Details of a Student's condition/difficulties

- Any adjustments needed to support the student and to ensure that he/she can access the curriculum
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play
- How parents can support the young people
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## **11. Working with Parents**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we are sensitive in our approach.

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We are accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect

We always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. We finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on CPOMS.

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents we:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Provide information at Information Evenings to 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 our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- 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
- Invite parents to workshops delivered online by Trafford Thrive

## **12. Training**

- The Assistant head for Student Welfare and Development has completed senior mental health training and has been accredited
- As a minimum, all staff 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. Further information is provided through the Staff Safeguarding Newsletter
- Four members of staff have been trained to deliver the Mindfulness .Be course to students
- Mental Health and Wellbeing is a standing item on the Governor Welfare Committee

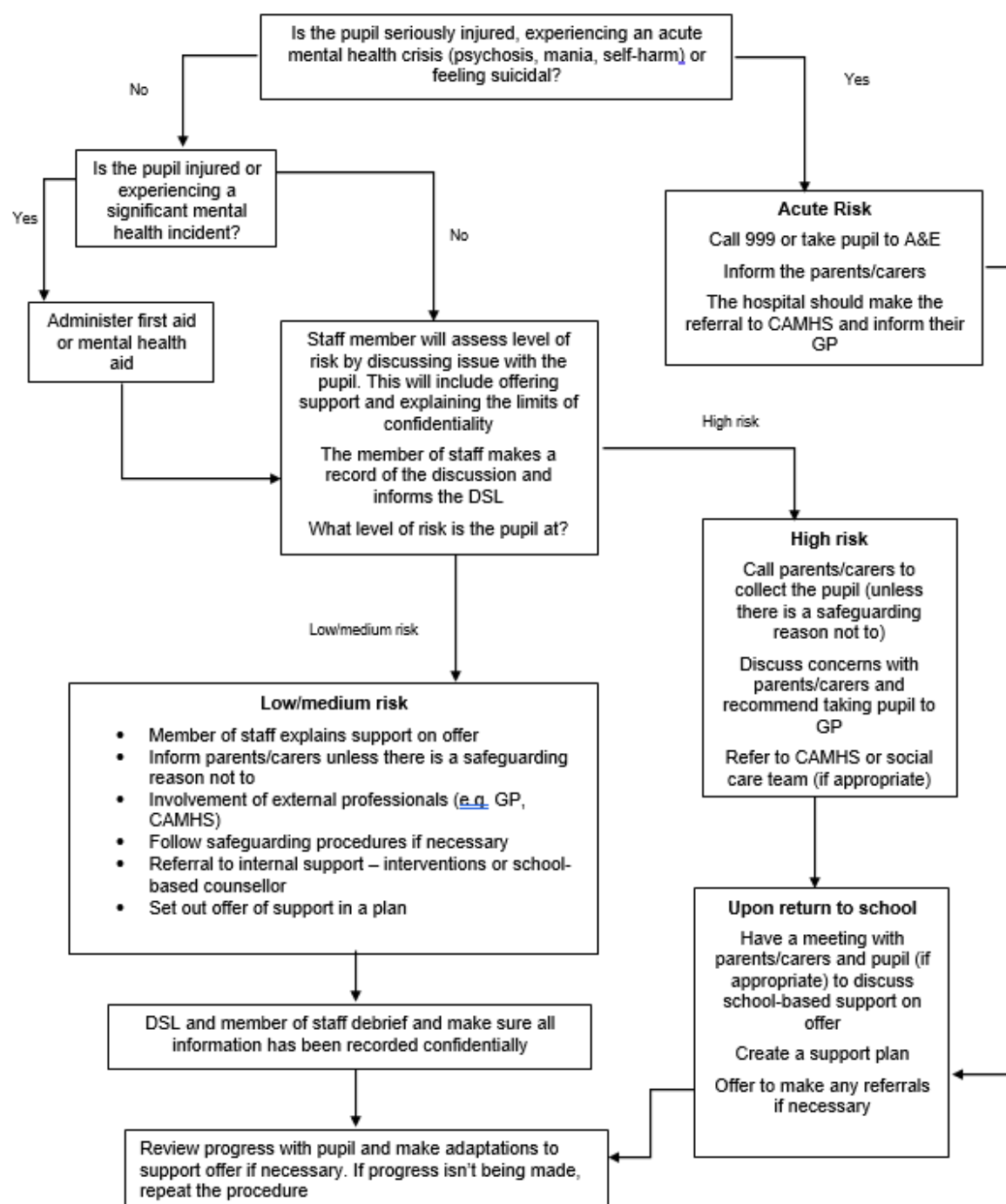
### **13. Policy Review**

- This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum

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## Appendix A Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



## **Appendix B Sources of Support**

Anna Freud <https://www.annafreud.org/resources/children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing/young-people-urgent-help/>

Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk/](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/)

Mind: [www.mind.org.uk/](http://www.mind.org.uk/)  
<https://www.mind.org.uk/for-young-people/how-to-get-help-and-support/useful-contacts/>

Minded [www.minded.org.uk/](http://www.minded.org.uk/)

SelfHarm.co.uk [www.selfharm.co.uk/](http://www.selfharm.co.uk/)

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

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

OCD UK: [www.ocduk.org/ocd/](http://www.ocduk.org/ocd/)

42<sup>nd</sup> Street: <https://www.42ndstreet.org.uk/>

Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>

Kooth online counselling [www.kooth.co.uk/](http://www.kooth.co.uk/)

Childline [www.childline.org.uk/](http://www.childline.org.uk/)

Samaritans [www.samaritans.org.uk/](http://www.samaritans.org.uk/)

Text SHOUT to 85358

NHS support dial 111

Chat with a School Nurse 07312 263056

## **Appendix C: Talking to students when they make mental health disclosures**

The advice below is from students themselves, in their own words, together with some additional ideas to help you in initial conversations with students when they disclose mental health concerns. This advice should be considered alongside relevant school policies on pastoral care and child protection and discussed with relevant colleagues as appropriate.

### **Focus on listening**

*"She listened, and I mean REALLY listened. She didn't interrupt me or ask me to explain myself or anything, she just let me talk and talk and talk. I had been unsure about talking to anyone but I knew quite quickly that I'd chosen the right person to talk to and that it would be a turning point."*

If a student has come to you, it's because they trust you and feel a need to share their difficulties with someone. Let them talk. Ask occasional open questions if you need to in order to encourage them to keep exploring their feelings and opening up to you. Just letting them pour out what they're thinking will make a huge difference and marks a huge first step in recovery. Up until now they may not have admitted even to themselves that there is a problem.

### **Don't talk too much**

*"Sometimes it's hard to explain what's going on in my head – it doesn't make a lot of sense and I've kind of gotten used to keeping myself to myself. But just 'cos I'm struggling to find the right words doesn't mean you should help me. Just keep quiet, I'll get there in the end."*

The student should be talking at least three quarters of the time. If that's not the case then you need to redress the balance. You are here to listen, not to talk. Sometimes the conversation may lapse into silence. Try not to give in to the urge to fill the gap, but rather wait until the student does so. This can often lead to them exploring their feelings more deeply. Of course, you should interject occasionally, perhaps with questions to the student to explore certain topics they've touched on more deeply, or to show that you understand and are supportive. Don't feel an urge to over-analyse the situation or try to offer answers. This all comes later. For now your role is simply one of supportive listener. So make sure you're listening!

### **Don't pretend to understand**

*"I think that all teachers got taught on some course somewhere to say 'I understand how that must feel' the moment you open up. YOU DON'T – don't even pretend to, it's not helpful, it's insulting."*

The concept of a mental health difficulty such as an eating disorder or obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can seem completely alien if you've never experienced these difficulties first hand. You may find yourself wondering why on earth someone would do these things to

themselves, but don't explore those feelings with the sufferer. Instead listen hard to what they're saying and encourage them to talk and you'll slowly start to understand what steps they might be ready to take in order to start making some changes.

### **Don't be afraid to make eye contact**

*"She was so disgusted by what I told her that she couldn't bear to look at me."*

It's important to try to maintain a natural level of eye contact (even if you have to think very hard about doing so and it doesn't feel natural to you at all). If you make too much eye contact, the student may interpret this as you staring at them. They may think that you are horrified about what they are saying or think they are a 'freak'. On the other hand, if you don't make eye contact at all then a student may interpret this as you being disgusted by them – to the extent that you can't bring yourself to look at them. Making an effort to maintain natural eye contact will convey a very positive message to the student.

### **Offer support**

*"I was worried how she'd react, but my Mum just listened then said 'How can I support you?' – no one had asked me that before and it made me realise that she cared. Between us we thought of some really practical things she could do to help me stop self-harming."*

Never leave this kind of conversation without agreeing next steps. These will be informed by your conversations with appropriate colleagues and the schools' policies on such issues. Whatever happens, you should have some form of next steps to carry out after the conversation because this will help the student to realise that you're working with them to move things forward.

### **Acknowledge how hard it is to discuss these issues**

*"Talking about my bingeing for the first time was the hardest thing I ever did. When I was done talking, my teacher looked me in the eye and said 'That must have been really tough' – he was right, it was, but it meant so much that he realised what a big deal it was for me."*

It can take a young person weeks or even months to admit they have a problem to themselves, let alone share that with anyone else. If a student chooses to confide in you, you should feel proud and privileged that they have such a high level of trust in you. Acknowledging both how brave they have been, and how glad you are they chose to speak to you, conveys positive messages of support to the student.

### **Don't assume that an apparently negative response is actually a negative response**

*"The anorexic voice in my head was telling me to push help away so I was saying no. But there was a tiny part of me that wanted to get better. I just couldn't say it out loud or else I'd have to punish myself."*

Despite the fact that a student has confided in you, and may even have expressed a desire to get on top of their illness, that doesn't mean they'll readily accept help. The illness may ensure they resist any form of help for as long as they possibly can. Don't be offended or upset if your offers of help are met with anger, indifference or insolence, it's the illness talking, not the student.

### **Never break your promises**

*"Whatever you say you'll do you have to do or else the trust we've built in you will be smashed to smithereens. And never lie. Just be honest. If you're going to tell someone just be upfront about it, we can handle that, what we can't handle is having our trust broken."*

Above all else, a student wants to know they can trust you. That means if they want you to keep their issues confidential and you can't then you must be honest. Explain that, whilst you can't keep it a secret, you can ensure that it is handled within the school's policy of confidentiality and that only those who need to know about it in order to help will know about the situation. You can also be honest about the fact you don't have all the answers or aren't exactly sure what will happen next. Consider yourself the student's ally rather than their saviour and think about which next steps you can take together, always ensuring you follow relevant policies and consult appropriate colleagues.



# Stretford Grammar School

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## Appendix D Trafford Thrive

The poster is titled 'Trafford Thrive in Education' and features the NHS Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust logo. It includes a circular diagram with four colored arrows (green, blue, orange, purple) forming a circle, with the text 'Thrive in Education' in the center. The main text describes the role of Education Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPS) and lists various issues they support young people with. There are three speech bubbles containing testimonials and a final statement at the bottom.

**NHS**  
Manchester University  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Trafford Thrive in Education

**We are Education Mental Health Practitioners (or EMHPS for short!) working in your school and college. Below is more information about how we support young people with their mental health and wellbeing.**

**We support young people through the use of workshops, group work and 1 to 1 appointments who are struggling with:**

- Worries about school, friendships, exams etc.
- Low mood
- Phobias (dog, vomit, needles, blood etc).
- Education ransition
- Panic (feeling panicky, mild panic attacks)
- Managing emotions
- Exam stress
- Sleeping difficulties
- Thoughts of self-harm

*"I don't have to worry about being judged it makes me feel very safe."*

*"It was good to have someone to talk through things with someone who understands and can offer useful solutions and steps to overcome."*

**If you have any questions or would like to talk over anything that may support you then please speak to a member of your school/college staff.**

*"Supporting you to thrive ... your way"*