

# Mental health and wellbeing policy

| Action      | Policy to be reviewed triennially |             |           |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
|             | Committee                         | Date        | Completed |
| Review      | Deputy Head (Pastoral)            | April 2025  | ✓         |
| Approved    | Education Committee               | 7 May 2025  | ✓         |
| Next Review |                                   | Summer 2028 |           |

| To be published on the following: |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Staff Portal                      | ✓ |
| School website                    | ✓ |

## **Mental health and wellbeing policy**

### **Who this policy applies to**

This policy is addressed to all staff, governors and volunteers and, is available to parents on the school website. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with students even where this is away from the school, for example on an educational visit.

### **What this policy is for**

This policy aims to:

- describe the school's approach to mental health issues
- increase understanding and awareness of mental health issues so as to facilitate early intervention of mental health problems
- alert staff to warning signs and risk factors
- provide support and guidance to all staff and governors, dealing with students who suffer from mental health issues
- provide support to students who suffer from mental health issues, alongside their peers and parents/carers.

### **Legal/ regulatory framework**

- Every Child Matters, 2003, DfES
- Keeping Children safe in Education
- Working together to safeguard children (February 2024)

### **Other relevant school policies**

- Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Further Reading and Useful Links

### **Content of policy**

1. Policy statement
2. Child Protection Responsibilities
3. Background
4. Identifiable mental health issues
5. Signs and symptoms of mental or emotional concerns
6. Procedures
7. Individual care plans and safety plans
8. Confidentiality and information sharing
9. Records and reporting
10. Mental Health First Aid
11. Staffing of the Wellbeing Centre
12. Absence from school
13. Reintegration to school

## **1 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 The School promotes the mental and physical health and emotional wellbeing of all its students. Wellbeing is at the forefront of the school's PSHE programme and promoting good mental health is a priority. The physical, mental and emotional health benefits of exercise are well documented, and the school actively encourages sport for all. Through the School Council, the school community has identified 10 key qualities that are fundamental to good mental health and wellbeing:
1. *Proper sleep patterns*
  2. *Time for exercise*
  3. *Eating healthily at regular times*
  4. *Time to relax*
  5. *Emotional resilience - accepting being 'good enough'*
  6. *Sense of humour*
  7. *Firm boundaries*
  8. *Random acts of kindness*
  9. *Walking in fresh air*
  10. *A sense of perspective*
- 1.2 Mental health issues can and should be de-stigmatised by educating students, staff and parents. This is done through tutorials and PSHE with the students, through staff INSET and through regular parent discussion evenings and the pastoral events for parents that take place twice termly. Positive mental health is also promoted through strong pastoral care and an effective peer support and peer-educators system and via the annual Wellbeing Week in the spring term.

## **2 Child Protection Responsibilities**

- 2.1 St Paul's Girls' School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, including their mental health and emotional wellbeing, and expects all staff, governors and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and that students cannot learn effectively unless they feel secure. We therefore aim to provide a school environment which promotes self-confidence, a feeling of self-worth and the knowledge that students' concerns will be listened to and acted upon. Every student should feel safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing (Every Child Matters, 2003, DfES).
- 2.2 The Board of Governors takes seriously its responsibility to uphold the aims of the charity and its duty in promoting an environment in which children can feel secure and safe from harm. A nominated safeguarding governor conducts a review of the school's safeguarding procedures and reports to the Board annually, making any recommendations for improvements.
- 2.3 The High Mistress is responsible for ensuring that the procedures outlined in this policy are followed on a day-to-day basis.
- 2.4 The school has appointed a senior member of staff with the necessary status and authority (Deputy Head (Safeguarding & Inclusion)/DSL) to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. Parents are welcome to approach the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have any concerns about the welfare of any child in the school, whether these concerns relate to their own child or any other. If preferred, parents may discuss concerns in private with the child's tutor, Chaplain, Head of Year, Heads of Section, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the High Mistress who will notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with these procedures.
- 2.5 In addition to the child protection measures outlined in the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy, the school has a duty of care to protect and promote a child or young person's mental and emotional wellbeing.

### 3 Background

- 3.1 In 2023, one in five young people between the ages of 8 and 25 had a probable mental health condition. (source: *Mental Health Statistics UK / Young People / YoungMinds*). See Appendix 2 for further reading.

### 4 Identifiable mental health issues

- 4.1 It is important for staff to be alert to signs that a child might be suffering from poor mental health, and recognising the signs of poor mental health is included in safeguarding training for staff. Mental health issues come in many forms and manifest themselves in a wide range of ways, including:
- Anxiety
  - Low Mood
  - Depression
  - Eating disorders / disordered eating
  - Self-harm
  - Suicidal ideation
- 4.2 Two important elements enabling the school to identify mental health issues are the effective use of data (i.e., monitoring changes in students' patterns of attendance/academic achievement) and an effective pastoral system whereby staff know students well and can identify unusual behaviour).

### 5 Signs and symptoms of mental or emotional concerns

- 5.1 These are outlined on the staff portal [here](#).

| Common Signs/Symptoms of mental or emotional concerns                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Panic attacks – difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, hyperventilating     |
| Sleep disturbance, insomnia, excessive tiredness                                |
| Irritability, quickness to anger                                                |
| Low mood, upset, crying                                                         |
| Anxiety                                                                         |
| Loss of weight, restrictive eating, excessive cold, skipping lunch              |
| Cutting, burning/scalding, hair-pulling, banging the head, scrubbing/scratching |
| Using illegal substances – drugs and alcohol                                    |
| Social withdrawal                                                               |

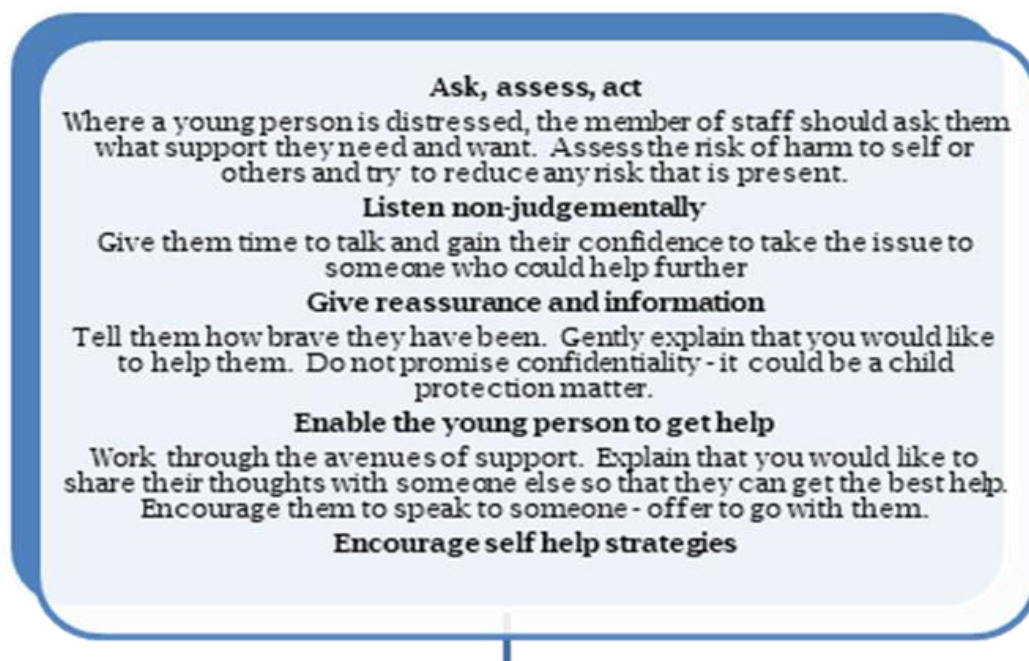
### 6 Procedures

- 6.1 The most important role school staff play is to familiarise themselves with the risk factors and warning signs outlined on the staff portal [here](#). If a member of staff has a concern about a student which pertains to their mental health, they must report it to DSL and a member of the wellbeing team. It must then be logged on CPOMS as soon as is practicable. The wellbeing team member will assess the situation and take appropriate action and inform the appropriate staff members bearing in mind confidentiality and the wishes of the student. If the mental health concern presents a safeguarding risk, namely self-harm, active or passive suicidal ideation or

suicidal planning, or harm to another student, the DSL must be informed immediately, and safeguarding procedures followed.

- 6.2 When the wellbeing team is assessing a student, they will consider the following support structure and processes.

Figure 1 Procedures following a concern



## 7 Individual care plans and safety plans

- 7.1 Following consultation between the relevant members of the pastoral team, a care plan would be agreed between the pastoral team, the student and, where appropriate, the student's parents. Where the student has disclosed thoughts of suicide, i.e., passive suicidal ideation (SI), to a counsellor, it will be entered on the wellbeing tracker and highlighted at a safeguarding level, in which case it will be entered on CPOMS. . The pastoral/wellbeing team would then usually work with a student to improve their mental health. It is crucial that all care strategies be agreed by the medical team, counsellors and DSL in conjunction with each other and that decisions are made together to ensure the safety of the student. A safety plan may include confidential information. Any student who is suicidally active should have a safety plan guided by the Papyrus template<sup>1</sup>, including vital safety helplines and web addresses. This is then copied directly to the DSL and shared with parents.

## 8 Confidentiality and information sharing

- 8.1 Students may choose to confide in a member of school staff if they are concerned about their own welfare or that of a peer. Students should be made aware that it may not be possible for staff to offer complete confidentiality. **If a member of staff considers a student is at serious risk of causing themselves harm, then confidentiality cannot be kept.** It is important not to make promises of confidentiality that cannot be kept even if a student puts pressure on a member of staff to do so.

<sup>1</sup> [Using Safety Plans | Suicide Safety Plan | Papyrus UK](#)

8.2 It is likely that a student will present at the Wellbeing Centre in the first instance. Young people with mental health problems typically visit the Wellbeing Centre more than their peers, often presenting with a physical concern. This gives the medical team a key role in identifying mental health issues early. If a student confides in a member of the school medical team, then they should be encouraged to speak to their tutor or Head of Year. After nursing assessment, any immediate concern for a student's mental health would be reported to the Deputy Head (Pastoral)/DSL. **Confidentiality will be maintained within the boundaries of safeguarding the student.** Gillick competence will also be considered. The Deputy Head (Pastoral)/DSL may decide to share relevant information with certain colleagues on a need-to-know basis. Parents should be involved wherever possible, although the student's wishes should always be taken into account.

8.3 **Parents must disclose to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Deputy Head (Safeguarding & Inclusion) DSL any known mental health problem or any concerns they may have about a student's mental health or emotional wellbeing.** This includes any changes in family circumstances that may impact the student's wellbeing.

## **9 Records and reporting**

9.1 Medical Centre retains medical information in ISAMs medical module. CPOMS contains safeguarding and pastoral records.

9.2 All staff are trained to record incidents regarding the mental health and wellbeing of students on CPOMS. CPOMS is also used to track and monitor trends and patterns in student health and to spot emerging concerns.

9.3 Vulnerable Child Log where students are rag rated (red, amber, green) and all safeguarding files are kept. These categories on CPOMS are only available to the DSL team and there is a weekly meeting to discuss all cases and assess levels of concern and any necessary actions.

## **10 Mental Health First Aid**

10.1 A qualified youth mental health first aider is someone who has undertaken a 12-hour training module approved by Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England and holds a valid certificate of competence. Mental Health First Aid is used in over 16 countries worldwide and was introduced into England by the National Institute for Mental Health England (NIMHE) in 2007 (NIMHE has been disbanded and a new body, the National Mental Health Development Unit was launched in 2009).

10.2 There are a number of qualified mental health first aiders who can provide emergency assistance, if necessary, in addition to the Wellbeing Team and Pastoral systems. This log is kept by the Deputy Head (Pastoral)'s P.A.

10.3 All staff have a duty of care towards the students and should respond accordingly when first aid situations arise. New staff are briefed about the school's Wellbeing Centre and where to find information and help. All staff are reminded regularly about the specific medical and emotional needs of students within the school community. They are asked to familiarise themselves with the serious medical conditions poster, which details those students with medical needs that require specific action to support their mental/emotional wellbeing.

## **11 Staffing of the Wellbeing Centre**

11.1 The School has employed two nurses, and at least one will be in the medical centre during normal working hours, 8.30am to 4.00pm, Monday to Friday during term time. If both nurses are absent, adequate first aid cover is put in place. If a nurse is on a long-term absence, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will organise for a replacement/agency nurse to be available.

11.2 Details of the availability of the counsellors is available from the Wellbeing Centre.

- 11.3 Students are usually given about eight sessions with the counsellor/coach. After this time a referral may be made to an appropriate external provider, and an in-school care plan will be agreed to support the student within the school environment. Any further sessions with the school counsellor are agreed at the discretion of the Deputy Head (Pastoral)/DSL.
- 11.4 Parental permission is not sought for access to counselling provision; the counsellors use the Gillick competency guidelines<sup>2</sup>.

## **12 Absence from school**

- 12.1 If a student is absent from school for any length of time, then appropriate arrangements will be made to provide study material. This may be in discussion with any medical professionals who may be treating a student.
- 12.2 If the school considers that the presence of a student in school is having a detrimental effect on the wellbeing and safety of other members of the community or that a student's mental health concern cannot be managed effectively and safely within the school, the High Mistress reserves the right to request that parents withdraw their daughter temporarily until appropriate reassurances have been met.

## **13 Reintegration to school**

- 13.1 Should a student require some time out of school, the school will be fully supportive of this, and every step will be taken in order to ensure a smooth reintegration back into school when they are ready.
- 13.2 The Deputy Head (Pastoral)/DSL will work alongside the Deputy Head (Academic), the Head of Year (HoY), the Head of Section, the school medical team, the student and their parents to draw up an appropriate care plan. The student should have as much ownership as possible with regard to the support provided in school so that they feel they have control over the situation. If a phased return to school is deemed appropriate, this will be agreed with the parents.
- 13.3 The school will consider whether the student will benefit from being identified as having a special educational need or disability (SEND) and may work alongside the Head of Learning Support where special provision might be required.
- 13.4 If a significant period of time has elapsed where a student's return to school might not be considered to be in their best interests, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will liaise with the student's parents, in consultation with the High Mistress and on a case-by-case basis, to support an application to another educational establishment.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/legal-definition-child-rights-law/gillick-competency-fraser-guidelines/>  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/consent-to-treatment/children/>

## Appendix 1

### Further Reading and Useful Links

HM Government (2011), *No Health Without Mental Health*, Department of Health

Resources targeted at young people: <https://reading-well.org.uk/books/books-on-prescription/young-people-mental-health>

#### **Websites**

Mind: <http://www.mind.org.uk/>

NHS: [Mental health - NHS](#)

Mental Health Foundation: <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

Stem4: <http://www.stem4.org.uk/>

Royal College of Psychiatrists: <https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mental-health/parents-and-young-people>

Eating Disorders Support: <https://www.eatingdisorderssupport.co.uk/home>

Beat Eating Disorders: <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>

Anorexia Bulimia Care: [Anorexia and Bulimia Care - Association of Mental Health Providers](#)

Anna Freud - self-harm: [Child in Mind: why do some people self-harm? by Anna Freud NCCF \(soundcloud.com\)](#)

Harmless: <http://www.harmless.org.uk/>

National Self Harm Network: <http://www.nshn.co.uk/>

Youth wellbeing directory: <https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/youth-wellbeing/>

#### **Useful free apps for help with well being**

##### **Stay Alive**

Stay alive is a free suicide prevention app that helps its users to stay safe from acting on their thoughts of suicide. Downloading this app means that the help and information someone may need when managing thoughts of suicide is easily accessible, helping them to stay safe.

##### **Calm Harm**

This app can be used to help the user manage urges to self-harm. It's a private app and can be password protected. The help and advice provide suggestions of 5-15-minute categorised activities that can help the user 'ride the wave' of an urge to self-harm.

##### **Talk life**

Talk Life is a free online peer-to-peer support network for those battling with mental health issues.

##### **Headspace**

This app provides mindfulness activities and sleep tips, good health ideas and resilience strategies.



## **Further useful contacts**

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Papyrus – HOPEline UK</b>                | <p>HOPElineUK offers support and advice:<br/>         To children and young people under the age of 35 having thoughts of suicide<br/>         To anyone who is concerned about a child or young person<br/>         Call: 0800 068 41 41<br/> <a href="#">Papyrus UK Suicide Prevention   Prevention of Young Suicide</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>National Suicide Prevention Alliance</b> | <p><a href="http://nspa.org.uk">http://nspa.org.uk</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Support after Suicide Partnership</b>    | <p><a href="http://supportaftersuicide.org.uk">http://supportaftersuicide.org.uk</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Child Bereavement UK</b>                 | <p>Child Bereavement UK provides support to families grieving the loss of a child, and advice for professionals working with bereaved families</p> <p>Phone: 0800 0288840</p> <p><a href="#">Child Bereavement UK</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Crisis / Mental Health Crisis</b>        | <p><a href="#">Mental health services</a></p> <p>24-hour phone line: 0800 328 4444</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>ChildLine</b>                            | <p>Phone: 0800 11 11</p> <p>Some young people have reported that calls from an 02 network aren't connecting to Childline. If you have an 02 mobile and need to speak to Childline, please dial 116 111 or chat to them online whilst 02 work hard to fix the problem.</p> <p>Counselling chat <a href="https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/">https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/</a></p> <p>Contacting Childline <a href="#">Contacting Childline   Childline</a></p> |
| <b>Samaritans</b>                           | <p>Phone: <b>0808 168 2528</b></p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a></p> <p><a href="#">Step by Step   Samaritans</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Young Minds</b>                          | <p>Young Mind offers advice and support to parents worried about their children's emotional or mental wellbeing</p> <p><a href="http://www.youngminds.org.uk">www.youngminds.org.uk</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Emergency Services</b>                   | <p>999</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

|                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinic</b> | <p>Hammersmith &amp; Fulham CAMHS<br/>48 Glenthorne Road, W6 0LS<br/>Phone: 020 8483 1979</p> <p>Kensington and Chelsea CAMHS<br/>B Beatrice Pl, Kensington, London W8 5LP<br/><b>Phone:</b> <u>020 3317 3599</u></p> <p>Ealing CAMHS<br/>1 Armstrong Way UB2 4SA<br/>Phone: 020 8354 8160</p> <p>Hounslow CAMHS<br/>Heart of Hounslow Centre for Health<br/>92 Bath Road TW3 3EL<br/>Phone: 020 8483 2050</p> <p>Harrow CAMHS<br/>Ash Tree Clinic<br/>322 - 326 Northolt Road<br/>South Harrow<br/>Middlesex<br/>HA2 8EQ<br/>Telephone:<br/><u>020 8869 4500</u></p> |
| <b>Other resources</b>                           | <p>Very Well Mind <a href="http://www.verywellmind.com">www.verywellmind.com</a></p> <p>American Foundation for Suicide Prevention <a href="https://afsp.org/">https://afsp.org/</a></p> <p>The <a href="#">student</a> and <a href="#">staff portals</a> also have extensive resources for mental well-being.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |