

Positive Mental Health policy

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 Fortismere, we aim to 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.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom in the UK, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

Scope and links to other policies

This document describes Fortismere'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 the Safeguarding Policy and student care plans 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 or disability.

This policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- 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

Staff -their roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

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 students with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. Staff will receive regular training and information to support them to carry out their role.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems; such a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem,

communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

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

- Designated child protection / safeguarding officer
- Mental health lead Director of Learning: Vulnerable Groups
- Welfare Lead (admin)
- Heads of Colleges
- CPD lead (Assistant Headteacher T&L)
- Head of RS/Wellbeing/Philosophy and Classics

A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health

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

This encompasses 7 aspects

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

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues.

Supporting students' positive mental health

We believe we have a key role in promoting students positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including;

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 Well-being curriculum which delivers PSHE. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're 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. 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.

Pupil-led activities

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health
- Student ambassadors
- Peer mentoring
- 6th form associations

Transition programmes

- Transition Programme to secondary schools which includes all Year 6 students, to support a smooth transition to secondary school, including obtaining detailed feedback from Primary School teachers about every student. We visit all of our local schools and request feedback from those schools not in the local area.
- Careers guidance and KS4 academic support to support KS3-KS4 transition
- Transition programme from Key Stage 4 and beyond

Class activities

- Positive mental health promotion in classes, specifically; well-being, PE, RS, Sociology
- Mindfulness sessions for students
- Mental health teaching programmes

Whole school

- Throughout the year positive mental health is discussed and promoted through Heads of college and tutors
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school and outside the school
- Place 2 talk self-referral is available on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays

Small group activities

- Nurture groups
- Small group withdrawals e.g aspirations group
- Teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Through well-being we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help students to be more resilient, understand about mental health and help reduce the stigma of mental health problems.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Lead and recorded. We then implement our assessment system which is based on levels of need to ensure that students get the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

| Need The level of need is based on discussions at the regular Inclusion meetings/panel with key members of staff | Evidence-based Intervention and Support -the kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and students <i>For example</i> | Monitoring |
|--|--|---|
| Highest need | CAMHS-assessment, 1:1 or family support or treatment, consultation with school staff and other agencies School counsellor-1:1 support External agency support such as Place2be that provides 1:1 support and group work Other interventions eg art therapy If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a statutory education, health and care assessment is required, we refer to the SEND policy and SEN School Information Report. | All students needing targeted individualised support will go through Inclusion panel which will assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The needs of the students • How the student will be supported • Actions to provide that support • Any special requirements |
| Some need | Access to in school nurse, learning mentors, school counsellors, educational psychologist, 1:1 intervention, small group intervention, | |
| Low need | General support Eg school nurse drop in, class teacher/TA, form tutor | |

Students are informed that the mental health Lead is available when a student is dissatisfied with the level of care and support.

Support for Parents

On first entry to the school, our parent's meeting includes a discussion on the importance of positive mental health for learning. We ask parents to inform us of any mental health needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing, based on a list of risk factors pertaining to the child or family (see appendix 1). It is very helpful if parents and carers can share information with the school so that we can better support their child.

We refer parents to local groups and activities for families with children who are experiencing mental health issues. E.g. Parents in Mind
Annual cycle of speakers who share experiences and advice on this and other topics with parents.

Support for friends

We recognise that when a student is experiencing mental health problems it can be challenging for their friends, who often want to help them but are not sure the best thing to do and can also be emotionally affected. In the case of eating disorders and self harm, it is

possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping strategies from each other, and we will consider on a case by case basis what support might be appropriate including one to one and group support.

We will involve the student who is suffering and their parents and consider what is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told, how they can best support, things they should avoid doing/saying which may inadvertently cause upset and warning signs that their friend needs help

We will also make information available about where and how to access information and support for themselves and healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling.

Support for students after inpatient treatment

We recognise that some students will need ongoing support and the Mental Health Lead will meet with students on a regular basis. We are careful not to “label” students.

We have a duty of care to support students and will seek advice from medical staff and mental health professionals on the best way to support students. We will carry out a risk assessment and produce a care plan to support students to re-integrate successfully back to school.

When a child leaves an inpatient provision and is transitioning back to school we discuss what needs to happen so the transition is smooth and positive

Working with specialist services to get swift access to the right specialist support and treatment

In some case a student’s mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders.

We have access to a range of specialist services and during the support will have regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the students’ Individual Care Plan.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Lead following the assessment process and in consultation with the student and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the student and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the student’s specific needs.

| Specialist Service | Referral process |
|--|--|
| Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) | Accessed through school, GP or self-referral |
| School Counsellor | Accessed through the Inclusion Panel |
| Place2be | Accessed through the Inclusion Panel |
| Educational Psychologist | Accessed through the Inclusion Panel |

Supporting and training staff

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in students and know what to do and where to get help (see Appendix 3). All teaching and support staff have completed the national Mental Health First Aid training and have annual updates.

Those staff with a specific responsibility have more specialised training and where possible access to supervision from mental health professionals

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing, we have recently had whole school Inset on staff well-being. Staff have access to mindfulness, Place 2 talk and coaching.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school office. All mental health professionals are given a copy before they begin working with the school as well as external agencies involved in our mental health work.

The policy is monitored at an annual review meeting led by the Mental Health Lead and involves staff with a responsibility for mental health, including specialist services supporting the school and governors.

Appendix 1 Protective and Risk factors (adapted from *Mental Health and Behaviour DfE March 2016*)

| | Risk Factors | Protective Factors |
|---------------|--|---|
| In the Child | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic influences • Specific development delay • Communication difficulties • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem • SEND | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being female (in younger children) • Secure attachment experience • Outgoing temperament as an infant • Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour • Problem solving skills and a positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect |
| In the Family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships • Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs • Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord |

| | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental psychiatric illness • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship | |
| In the School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Negative peer influences • Peer pressure • Poor student to teacher relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • ‘Open door’ policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences |
| In the Community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Other significant life events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider supportive network • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities |

Policy date: March 2018

Reviewed by Governors’ Curriculum Committee: 28 March 2018