



HILLSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Mental Health Policy

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Last reviewed on: September 2023
Next review due by: September 2024

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Support the wellbeing of all staff & pupils to avoid negative impacts on their mental and physical health.
- Provide a supportive work environment for all staff & pupils.
- Acknowledge the needs of staff, and how these change over time.
- Allow staff to balance their working lives with their personal needs and responsibilities.
- Help staff with any specific wellbeing issues they experience.
- To offer support to parents/carers/families.
- Ensure that staff understand their role in working towards the above aims.

2. Promoting well-being at all times

At Hillstone we want our children to Be ready, Be respectful and Be safe. For this to be possible first our staff must feel the same way.

2.1 Role of all staff

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff
- Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- Follow the school's policy on out-of-school hours working, including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

2.2 Role of line managers

Line managers are expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern

- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that led to their resignation

2.3 Role of senior staff

If you have any concerns regarding mental health & well-being please arrange a meeting with Gemma Gibbon. She will then support you with an action plan moving forward.

Senior staff are expected to:

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up-to-date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes are made
- Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school
- Establish a clear policy on out-of-school hours working, including on when it is and isn't reasonable for staff to respond to communications, and provide clear guidance to all
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated

- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services, and make sure that there are clear routes in place to escalate a concern in order to access further support
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections

2.4 Role of the trustee board

The trustee board is expected to:

- Make sure the school is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the headteacher
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing
- Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly in regards to workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

3. Managing specific wellbeing issues

Hillstone will support and discuss options with any staff that raise wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at school or in their personal lives.

Where possible, support will be given by line managers or senior staff. This could be through:

- Giving staff time to deal with a personal crisis.
- Arranging external support, such as counselling or occupational health services
- Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified
- Reassessing their workload and deciding what tasks to prioritise
- Staff can request a 'Staff mental health & well-being record' to record their concerns.

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.

4. Supporting children's mental health and well-being

- All staff to promote a ready, respectful, and safe environment.
- All staff to ensure that they teach Hillstone life skills lessons according to the timetable and lesson plans provided by the lead – Danielle Bridges.
- All staff to monitor the mental health and well-being of the children in their class.
- All staff to share concerns with the mental health lead.
- Mental health lead to engage with the child and families to ensure the right support is given at the right time – this can be internal or external support.
- Mental health lead to make the appropriate external referrals to meet the child's or family's needs.
- Mental health lead to sign post/host/engage events for parents to support their personal mental health and well-being.

5. Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of sources of support within school, in the local community and nationally. Via the school website and on a personal basis if necessary.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will 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?

6. Early warning signs

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Changes in activity and mood
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- 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

- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Lowering of academic achievement

7. Managing and responding to concerns raised

It is important that staff remain calm, supportive and non-judgemental to students who disclose a concern about themselves or another student. We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality and if it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, staff should be clear with students that their concern will be shared with the relevant staff member. 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?'.

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMs, and if there is a fear for the immediate safety or wellbeing of the young person, an immediate referral should be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Parents/carers must always be informed if;

- A child has self-injured or disclosed that they have considered self-injuring
- A child suggests or expresses they are having suicidal thoughts or have attempted suicide
- A child discloses disordered eating behaviours
- If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but a Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed immediately.

8. Supporting parents/carers mental health and well-being

The school will support parents/carers as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and always offering our support. Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach.

To support parents/carers we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school
- Share and allow parents/carers to access further support

- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child
- Give parents/carers guidance about how they can support their child's/children's positive mental health
- Ensure this policy is easily accessible to parents/carers on the school website

Ensure that each meeting has 'next steps' discussed and a brief record of the meeting to be recorded on CPOMs.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed year academic year by Gemma Gibbon. At every review, it will be approved by Head Teacher (Jason King) and the full trustee board.

10. Links with other Hillstone Primary school policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Keeping children safe in education
- Hillstone life skills policy

Appendix A: Support Services

Below is a list of national and local support services or charities that might be accessed by students or their families. Often there is a range of charities and other local services that can be accessed freely or at very low cost. There may be pockets of knowledge on such topics amongst staff and parents. It is well worth going to the effort of trying to gather this information in your policy so that it is easy to access centrally when most needed.

Local Services – Birmingham

- The Waiting Room – A directory for wellbeing services across Birmingham – visit the-waitingroom.org/
- Forward Thinking Birmingham – Birmingham’s child and adolescent mental health services - call 0300 300 0099 or visit [Home | Forward Thinking Birmingham](#)
- PAUSE – Drop-in face to face sessions with no need to book for young people and for parents and carers who are concerned about their child’s wellbeing. Register by calling 020 784 14470 or visiting [Pause hubs | Forward Thinking Birmingham](#)
- Solar – Birmingham and Solihull NHS Mental Health Service – call 0121 301 2750 or visit [Solar - Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust \(bsmhft.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Birmingham Mind – A branch of the charity MIND – call 0800 915 9292 or visit [Home - Birmingham Mind](#)
- Cherished – A charity which provides attachment-focussed and trauma-responsive support for children – call 0121 389 8244 or visit cherisheduk.org
- Beacon Family Services – A charity which provides a wide range of services to support families with a wide range of issues including wellbeing - call 0121 270 0590 or visit www.beaconservices.org.uk

National Services for Advice and General Support

- NHS Every Mind Matters – For self-care tips and advice on how to manage wellbeing - visit Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
- YOUNG MINDS provides information and advice so no young person feels alone with their mental health - call 0808 802 5544 or visit www.youngminds.org.uk
- NSPCC – the UK's leading charity, preventing abuse and helping recovery – visit www.nspcc.org.uk
- Anna Freud – Advice and guidance for parents and carers of children experiencing poor mental health or wellbeing For families | Anna Freud
- Clic Parenting Hub – A group helping parents and carers access mental health support for their children – visit Clic - Free online community supporting everyone with their mental health (clic-uk.org)

National Support Services for Young People

- Childline – Offers support to any young person under the age of 19 - call 0800 1111 or visit www.childline.org.uk
- The MIX for under 25s – call 0808 808 4994 or visit Get Support - The Mix
- SHOUT – the UK's 24/7 crisis text service for young people for mental health – text SHOUT 85258 or visit giveusashout.org
- KOOTH – online mental health community for young people - visit Home - Kooth

