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Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community. (World Health Organisation).

1. Policy Statement

We are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students and staff. We aim to promote positive mental health and pursue this using whole school universal approaches and more targeted approaches for those that need them. We know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support to help cope with them. We aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health and to develop and implement practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures, in order to promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health. For any case that requires specialist or long-term, ongoing intervention we will signpost and refer to mental health and medical professionals.

This policy outlines our approach to mental health and wellbeing and is intended as guidance for all staff including teachers, non-teaching staff and Governors. The school recognises that poor mental health may be both a safeguarding concern in its own right and an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect, exploitation or other forms of harm.

2. Aims

- To promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all students and staff
- To raise awareness amongst staff and students about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms
- To foster an open culture where students and staff feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries
- To enable staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in students
- To support any student that needs it, their peers and their parents/carers

3. 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 PSHE curriculum and also delivered as part of our tutor and assembly programme.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the age and needs of the cohort, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy. There is also a focus on developing resilience and the confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

The Magna Carta School ensures it teaches mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

4. Roles and responsibilities

In addition to developing positive and supportive relationships with students, staff have the following responsibilities:

All Staff	• Promote positive mental health and wellbeing through daily interactions • Be alert to signs of emotional distress, mental ill health or emerging concerns • Listen to students in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental manner • Record and report concerns promptly in accordance with safeguarding procedures • Contribute to appropriate support and risk management plans where required • Promote a culture where seeking help is encouraged and stigma is challenged
Leaders and pastoral staff	• Undertake the responsibilities outlined above

	• Coordinate early intervention and targeted support for pupils requiring additional assistance • Oversee the implementation and quality of the school's mental health and wellbeing provision • Liaise with parents/carers and external agencies where appropriate • Monitor trends, emerging concerns and patterns of need • Support staff in responding effectively to mental health concerns • Contribute to risk assessments and support plans where necessary
Designated Safeguarding Lead	• Ensure that mental health concerns are considered within the school's safeguarding framework • Provide advice and support where there are concerns that a pupil may be at risk of harm • Make referrals to Children's Services, Early Help, health services and other agencies where appropriate • Oversee safeguarding responses to self-harm, suicidal ideation and high-risk concerns • Work closely with the Mental Health Support Team and other professionals to coordinate support • • Ensure staff understand safeguarding procedures relating to mental health concerns
Local Governing Council	• Monitor the effectiveness of the school's mental health and wellbeing provision • Receive appropriate information regarding pupil and staff wellbeing trends • Ensure that appropriate policies, systems and resources are in place • Support a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing • • Hold school leaders to account for the implementation of this policy

5. Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of the support that is available in our school and locally for mental health. This includes how to access further support, both inside and outside of school hours.

Relevant sources of support are displayed in communal areas in school and sources of support are regularly highlighted to students within relevant parts of the curriculum or via tutor time and assemblies.

There is also a list of links on the Edulink Noticeboard to a variety of useful external websites for mental health and wellbeing support. Additionally, there is a QR code on the school website that students can use to complete a form requesting support.

6. Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All of our staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems. This means that they will be able to offer help and support to students who need it, when they need it. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Pastoral and/or Safeguarding Teams.

Mental health concerns do not automatically indicate a safeguarding issue. However, they may become a safeguarding concern where there is a risk of significant harm to the student or others, or where the concern may indicate underlying abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating and/or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement or attitude towards education
- 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
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Persistent absence, severe absence or emotionally based school avoidance.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional professional development will be supported where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more students.

7. Managing disclosures and confidentiality

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, should this happen staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner. Staff will then follow the guidance in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

8. Referring Concerns

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should log this on CPOMS and where necessary complete a referral form and send it to dsl@mcs-unity.co.uk. Students can self-refer to the wellbeing service or they can speak to a member of pastoral staff who can make a referral for them.

If a child presents with a medical emergency then relevant school procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

Any referral will be followed up in line with this and the school's [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)

9. Whole School Approach

We work in partnership with our local Mental Health Support Team, adopting a whole school approach towards the mental health of our students and staff. This means working parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary.

The school recognises the strong relationship between special educational needs and mental health and wellbeing. Support will be coordinated, where appropriate, with SEND provision and external professionals. The school recognises and values neurodiversity and aims to create an environment where neurodivergent pupils can flourish and access appropriate support when required.

Working with Parents and Carers

In order to support parents with their child's positive mental health and wellbeing we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- 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 this policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our information evenings
- Keep parents informed about any mental health topics their children are learning within the PSHE curriculum

Where we identify that a child is in need of external specialist assessment and/or targeted support, we will direct parents to take the appropriate action e.g. urgent GP appointment, CAMHS Crisis Line 0800 915 4644 or accessing the [Mindworks](#) website.

10. Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our students' emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- The school nurse
- Mindworks Surrey (CAMHS)
- Eikon (or other Level 3 providers)
- Youth Counselling services
- The Mental health Support Team
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) trained Teaching Assistants and Pastoral Staff

11. Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order

to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in a one-to-one or group settings. These sessions will be guided by the student, but they will discuss how peers can help, how peers can access support themselves, and healthy ways of coping with any emotions they might be feeling.

12. Children at risk of harming themselves

For a student to be in school, they must be well enough (low enough risk) that they are able to participate in lessons and can be unsupervised at break/lunch/going to the toilets. If the student is considered to be at risk of harming themselves then they need to be referred to a medical professional ([Mindworks](#) Surrey (CAMHS), GP or A&E) by their parents. In case of an emergency, the usual procedure will be taken by school to ensure that the child is safe and is taken to A&E if necessary.

13. Risk Assessments

For students causing concern or who receive a medical diagnosis pertaining to their mental health that indicates a level of extra care required, a highlighted level of risk or a personal wellbeing plan will be put in place. This will be drawn up with involvement of the student, the parents and relevant health professionals and can include:

- Details of a student's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The support the school can and can't provide

Where risks cannot currently be managed safely within the school environment, the school will work with parents/carers, health professionals and relevant agencies to determine appropriate next steps and support arrangements.

14. Trips

Where students have a risk assessment or wellbeing plan in place to be in school, an additional risk assessment will be completed to consider whether the risk can be managed to enable that student to attend the trip.

If the risk is too high and we cannot mitigate it, the school will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to determine whether reasonable adjustments or alternative arrangements can be made.

15. Evaluation

The Wellbeing and Mental Health provision at The Magna Carta School will be reviewed annually via surveys, the Student Voice, review of the curriculum and staff training needs.

16. Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health

At The Magna Carta School, we recognise that our staff are our most important resource and are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring, purposeful learning community.

Staff are encouraged to seek support at an early stage and may access wellbeing support through their line manager, senior leaders, occupational health services, employee assistance programmes or external professional services where appropriate.

The school is committed to maintaining a professional environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination and inappropriate behaviour.