



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

Policy Statement

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)

“Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children by developing whole school approaches tailored to their particular needs, as well as considering the needs of individual pupils.” Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DFE, November 2018).

“True education goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge. It has moral and ethical purpose and, for that reason, the development of compassion needs to be included in all educational programmes. This requires education in the values of emotional literacy as the mature way of dealing with difficult emotions while avoiding the harm that they might otherwise cause” (Manifesto for Compassionate Communities, Dr J Abel & L Clarke)

At Nidderdale High School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody’s business and that we all have a role to play.

Our key expectations of all members of our school community are to be:

- Ready
- Respectful
- Safe

At our school we aim to:

- help students to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help students feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- promote positive and respectful relationships.
- promote self-esteem
- help students to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks
- support staff with workload and emotional health

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting good mental health as part of school life
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Promoting restorative conversations as part of the Behaviour Policy
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements

- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Providing access to appropriate support that meets student and staff needs

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties

Key Staff

All staff have a responsibility to promote good mental health and wellbeing with their students and with colleagues. The following staff have specific roles relating to Mental Health and Wellbeing:

Kath Jordan	Headteacher / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Anneliese Walker	Senior Pastoral Officer / Designated Safeguarding Lead / Mental Health First Aider
Jenny Kay	Director of Learning, Wellbeing / Mental Health First Aider
Jan Ashton	KS4 Learning Manager / Youth Mental Health First Aider
Sarah Beard	KS3 Pastoral Officer / Youth Mental Health First Aider
Jenn Blunstone	SENCO
Isabel Peel	Safeguarding Governor and Mental Health Governor

Links to other policies

This policy is also linked to:

- Attendance
- Anti Bullying
- Behaviour
- Curriculum
- Health Education
- Safeguarding
- Special Educational Needs

Mental Health Education and Flourish

The Flourish Programme is a curriculum that focuses on understanding and developing our emotional wellbeing and mental strength in order to Flourish, delivered as part of the PSHE curriculum. A big part of the curriculum is for students to journal as part of their self-reflection. Each student will be issued with an exercise book but students can use their own book if they wish to. The journal is theirs and will not be taken in by teachers, all we will do is check that they are being used to record information during PSHE lessons. As part of the Flourish Programme we will suggest different home activities. This is designed to encourage conversations about mental health and can be supported by anyone in the family. It will involve students developing core skills and learning a range of techniques that will empower them with the tools they need to flourish. The content includes a range of theory that will help students understand the mind, learn about themselves and create healthy habits for life. The Flourish Programme encompasses concepts such as growth

mindset, goal setting, self reflection and resilience. Another theory that underpins the Flourish Programme is the Chimp Paradox by Prof. Steve Peters. As students develop their knowledge in PSHE lessons they will then have opportunities to flourish throughout the wider school and during form time on Flourishing Fridays.

Mental Health and Wellbeing as part of the wider Curriculum

The Nidderdale Curriculum extends beyond the knowledge, skills and experiences delivered in lessons to include extra-curricular clubs and activities; opportunities to learn beyond the school through visits, engagement with our own and other communities and the world of work. The curriculum also encompasses pastoral support, mental health support and student leadership opportunities.

Through the delivery of our curriculum we intend to enable and empower all young people to Flourish in a variety of ways including socially and emotionally.

It is intended that our curriculum will enable students to understand themselves; manage themselves; value themselves and others; to experience success; recognise their achievements and maximise their potential.

Through our curriculum we aim to support students to become confident and successful young adults who are:

- Invested in their learning
- Ambitious for the future
- Reflective of their experiences
- Empathic about others
- Resilient and ready for challenge
- Respectful of themselves and others
- Responsible for their actions

Across all subjects in each year group teachers will identify opportunities to support students to become 'Flourishing Citizens'.

Finish with a Flourish

At Nidderdale High School we believe that education is more than classrooms, tests and exams. School is a place to learn, be inspired and develop relationships. We want to put our words into action and create a time and space that is devoted to students' wellbeing and develops a lifelong love of learning.

'Finish with a Flourish' is about giving our students an opportunity to challenge themselves, to be creative and develop lifelong skills through a range of non-standard curriculum activities as a way of enhancing wellbeing and broadening horizons.

Every student in Year 7 to Year 10 will have the opportunity to take part in 3 activities during the school year, 1 per term. There are a wide variety of activities for students to choose from. Some that are more creative, challenging or physically active and some that are very much a mixture of them all.

Finish with a Flourish is timetabled period 5 Wednesday week 2 at the end of the timetable cycle. It gives students the opportunity to work in smaller groups with teaching and non-teaching staff. Often students will have the opportunity to work with a member of staff on an activity that isn't related to a teaching specialism but instead builds relationships through developing common interests.

Supporting students with mental health concerns

Students who are showing signs of mental distress do not always express problems directly or ask for help, even where there are clear signs that they are having difficulties and could be due to a number of reasons. Students may still feel stigma around mental health problems, or may be concerned about the consequences of telling someone. They may be unaware that they have a problem, or be aware but feel that they have to cope with it on their own.

Adolescence can be a difficult developmental time and this period of change can result in the gradual onset of mental illness. It is important that warning signs are recognised and an appropriate, supportive response is put in place as soon as possible. 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 and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with a member of the Pastoral Team.

Possible warning signs include:

- The student has told you there is a problem, for example, they have been feeling low or anxious recently
- Significant changes in the student's appearance, for example: weight loss/gain, decline in personal hygiene, noticeable signs of self-harm
- Changes in mood, for example: mood is very up and down, miserable, tired, withdrawn
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating patterns or sleeping habits
- Concerns expressed from friends, family, other staff members
- Changes in behaviour, academic achievement, extracurricular activity engagement, or among peers. For example, doing too much work, not socialising as much as usual, withdrawn, not attending school, being late or, failure to meet deadlines
- Increased isolation from friends, family.
- 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
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Support for Students in school

Students are taught about the importance of good mental health and wellbeing in PSHE and Flourish sessions.

The school's Behaviour Policy is rooted in building positive relationships between staff and students and between peers. It places emphasis on recognising the positives, providing 'notes for improvement', giving young people choices and taking a restorative approach when relationships breakdown.

Staff are encouraged to provide a note for improvement on the school's Classcharts system, when a young person has made a poor choice but has subsequently been able to self-regulate or make a positive choice after being given support to change their behaviour. The school does not use formal detention but instead requires students to take part in conversations reflecting on their choices and the impact these choices have had on others and on themselves. They are then given the opportunity to identify alternative ways of responding to a similar issue in future. These conversations may take place during social time with a class teacher, a member of the pastoral team or a member of SLT.

Staff and students are supported in taking part in restorative conversations to rebuild relationships.

All students are able to access the following support in school:

- Access to information about wellbeing services
- Pastoral support from Key Stage Learning Managers, or Pastoral Officers
- Restorative conversations
- Individual mentoring
- Peer support
- Anger management
- My plan
- 1:1 support through the Outdoor Learning programme
- Pastoral support plan with a named key worker
- Risk management or safety plan

Support for Parents

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 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 our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through Flourish updates
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE / Flourish and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

Signposting students to other services

The school works with a wide range of other agencies and sources of support. Students and parents requiring additional support may be signposted to the following services:

- Mental Health First Aiders in school
- CAMHS and CAMHS Crisis
- GP with school referral form
- Compass Buzz
- BUZZ US Text Messaging Service
- Compass Reach
- The Heathy Child Team through Early Help
- JustB Counselling
- Wellspring Counselling Service
- Social Care & Emergency Duty Team contact details 01609 780780
- North Yorkshire out of hours mental health advice line: 0333 0000309
- North Yorkshire Go-To Website for local health and wellbeing advice
- Relateen
- MESMAC Support, Guidance and Counselling
- IDAS
- Horizons
- BEAT
- Kooth Counselling
- Mental Health related websites

- Recovery College Online Resource

Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for Staff

Nidderdale High School is committed to supporting good mental and emotional health within the staff team. The school's Leadership Team and Governors are mindful of staff workload and wellbeing when planning the school's annual calendar, reviewing policies and writing the annual development plan.

The school is part of the Health Assured Employee Assistance Programme, giving all staff free access to support and advice on a range of issues including health and wellbeing. Through Line Management and Appraisal' all staff are given regular opportunities to discuss any issues causing concern and to identify solutions.

NYHR Policies including Attendance Management, Resolving Issues at Work and Stress Risk Assessments provide a supportive structure for identifying potential concerns with mental health and wellbeing and offer a framework for resolving any issues.

One INSET day each year is designated as a Wellbeing Day, giving staff the opportunity to take part in activities designed to promote good physical and mental health. This day also includes updates to training on a range of mental health and wellbeing topics relating to students and / or adult mental health.

Approved by the Governing Board: 22/5/23

Next Review: May 2025