HIGHFIELD LITTLEPORT ACADEMY
An Active Learning Trust School

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy

When did we adopt this strategy? Spring Term 2024

When was this strategy last reviewed? Spring Term 2024

When do we need to next review this strategy? Spring Term 2025

Named mental health lead: Tilly Newbury

Mental Health Definition

We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health. Our mental health is how we're feeling inside, or how we are emotionally. Our mental health impacts how we think, feel, react and behave.

Our Vision

At Highfield Littleport Academy, we believe that;

- emotional wellbeing and mental health is of central importance and fundamental to our lives
- there shouldn't be fear or stigma around mental health
- that everybody within our school community should have an understanding and awareness of mental health
- everyone is entitled to the support that they need so that they can become the best, healthiest version of themselves
- having a mentally healthy community is about working together through challenges and sharing celebrations ensuring everyone feels supported, heard, accepted, valued and empowered
- individuals thrive in a mentally healthy environment and this is what we want to create for our school community

Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health

Emotional wellbeing is a continuum and we will all experience episodes of poor emotional health and wellbeing during our lives. We believe that everyone at Highfield Littleport Academy has a responsibility to promote positive mental health and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. All staff and governors should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils and other staff members with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

Protective and Risk Factors

As outlined in the 2018 Department for Education guidance 'Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools', certain individuals are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others. These risk can relate to the child themselves, to their family, to their community or their life events. We aim to develop protective factors which can help promote resilience. See table below for an overview of risk and protective factors associated with mental health outcomes.

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In the child	- Genetic influences - Low IQ and learning disabilities - Specific developmental delay or neuro-diversity - Communication difficulties - Difficult temperament - Physical illness	- Secure attachment experiences - Outgoing temperament as an infant - Good communication skills - Being a planner and having a belief in control - Humour - A positive attitude

	• Academic failure • Low self-esteem	• Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect
In the family	• 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 • Parental psychiatric illness • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship	• At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long term relationship of the absence of severe discord
In the school	• Bullying including online • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Deviant peer influences • Peer pressure • Peer on peer abuse • Poor pupil to teacher/school staff relationships	• Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct) • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Good pupil to teacher/school staff relationships • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences • Positive friendships • Effective safeguarding and Child Protection policies • An effective early help process • Understand their role in and be part of effective multi-agency working • Appropriate procedures to ensure staff are confident to raise concerns about policies and processes and know they will be dealt with fairly and effectively
In the community	• Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Exploitation, including by criminal gangs and organised crime groups, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation • Other significant life events	• 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

Our Aims

Pupils

Our aim is to enable pupils to;

- feel valued and listened to
- feel safe in school and confident to talk to adults in school
- understand what mental health is and the importance of promoting and valuing positive mental health
- develop a personal toolkit of coping strategies to help them in times of distress or upset
- maintain positive mental health throughout different stages of their lives
- develop protective factors which help to build resilience
- communicate and express emotions
- self-regulate their emotions
- understand that all humans experience a wide range of emotions
- know where and how to seek further support
- identify early signs of mental wellbeing concerns

Staff

Our aim is to enable staff to;

- feel confident identifying and supporting pupils mental health needs
- support one another in the workplace
- develop a non-judgemental attitude towards mental health
- recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing
- feel valued, included, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally
- express their views
- manage their workload and maintain a healthy work-life balance
- build resilience
- be reflective professionals
- effectively communicate about their own wellbeing
- continue learning and developing personally and professionally
- know where and how to seek further support
- identify early signs of mental wellbeing concerns

Parents and Carers

Our aim is to enable parents and carers to;

- feel supportive and valued
- feel part of the Highfield Littleport Academy community
- have opportunities to express their views and feel listened to
- build resilience
- be actively involved in child's education and journey, come to us for support, feel listened to and heard
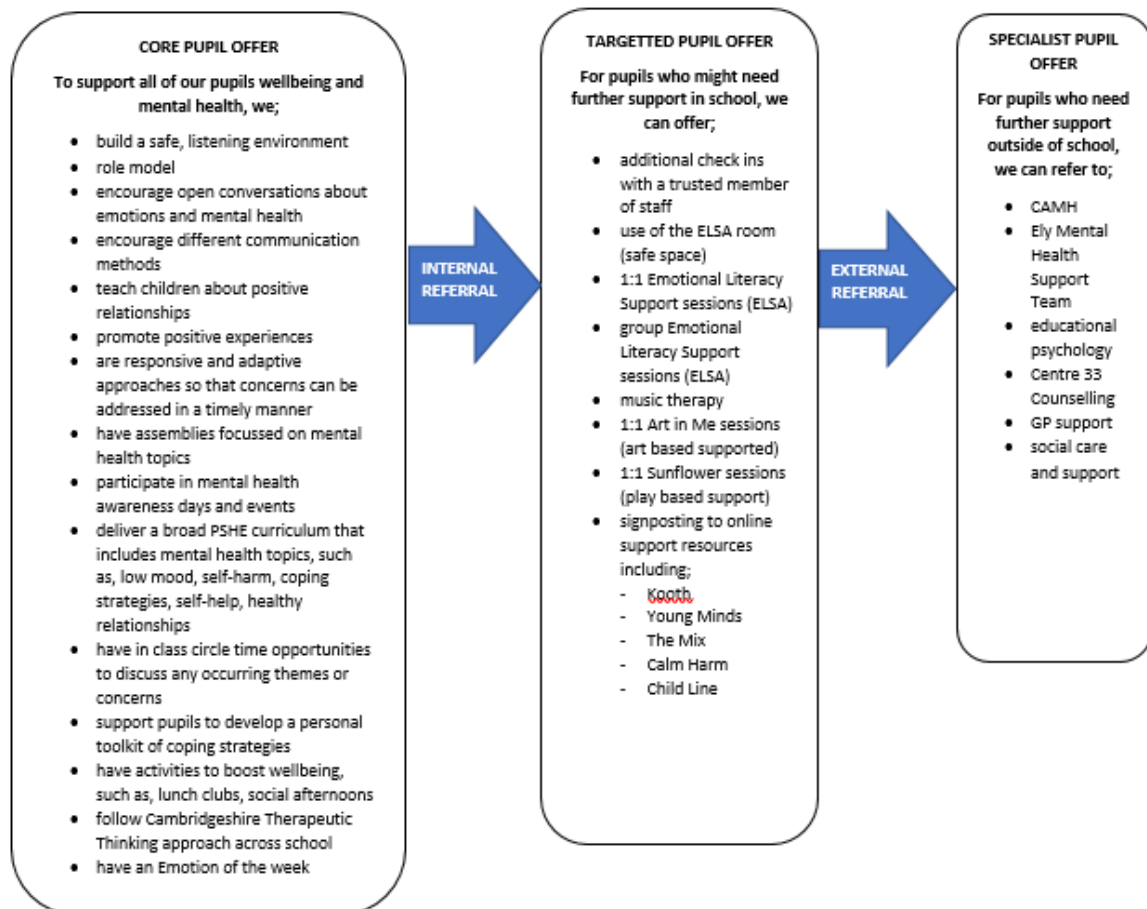
How Do We Support the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of our Whole School Community?

Pupils

Information about the wellbeing and mental health of a pupil is shared with the class teacher and any other professionals supporting the pupil as well as the parent/carer. Information is shared in a timely manner so that next steps can quickly be identified.

The diagram below outlines how we support pupils with their mental health and wellbeing. Support is available at three tiers; core offer, targeted offer and specialist offer.

CORE PUPIL OFFER

To support all of our pupils wellbeing and mental health, we;

- build a safe, listening environment
- role model
- encourage open conversations about emotions and mental health
- encourage different communication methods
- teach children about positive relationships
- promote positive experiences
- are responsive and adaptive approaches so that concerns can be addressed in a timely manner
- have assemblies focussed on mental health topics
- participate in mental health awareness days and events
- deliver a broad PSHE curriculum that includes mental health topics, such as, low mood, self-harm, coping strategies, self-help, healthy relationships
- have in class circle time opportunities to discuss any occurring themes or concerns
- support pupils to develop a personal toolkit of coping strategies
- have activities to boost wellbeing, such as, lunch clubs, social afternoons
- follow Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking approach across school
- have an Emotion of the week

INTERNAL REFERRAL →

TARGETTED PUPIL OFFER

For pupils who might need further support in school, we can offer;

- additional check ins with a trusted member of staff
- use of the ELSA room (safe space)
- 1:1 Emotional Literacy Support sessions (ELSA)
- group Emotional Literacy Support sessions (ELSA)
- music therapy
- 1:1 Art in Me sessions (art based supported)
- 1:1 Sunflower sessions (play based support)
- signposting to online support resources including;
  - Kooth
  - Young Minds
  - The Mix
  - Calm Harm
  - Child Line

EXTERNAL REFERRAL →

SPECIALIST PUPIL OFFER

For pupils who need further support outside of school, we can refer to;

- CAMH
- Ely Mental Health Support Team
- educational psychology
- Centre 33 Counselling
- GP support
- social care and support

Staff

To enable staff at Highfield Littleport Academy to feel mentally healthy and well-prepared to support the mental health of our pupils, we;

- hold termly pupil progress meetings with teachers where any new concerns can be discussed
- review and assess the need for further mental health training on an annual basis
- provide training and support as and when individual concerns and needs are identified
- are committed to promoting staff wellbeing and minimising workload
- value members of staff and acknowledge the important role of all colleagues
- build morale and effective team spirit

- have shared areas that are spaces to relax as well as appropriate work spaces
- provide signposting materials for anyone looking for further support
- invest in an employee assistance programme (Education Support)
- support staff to look after their own wellbeing
- encourage staff to complete wellness action plans when they feel they need further support (using the Mind template)
- have a staff wellbeing team who manage social events and fundraising
- have trained Adult mental health first aiders on site
- Conduct regular surveys to gain feedback

Self-Care for Staff

All adults that work with children have a need to engage in self-care. Good self-care is an effective prevention, guarding against severe or chronic distress. Staff are encouraged to consider their own self-care practices and how they maintain their own wellbeing. This can be discussed with line managers through appraisal meetings or at a drop in. Staff are also offered termly opportunities to attend a reflective group session led by our local Mental Health Support Team.

General Self-Care and Wellbeing Tips

- Honestly assess your wellbeing regularly
- Focus on prevention
- Make time for your wellbeing
- Pay attention to possible warning signs of poor mental health
- Establish and maintain professional connections that offer an opportunity to discuss stressors at work
- Develop realistic and reasonable expectations about work and your capabilities
- Take steps to enhance your job satisfaction
- Ask for help
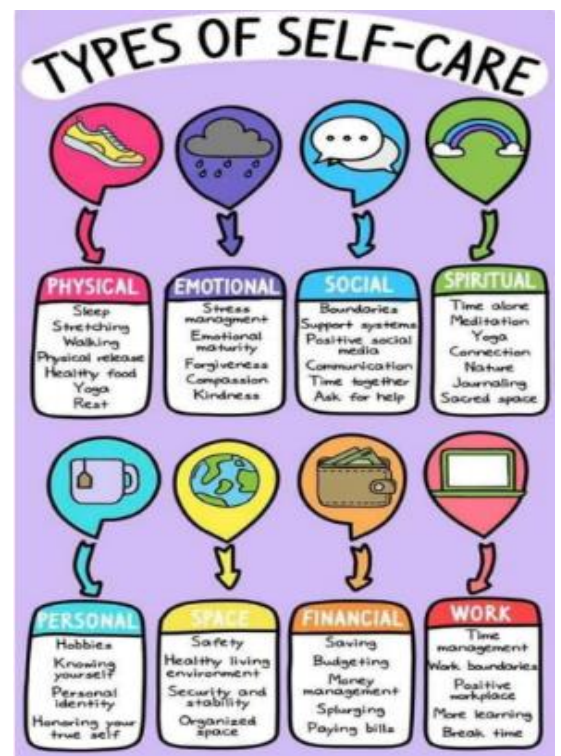
Self-care is very personal and individual. Staff should take responsibility to develop a personal plan. Promoting positive wellbeing and self-care is an ongoing endeavour.

Parents and Carers

To support the mental health and wellbeing of parents and carers, we;

- host coffee mornings with a different focus each time including inviting guest speakers
- invite parents to in-school events and celebrations, such as, Christmas Fair, Sports Day
- ensure parents/carers are involved in child's education journey e.g. EHCP annual review meeting, two parents' evenings a year, pre-admission meeting
- have a family support worker who is a direct contact for parents/carers seeking further support
- provide signposting information for a range of services and events in the local area. These will be shared on Facebook and on Class Dojo.

- use Class Dojo to maintain regular contact between teachers and parents/carers
- share pupil learning and progress on Evidence for Learning
- share mental health and wellbeing information on our weekly newsletter
- ensure parent/carers are valued and feel listened to
- conduct regular surveys to gain feedback