

Testwood School Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Policy



Key Responsibility area:	Phil Ward
Last Review:	January 2024
Next Review:	January 2026

Revision History

Version	Date	Amendments	Initials
2.0	21.10.20	Five appendices added	CSi
2.1	26.01.21	Additions to purpose in light of current climate	CSi
2.2	08.02.21	Personal pronouns removed	JB
2.3	20.2.21	Amendments made	CSi
2.4	8.1.2022	Amendments made	CSi
2.5	8.1.2023	Amendments made	CSi
2.6	10.01.24	Five appendices removed	PW

Introduction

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)

'Members of the Testwood School Community actively value, educate and support Children & Young People (C&YP) and each other on their journey to positive mental health.'

Purpose

The Department for Education recognises that schools and colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their students and students, by developing approaches tailored to the particular needs of their students and students. Taking a coordinated and evidence-informed approach to mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges can also help foster readiness to learn (DfE 2021) At Testwood School we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood (DfE Promoting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-Being). At Testwood School 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, at Testwood School we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures Testwood School can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our **Medical policy** in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue; the **SEND policy** where a student has an identified special educational need and the **Safeguarding Policy** where a student has been identified as possibly being at risk.

Aims

- 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 and staff suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers
- Develop a whole school approach to promote resilience within our young people.

All staff have a responsibility and a role to play in helping to promote students' Mental Health and Emotional Well-being. However, any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should if possible have a discussion with the student. They should then contact the relevant Year Leader or Pastoral Support Worker. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Headteacher. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting matron; first aid staff, parents/cares and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be lead and managed by the individual submitting the form. The criteria required for a CAMHS referral is located with our SEN department.

Individual Health Care Plans

Any student who is receiving regular support from CAMHS should have an IHCP. This should be drawn up in discussion with the student, parents/carers and any relevant health care professionals. This will outline: -

- 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 role the school can play in supporting the student and lead support.

Signposting

Testwood School will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the sources of support within the school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined on the school's website. **There is also a help booklet 'Well-being, through and after COVID' for all staff, parents/carers and students on the website www.testwoodschool.co.uk**

Testwood School will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. 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

Warning Signs

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 Year Leader/Pastoral Support Worker.

Managing Disclosures and Confidentiality

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

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?'

This information should be shared on CPOMS and with the Year Leader and Pastoral Support Worker who will record the information appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Testwood School will be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent/carer. For example, if the student or another student's health, well-being and safety is being put at serious risk.

If this is the case, if a student gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues. The DSL will take responsibility for following safeguarding protocols.

However, for other reasons parents/carers must always be informed and students may choose to tell their parents/carers themselves. If this is the case, the student should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents/carers. We should always give students the option of us informing parents/carers for them or with them.

Working with Parents/Carers

It is imperative that we have the support of parents/carers and therefore communication and contact is vital. We will not only signpost them to other support and guidance for their son/daughter but also share sources of further support aimed specifically at the parents/carers themselves.

Additional support for our parents/carers will also include: -

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on the school website
- Ensure that all parents/carers 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
- Share ideas about how parents/carers can support positive mental health in their children through information evenings and on the website
- Keep parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in school and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home
- Wellbeing through and after COVID booklet

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, it is possible that 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 one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering and their parents/carers with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend should report (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is imperative that there are clear accountability systems in place so that once early identification has been undertaken then support within school or access to specialist support is commenced and tracked on CPOMs.

This will be monitored regularly by the Pastoral Team.

The awareness and understanding of staff will be monitored termly via a survey using google forms.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees and will be reviewed bi-annually.