



Long Crendon School Wellbeing Strategy

World Health Organisation Statement

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises her or his 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.

At Long Crendon School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our community - including staff, pupils, parents and governors. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to poor mental health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health strategies, we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by poor mental health. We work in partnership with parents to meet the mental health needs of all children in order to maintain a holistic approach for every child.

1 Scope

This document describes our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and well-being. It is intended as guidance for all staff and governors. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies in cases where a pupil's mental health overlaps with or is linked to medical issues or where a pupil has an identified special educational need:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting pupils with Medical Needs Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Equalities & Cohesion Policy

2 Aims

The strategy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering with poor mental health and their peers and parents/carers

3 Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, the following staff have a specific relevant remit:

- Sue Stamp - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Anna Bowden - Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Rosanna Deppe - Designated Safeguarding Lead (in Anna Bowden's absence)
- Anna Bowden - Wellbeing Co-ordinator
- Beck Fleming - Deputy Wellbeing Co-ordinator / School Counsellor
- Jo Russell, Jacqs Motion - Paediatric First Aid
- Madeline Poote - SENDCo

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to either the Head Teacher, Wellbeing Co-ordinator or SENDCo. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to one of the DSLs. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting a Paediatric First Aider and contacting the emergency services if necessary. Where a referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by either the Head Teacher or SENDCo.

4 Individual Care/Behaviour Plans

An individual care or behaviour plan may be drawn up for a pupil causing concern or who has received a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. The plan will be drawn up by the Head Teacher and class teacher with the pupil, their parents/carers and relevant health professionals. The plan may include:

- Details of a pupil'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

5 Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity in PSHE lessons to discuss mental health in a safe environment, e.g. circle time, group talks, P4C sessions, etc. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

6 Signposting

At Long Crendon School we are committed to reduce the escalation of wellbeing issues and so have a number of strategies in place to signpost when a pupil may need nurturing in some way.

We will ensure that staff, pupils, parents/carers are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community via our school website and in the Long Crendon School Newsletter.

Every child is asked to nominate an adult in school that they would like as a 'listener', on a termly basis (this adult may or may not change each term) . Every class has a shared list with all members of staff so that everyone knows who a child might like to go to for a quiet chat. Children are encouraged to go to their designated adult with any wellbeing issues, or they can approach a member of the SLT at any time. If a child asks to see a member of the SLT or their designated adult during any break times, staff will let them go and find them.

All classes have a Bubble Box or Book, in which children can record thoughts that they would like to share with their class teacher on an ad hoc basis. These may be a positive or negative thought; the teacher responds to them in a timely fashion and keeps a record of any wellbeing concerns.

As a staff, we pledge to share any concerns we have about a child / children in school in collective meetings, such as the Monday morning diary meeting, Staff meeting, Key Stage meetings, etc. Through relevant discussion, any further action will be decided upon and prioritised accordingly.

On the playground we have volunteers from Year 6 who are Playground Buddies. These buddies are there for any child in school who would like help from an older child, for example if they have difficulties with solving an issue with a friend, or if they are feeling lonely, the buddy can either try to help them or direct them to a relevant adult who can assist.

Within the school we have a designated school counsellor who has taken on many roles within school. A regular nurture group is conducted by the counsellor and a trained Teaching Assistant, to give a selected number of referred children a regular session throughout the academic year to explore mental health and wellbeing. Teachers are involved in discussion about which children are more vulnerable and who would benefit from this group.

Our school counsellor also offers drop-in sessions for children throughout the school who may be in need of a one-off chat about their wellbeing. The children may also be signposted to the counsellor

by a member of staff if they feel that this approach is needed. It may be through these discussions, or through a referral process from the teacher, that the children can also access one to one counselling sessions for a prescribed amount of time, in order to improve their mental health.

Staff are supported by the school counsellor and wellbeing lead, with any issues pertaining to a child's well being. They can offer advice or support if a member of staff needs to talk through an issue.

As a result of some specific needs within one cohort, we have introduced Forest School Explore. This group has been set up to nurture children with very specific mental health needs in a Forest School environment that they have previously responded very well to. It is already the aim that this group will be rolled out for other children in the future and established further.

We will promote relevant sources of support for the children in our school through regular assemblies and the curriculum. These may be in-house assemblies or workshops / assemblies that are sourced from external companies, such as NSPCC, Bucks CC, etc. Children will also be reminded on a regular basis what support we have in school, so that they remember to access them.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available and who is it aimed at
- How to access the help and why
- What is likely to happen as a result of a request for help

7 Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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 the appropriate member of staff in the first instance (e.g. class teacher, Key Stage Leader, DSL, etc.). Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- 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
- Increased lateness or absenteeism from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

8 Managing Disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health, or that of a friend or family member, 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 pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than exploring 'Why?' When documenting a disclosure, staff have all been trained to make sure that they write everything down as it has been said exactly.

All disclosures should be communicated to a member of the SLT - if it is deemed a safeguarding issue, it needs to be recorded on the safeguarding sheets found in the staff room as soon as possible.

9 Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issues of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss with the pupil:

- 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 pupil without telling them first. Ideally we would receive their consent, though there are certain emergency situations when information must be shared immediately with another member of staff and/or parent/carer. Disclosures relating to poor mental health will always be shared with the DSL/Head Teacher so that continuity of care and extra sources for idea and support are provided. The DSL/Head Teacher can also help safeguard the emotional wellbeing of the member of staff working with the young person, so that they do not feel solely responsible for the pupil. Staff should always ensure that they cannot be overheard when sharing information of this nature.

Pupils are encouraged to share information with parents/carers themselves and are normally given 24 hours to do so before the school contacts the parent/carer. Pupils will be given the option of us informing parents/carers for them or with them. If a young person gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents/carers should not be informed but information shared with the DSL immediately.

10 Working with Parents/Carers

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents/carers, we will be sensitive but direct in our approach. Before disclosing to parents/carers we will consider the following questions:

- Is a face to face meeting or telephone communication preferable?
- Does the pupil want to attend the meeting or be present when the phone call takes place
- The aims of the meeting/discussion

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents/carers to learn of issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this, within reason, and give the parent/carer time to reflect. We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets, where possible, to help them understand the information being shared.

Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents/carers can also be helpful too eg parent helplines/forums. We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away, as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and record a summary of the meeting.

When a child is referred to the school counsellor, parents are always informed and consent is requested before any work will take place with their child. Parents/carers are always reminded that the work and discussions with the child in these sessions are confidential, however the school counsellor will contact parents with any concerns if it is felt necessary. The counsellor / client relationship is adhered to so that the child feels safe in discussions. Any information passed on to parents from these sessions, will be with the child's permission, unless there is serious safeguarding concern.

11 Working with All Parents/Carers

In order to support parents/carers we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues as appropriate
- Ensure that they are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child or one of their child's friends
- Share ideas about how they can support positive mental health
- Keep them informed about the mental health topics taught in our curriculum, through our class pages and sharing the PSHE policy

We regularly update the website with resources and articles that parents can access relating to children and mental health issues. Hosting a behaviour and emotional wellbeing evening, where the focus is on strategies to help improve children's mental and emotional wellbeing, is carried out on a regular basis for all parents within the school community.

12 Supporting Peers

When a pupil 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 disordered eating, 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 with the pupil who is suffering. We will discuss prior to the meeting:

- What 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 they may suggest further support is required

Additionally, we will highlight to 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

13 Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe. We will host relevant information via the notice board in the staff room and through discussion in collective meetings.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host training sessions for staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health. Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Head Teacher and Wellbeing leads.