



Hill Croft School

Mental health & wellbeing policy



Hill Croft School- Mental health & wellbeing policy

Please read in conjunction with all pastoral policies

Scope

This policy is a guide to **all** staff – including governors – outlining Hill Croft School approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

Policy aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students (*incorporating the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing in order to promote a common/shared language throughout the Whole School Community*).
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable the Whole School Community to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues in students.
- Enable the Whole School Community to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

Rationale

In Hill Croft School we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing of all students, their families, and, members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows our whole school community's voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected (both directly and indirectly) by mental health issues. In Hill Croft there is a strong and inclusive ethos and child-centred focus on all pupils thriving and meeting their potential. Our staff team are our most valuable resource in meeting this need, therefore, we put a high priority on their health, well-being and development.





Hill Croft School Mental health & wellbeing policy



The following statements of commitment were designed to relate to everyone connected to the school, including staff:

Statements of Commitment

Together we are building a school where everyone can say:

- *I am part of Hill Croft School, I fit in here, we all look after each other
- *I am safe in Hill Croft School; it is a happy place to be
- *There is no-one else just like me. Everyone can help me to learn
- *We know what I have to learn, we know how I like to learn best, it is fun
- *What I have to say is very important, I can always take part
- *I am always learning new skills that will help me at home, when I go out and when I leave school

A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health

Hill Croft are a 'Take 5' school and we use the Take 5 steps to wellbeing as a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, which everyone understands
2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
3. Helping children to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

Staff roles and school based support

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.





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Whilst this policy aims to ensure that everyone within the school community has a role in the promotion of mental health and emotional wellbeing, the following are key staff with specific responsibilities:

- Principal, Vice- Principal and Senior Leadership Team
- Pastoral staff
- Designated CP leads
- Well Team
- Take 5 ambassadors

(it should be remembered that teachers and members of school staff are not health professionals. They are not trained to diagnose mental health problems or to provide psychological interventions. They are, however, in a position to encourage positive mental health among young people and to be alert to signs and symptoms if possible)

Links to other policies

This policy links to the following existing school policies; safeguarding and child protection, anti-bullying, and the staff development policy.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, common rooms, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (School Facebook, website, See-Saw), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events. We will update and maintain this to ensure that the services remain available and accessible to all. The aim of this is to ensure we all understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why should they access it;
- What is likely to happen next



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Warning signs

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, in line with our safeguarding and child protection policy, inform a child protection designated member of staff.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non accidental
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- An increase in absenteeism w
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- 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
- 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

Managing disclosures and confidentiality

Please read & follow child protection policy for reporting and recording procedures.



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Take5
steps to wellbeing

www.makinglifebettertogether.com

Give Be active Connect Keep learning Take notice

Take5
Making the better together
Health and Social Care

