



Wellbeing Policy

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1. Policy Statement

Mental Health affects all aspects of a child's development including their cognitive abilities, their social skills as well as their emotional wellbeing. Childhood and teenage years are when mental health is developed and patterns are set for the future. For most children the opportunities for learning and personal development offered at school are exciting and challenging and an intrinsic part of their school experience. However, they can also give rise to anxiety and stress. Children may also suffer anxiety or stress owing to circumstances outside school. It is important not to label as "mental health" problems that are in reality normal emotional reactions to new experiences. However, a number of children may experience emotional or psychological difficulties that without appropriate professional support, are more persistent and inhibit their ability to participate fully in school. In addition, some children may arrive at school with a pre-existing psychological problem. Mental health problems can seriously impair academic performance and may lead to confused or disturbed behaviour. Minor difficulties that interfere with a child's capacity to work may also result in distress and wasted effort and undermine academic progress. A more seriously affected child may require a significant level of professional support. Children can suffer from depression.

Chandlings promotes the mental and physical health and emotional wellbeing of all its pupils. Wellbeing is at the forefront of the school's PSHEE/PSED programmes and promoting good mental health is a priority. The physical, mental and emotional health benefits of exercise are well documented and the school actively encourages sport for all. The Senior Leadership Team, with the staff community and the School Council has identified 6 key areas that are fundamental to good mental health and wellbeing:

1. My Relationships
2. My Body
3. My Learning
4. My World
5. My Reflections
6. My Heart

2. Aims of Chandlings School

As stated in its Safeguarding Policy, Chandlings is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for pupils and promoting a climate where pupils feel confident to talk about their emotions and share any concerns that they might have. We wish them to be happy and thrive whilst at Chandlings and to ensure they acquire the skills necessary for life after school.

We aim to provide a supportive environment that will help pupils who experience mental difficulties.

We aim to achieve these aims by

- Nurturing a supportive community that encourages a sense of social responsibility, and spiritual and personal development.
- Providing a range of support
- Maintaining a culture where it is normal to talk about feelings
- Providing guidance and awareness training to the teaching staff and other staff involved in the support and care of pupils
- Respecting the confidentiality of personal information provided by pupils with mental health difficulties

3. Promoting Good Mental Health

The framework for the promotion of good mental health at Chandlings is the positive and caring ethos of the school, where everyone is encouraged to support and help one another and, in particular, to have respect for each other, allowing others to be themselves. The pupils play an important role, therefore, through the culture they create, established through commitment to hundreds of small decisions and choices each day: their respect for routines, manners and courtesy, acceptable behaviour, anti-bullying expectations and genuine respect for each other, regardless of physical, cultural, religious, racial or other differences. The role of older pupils as role models is absolutely crucial.

What Chandlings does to promote good mental health:

- An intentional and well-directed PSHEE/PSED curriculum:
- Pastoral support from trained staff: there are various layers to this support, including the school nurse, Form Teachers, Heads of Year, Head of Pre-Prep, Head of Girls, Head of Boys(Deputy Head Pastoral). All strive to demonstrate that each individual pupil is valued, known and is listened to. Form Teachers play a particularly important role in emphasising the academic and personal development of each pupil and encouraging them to pursue an active and

balanced life, to develop friendships through engagement with the co-curricular life of the school and to nudge them outside of their comfort zone, particularly in trying new things.

- All staff play a crucial role in listening to pupils and identifying vulnerabilities and concerns as early as possible.
- A commitment to helping others: this is viewed by many experts as one of the best ways of maintaining a healthy perspective on one's own life and to establish a strong sense of self-confidence. The children are committed to help select and support various charitable causes and organisations, and every pupil is encouraged to be involved in this.
- An outstanding School Nurse
- An outstanding Learning Support team: they provide not only practical support with specific learning support needs, but also work to reinforce pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
- The Year 6 team of 'Trusted Listeners': they receive training and work in a variety of different ways to support pupils
- Appropriate support and training is provided to staff, particularly pastoral staff who may be directly involved in supporting and monitoring physical and or mental health issues with pupils.
- Pastoral seminars for parents, materials from which are made available to parents on the Parent Portal. This is one aspect of a genuine desire to forge a strong partnership with parents, with the well-being and educational progress of their child as the focus.
- The school is committed to a collaborative approach to supporting pupils, including the school's staff, pastoral staff, parents, external agencies and experts.
- The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments to a pupil's education and daily routine, where they will not affect the learning environment of other pupils.

4. Common Mental Health Risk Factors

There are common risk factors that may influence the chances of a young person developing a mental health disorder.

These may include:

Family factors, such as parental conflict, inconsistent discipline, family absence, loss or bereavement, family mental-health issues, difficult relationships in the family, either with parents or siblings, unrealistic expectations from a family member.

Physical illness or disability.

Psychological reaction to adverse events, such as bereavement, abuse, bullying.

Environmental factors and life changes, such as socio-economic disadvantages/changes, frequent moving of home/school.

The details of the type of mental health issue are not likely to affect the course of action taken in school unless there is an immediate risk of harm to the pupil, in which case the school's Safeguarding policy and procedures would be followed.

A brief summary of some of the different types of mental health disorders is given in Appendix 1, although this cannot be definitive. The summary aims to help staff and parents understand some of the specific issues pupils may face.

5. Identifying a Potential Problem – Guidance for Staff

Supporting a distressed pupil can be extremely time-consuming and challenging. You may know the pupil well from your lessons, from your after school activity, your House, from a previous class but it is important to look objectively at the situation and to work with other colleagues to establish how you can best support the pupil.

General Principles:

Supporting pupils requires excellent communication and teamwork. Consult with other pastoral staff, school nurse, form teacher, Head of Year, Head of Pre Prep, Head of Girls, and Head of Boys and always keep the appropriate class teacher and pastoral staff informed of your actions and interactions with the pupil.

Think carefully about what you can and cannot do to help the pupil. You may need to be explicit with the pupil to help them understand the limits of your role.

Be prepared to take a firm line about the extent of your involvement so that it does not impact on your teaching and your own well-being.

6. General Advice (to be read in conjunction with other pastoral and safeguarding policies):

- Always follow up concerns, however small, with pupils through the pastoral system. By being proactive, it may prevent a situation becoming much worse.
- Always be prepared to listen to pupils.
- If you are the class teacher, gather more information from other colleagues to see if your concern is shared.
- If you are the Form Teacher, consider what the best way will be to communicate concerns to the pupil and their parents using the school's established pastoral communication procedures.
- If you suspect the problem is not straightforward, or if there is no improvement following an initial intervention, do not delay in informing a senior member of the pastoral staff.
- Always be mindful of the guidance on confidentiality contained within the school's Safeguarding policy.

7. Referral

Specific advice on referrals can be obtained through the School Nurse. As a normal first port of call, the pupil's GP should be engaged, allowing referral for example to the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHS). The school will work with any family requiring assistance in these matters and will continue to engage with the external agencies and services when required.

8. Document Information

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Appendix

Anxiety and Depression

Anxiety disorders

Anxiety is a natural, normal feeling we all experience from time to time. It can vary in severity from mild uneasiness through to a terrifying panic attack. It can vary in how long it lasts, from a few moments to many years.

All children and young people get anxious at times; this is a normal part of their development as they grow up and develop their 'survival skills' so they can face challenges in the wider world. In addition, we all have different levels of stress we can cope with - some people are just naturally more anxious than others, and are quicker to get stressed or worried.

Concerns are raised when anxiety is getting in the way of a child's day to day life, slowing down their development, or having a significant effect on their schooling or relationships. It is estimated that 1 in 6 people will suffer from General Anxiety Disorder at some point in their lives.

Anxiety disorders include:

- Generalised anxiety disorder (GAD)
- Panic disorder and agoraphobia
- Acute stress disorder (ASD)
- Separation anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Phobic disorders (including social phobia)

Symptoms of an anxiety disorder

These can include:

Physical effects

- Cardiovascular – palpitations, chest pain, rapid, heartbeat, flushing
- Respiratory – hyperventilation, shortness of breath
- Neurological – dizziness, headache, sweating, tingling and numbness
- Gastrointestinal – choking, dry mouth, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea
- Musculoskeletal – muscle aches and pains, restlessness, tremor and shaking

Psychological effects

Unrealistic and/or excessive fear and worry (about past or future events)

Mind racing or going blank

Decreased concentration and memory

Difficulty making decisions

Irritability, impatience, anger

Confusion

Restlessness or feeling on edge, nervousness

Tiredness, sleep disturbances, vivid dreams

Unwanted unpleasant repetitive thoughts

Behavioural effects

Avoidance of situations

Repetitive compulsive behaviour e.g. excessive checking

Distress in social situations

Urges to escape situations that cause discomfort (phobic behaviour)

First Aid for anxiety disorders

How to help a student having a panic attack

If you are at all unsure whether the student is having a panic attack, a heart attack or an asthma attack, and/or the person is in distress, call an ambulance straight away.

If you are sure that the student is having a panic attack, move them to a quiet safe place if possible.

Help to calm the student by encouraging slow, relaxed breathing in unison with your own.

Encourage them to breathe in and hold for 3 seconds and then breathe out for 3 seconds.

Be a good listener, without judging.

Explain to the student that they are experiencing a panic attack and not something life threatening such as a heart attack.

Explain that the attack will soon stop and that they will recover fully.

Assure the student that someone will stay with them and keep them safe until the attack stops.

Many young people with anxiety problems do not fit neatly into a particular type of anxiety disorder. It is common for people to have some features of several anxiety disorders. A high level of anxiety over a long period will often lead to depression and long periods of depression can provide symptoms of anxiety. Many young people have a mixture of symptoms of anxiety and depression as a result.

Depression

A clinical depression is one that lasts for at least 2 weeks, affects behaviour and has physical, emotional and cognitive effects. It interferes with the ability to study, work and have satisfying relationships. Depression is a common but serious illness and can be recurrent. In England it affects at least 5% of teenagers, although some estimates are higher. Rates of depression are higher in girls than in boys. Depression in young people often occurs with other mental disorders, and recognition and diagnosis of the disorder may be more difficult in children because the way symptoms are expressed varies with the developmental age of the individual. In addition to this, stigma associated with mental illness may obscure diagnosis

Risk Factors

Experiencing other mental or emotional problems

Divorce of parents

Perceived poor achievement at school

Bullying

Developing a long term physical illness

Death of someone close

Break up of a relationship

Some people will develop depression in a distressing situation, whereas others in the same situation will not.

Symptoms

Effects on emotion: sadness, anxiety, guilt, anger, mood swings, lack of emotional responsiveness, helplessness, hopelessness

Effects on thinking: frequent self-criticism, self-blame, worry, pessimism, impaired memory and concentration, indecisiveness and confusion, tendency to believe others see you in a negative light, thoughts of death or suicide

Effects on behaviour: crying spells, withdrawal from others, neglect of responsibilities, loss of interest in personal appearance, loss of motivation.

Physical effects: chronic fatigue, lack of energy, sleeping too much or too little, overeating or loss of appetite, constipation, weight loss or gain, irregular menstrual cycle, unexplained aches and pains.

First Aid for anxiety and depression

The most important role school staff can play is to familiarise themselves with the risk factors and warning signs outlined above and to make the Deputy Head of Pastoral Care (designated teacher for safeguarding children) aware of any child causing concern.

Following the report, the Deputy Head of Pastoral Care will decide on the appropriate course of action. This may include:

Contacting parents/carers

Suggesting professional assistance e.g. doctor, nurse

Arranging a referral to CAMHS – with parental consent

Giving advice to parents, teachers and other students

Pupils may choose to confide in a member of school staff if they are concerned about their own welfare, or that of a peer. Pupils need to be made aware that it may not be possible for staff to offer complete confidentiality. If you consider a student is at serious risk of causing themselves harm then confidentiality cannot be kept. It is important not to make promises of confidentiality that cannot be kept even if a student puts pressure on you to do so.

Wellbeing Knight

Research is showing us how our health and happiness can be boosted by doing certain things on a day-to-day basis. The Wellbeing Knight is our guide to some of them.

My Relationships

Close relationships with friends and family make us feel good

Our wellbeing can improve by

- Being kind to those around us
- Talking to friends when we are feeling sad
- Helping our friends who are sad by playing with them, including them and listening to them

My Learning

Life long learners are some of the happiest and healthiest around. Our wellbeing can improve by

- Trying something new
- Being resilient, ready to learn, resourceful and
- Not being afraid of taking risks
- Understanding the importance of practise

My Heart

Giving to others does amazing things. Our wellbeing can improve by

- Random Acts of Kindness
- Volunteer time
- A simple 'Thank you'
- Helping a friend, parent, sibling, teacher
- Reflective time during assembly
- Smiling

My Body

Your body is the engine that powers your wellbeing. It is designed to move. Being active is a necessary ingredient to a long and happy life. Our wellbeing can improve by

- Eating nutritious foods, having a healthy balanced diet
- Taking part in our sports programme
- Taking part in sports outside of school, widening our friendships groups

My World

Keeping our blue planet in tip-top shape is the best recipe for world well-being. It can sometimes feel like a hopeless task, but small positive changes make a difference. Our wellbeing can improve by

- Walking or using a bike not a car
- Turning off the tap
- Switching of lights
- Supporting our Eco committee

My Reflections

Noticing and reflecting helps us to press the pause button. Savouring our surroundings and reflecting gives us the all important breathing space.

Our wellbeing can improve by

- Taking time to 'sit and stare' at the beauty around us
- Meditating /mindfulness
- Think of one good thing that made you smile
- Walking around the stunning grounds

