



Mental Health policy

Sandgate School Mental Policy

Statement of Intent:

At Sandgate School we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all members of our school community.

We are a values driven school and have an ethos of universal support and care. Our ethos is respectful and kind. Each individual and their unique contribution to school life is valued.

We believe that everyone in our school community has a voice and the right to be heard.

At our school we recognise that everyone experiences life challenges. Regardless of whether these challenges may be episodic or ongoing, they can make individuals vulnerable and may mean that additional support is required.

We take the view that supporting positive mental health is a collective responsibility and that everyone within the Sandgate School Community has a role to play in supporting and educating.

At our school we promote a mentally healthy environment by:

- Supporting the basic physical and sensory needs of our school community in order that they are calm and regulated
- Supporting everyone to communicate their needs, emotions and concerns to those around them and recognising the impact effective communication has on mental wellbeing.
- Supporting our school community to identify and name their basic emotions using whatever form of communication works for them.
- Supporting members of our school community to understand how their emotions affect their behaviour and what they can do regulate their emotions.
- Supporting members of our school community to develop personal resilience
- Supporting members of our school community to understand how their emotional responses may affect those around them.
- Supporting members of our school community to form and maintain healthy relationships.
- Informing and educating community members about common mental health issues and how to spot early warning signs.
- Supporting members of our school community to access support for identified mental health issues.

Students:

At Sandgate School we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health.

Underpinning our entire curriculum is the understanding that sensory, emotional and communication needs must be met before students can learn and maintain positive mental health. As such and where appropriate students are supported by Sensory profiles, Positive Behaviour Support plans and Pupil passports. These documents outline specific needs and strategies related to each child and help to ensure consistency of approach and delivery.

The curriculum is designed to support emotional regulation and PSHE input underpins all support.

Additionally following both the EYFS framework and PSHE association SEND framework mental health is addressed with the PSHE curriculum.

Examples of mental health support offered within the learning environment are:

- Decider Skills
- Moving Mindsets support
- Music Therapy
- Student workshops
- Support groups and lunchtime clubs
- Drawing and Talking Therapy
- Lego therapy
- Child Mental Health First Aider
- Pets as therapy
- Forest schools
- Working with outside agencies as required

Staff:

Sandgate school offers regular CPD to staff, around supporting mental health and specific mental health issues. Over the past two years CPD has been delivered to all on Managing Emotional Regulation, Trauma Informed Practice and Childhood Bereavement

All staff are trained in Team Teach which focuses on de-escalation and helping children manage their emotions.

All staff have access to National College and Learning Curve Courses, which has a wide range of resources covering a number of mental health topics.

Individual staff members and staff teams have received training and support regarding specific mental health issues in line with the needs of their students. The school prides itself on taking a dynamic response to identified issues and is very clear about the value of education.

Examples of mental health support offered within the workplace are:

- Designated People and Culture lead
- Mental health first aider on both sites
- Suicide awareness practitioner
- Designated mental health email for both sites
- Supportive and clear HR processes
- SLT open door policy and timetabled 'SLT Ear' slots.
- Access to Staff health care and wellbeing support services including access to counselling, 24-hour GP service and physiotherapy
- Mental health risk assessments
- Afterschool wellbeing groups.
- Mentor's or staff buddy's for new staff

Parents and carers:

Parents and carers are regularly consulted on the needs of their family around mental health. In response, school have offered half term family support groups, both in person and online. These sessions have taken

the form of both ‘coffee and chat’ and sessions/ workshops to deal with identified issues such as The Decider Skills Programme.

All parents and carers have access to the National College and Learning Curve Courses which have a wide range of resources covering a number of mental health topics.

All parents and carers have access to the My Family Coach App which also has a wide range of resources covering a number of mental health topics.

The school website has a designated mental health support area.

Staff keep parents and carers updated on topics covered in PSHE and share ideas on how they can support positive mental health within their family.

Support is also offered on a one-to-one basis through support meetings such as TAF and Early Help.

Staff will signpost parents and carers to external support services where they can seek support for both their own mental health and that of their young people.

Early warning signs of mental health challenges:

We may be aware of warning signs which indicate a member of our school community is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

These may take the form of:

- Changes in attendance
- Punctuality
- Issues around relationships
- Increase in behaviours that challenge
- Approach to learning
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Changes in activity and mood – especially extreme lows or highs
- Talking /joking about self-harm or suicide
- Evidence of substance abuse
- Expressing feelings of despair, failure or uselessness
- Change in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warmer weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping physical exercise or getting changed secretly
- Complaining repeatedly of feeling ill with no obvious cause

This list is by no means exhaustive. As a school we understand that signs and symptoms of mental challenges may be harder to identify in young people with SEND. Staff are encouraged to deploy their holistic and unique knowledge of individual students to recognise and flag changes in behaviour.

What will we do:

These warning signs should always be taken seriously and anyone observing any of these warning signs should:

- Alert Mental Health and Wellbeing lead or appropriate Mental Health First aider (or if not available a member of SLT)
- In the case of students record concerns / observations should be recorded on CPOMS
- If a concern raises a safeguarding issue the usual safeguarding procedures will be followed.

- Bespoke support will then be put in place, based on the strategies and resources listed above. If necessary, a mental health support plan will be put in place.

Staff roles and responsibilities

Mental Health Lead	Julia Wilson
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Dan Hinton
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Upper School)	Julia Wilson
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Lower School)	Rachel Canwell
Drawing and talking therapists	Richard Westwell
	Ben Sayers
	Nicky Harding
	Louise Wood
	Marie Breeze
ELSA trained staff	Julia Wilson
Staff Mental Health First Aider (Upper school)	Rachel Canwell
Staff Mental Health First Aider (Lower school)	Jen Playforth
Student Mental Health First Aider (Upper school)	Marcia Frith
Student Mental Health First Aider (Lower school)	Charlotte Broom
People and Culture lead	
Orange Button Suicide Awareness	Rachel Canwell

