



SURBITON

HIGH SCHOOL

Positive Mental Health & Well-being

Contents

1. Policy Statement	3
2. Lead Members of Staff.....	5
3. Flowchart for reporting concerns	5
4. Individual Care Plans	7
5. Teaching about Mental Health & Well-being	7
6. Signposting.....	7
7. Warning Signs	8
8. Managing disclosures.....	8
9. Confidentiality.....	9
10. Working with Parents	9
11. Supporting pupils' peers	10
12. Supporting Staff	10
Appendix A - Further information and sources of support about common mental health issues...	11
Appendix B – 'Whom Should I Tell' Poster – Boys' Prep & Senior School	12
Appendix C – 'Whom Should I Tell?' Poster – Girls' Prep	13
Document Information	14

Aims and Ethos

Surbiton High School aims to **inspire, encourage and empower** all its students to discover and embrace their individual talents, within United Learning's core mission to bring out "the best in everyone". We combine an intellectually rigorous academic environment with outstanding pastoral care and outstanding co-curricular opportunities; through this provision, we encourage our students to live out our **School values**, and become compassionate, respectful, courageous, and inquisitive members of the community.

Our Values

We are compassionate:

We are kind and we care, in both thought and action. We consider those less fortunate and strive to support and offer aid. We are mindful of the gentle power of positive actions. We support and encourage those around us, living out the School's motto: *Amor nos semper ducat* (May love always lead us).

We are respectful:

We respect all people equally. We respect ourselves, our learning, our community, our environment, and the planet we all share. We strive to act with respect and integrity in all things. When we disagree, we do so respectfully.

We are courageous:

When challenged by our fears we are determined, not deterred. We call on resilience for strength when in the heat of the struggle. We bravely chase our dreams and fight for what we believe. When we fall, we pick ourselves up and forge forward.

We are inquisitive:

We understand that a thoughtful question is the key to unlock understanding. We believe where answers provide ends, questions pose exciting beginnings. We are eager to explore, we question to discover, we are curious to learn more of the world at large.

We are a community:

We are united - with a common focus. We value belonging to a wider community: our school community, our local community, our global community. We are inclusive of all, no matter our differences. We value and nurture the connections we form.

United Learning and the United Church Schools' Trust

Surbiton High School is part of *United Learning* and the *United Church Schools' Trust*. The School has an Anglican foundation, valuing its Christian heritage whilst welcoming staff and children from all faiths and none. We share with United Learning its core mission statement "to bring out the best in everyone". We are committed to the aims of United Learning, including its *Framework for Excellence*, which can be found at: www.unitedlearning.org.uk

1. Policy Statement

‘Mental health is defined as a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn and work well, and contribute to their community’¹.

‘Well-being is being well, thriving and having the ability to bounce back from setbacks’².

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. However, it is important to recognise that whilst there is some overlap, low well-being and poor mental health should be treated as separate concerns; ‘Mental illness and wellbeing are independent dimensions; mental health is not simply the opposite of mental illness. It is possible for someone to have a mental disorder and high levels of wellbeing. It is also possible for someone to have low levels of wellbeing without having a mental disorder.’³

‘Everyone has ‘mental health’, and this can be thought of in terms of:

- how we feel about ourselves and the people around us
- our ability to make and keep friends and relationships
- our ability to learn from others and to develop psychologically and emotionally.

Being mentally healthy is also about having the strength to overcome the difficulties and challenges we can all face at times in our lives. Mental well-being is more than just the absconded of mental illness. It enables and supports good relationships, improves resilience, meaning, purpose and control.’⁴

Therefore, as a school, we aim to look at each and every member of our community individually. We aim to promote positive mental health *and* well-being. **We aim for all to flourish: to feel like they are winning even when things get tough.**

At Surbiton High School, we recognise that 7% of respondents in the Good Childhood Report 2021 reported poor well-being. We aim to provide the best environment for everyone within our community to lead flourishing lives. We pursue this aim through universal, whole school approaches alongside tailored, targeted support for more vulnerable individuals.

Our desire is to inspire, encourage and empower our young people to discover and liberate the very best of themselves, exceeding their potential in an intellectually and challenging academic environment, balanced with outstanding pastoral care and support. This is all underpinned by our *Charter for Happiness and Well-being* and this document should be read alongside this policy.

We are proud of the individual care, support, and mentoring each pupil receives. We provide an education which meets the individual needs of each pupil, alongside co-curricular opportunities to provide the breadth of experiences required to ensure they develop into well-rounded and grounded 21st century learners.

¹ World Health Organization (2022) *Mental Health: Strengthening our response* [online] Available at <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>

² Seldon, A. (2018) *The Ultimate Well-being in Education Conference*, University of Buckingham

³ Department for Health (2014) *The Relationship Between Wellbeing and Health* Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/295474/The_relationship_between_wellbeing_and_health.pdf

⁴ Rethink (2018) *What is Mental Health and Mental Illness?* Available at: <https://www.rethink.org/living-with-mental-illness/young-people/what-is-mental-health>

We are acutely aware of the additional pressures young people face, and we are resolved to be a school driven by empathy, where pupils and staff are self-aware, and know how to cope with both internal and external pressures.

Key to our promotion of positive mental health is our own recognition and understanding of what mental ill health and poor well-being look like and how best we can work to prevent them. With an estimated 1 in every 8 children having a diagnosable mental health problem⁵, our proactive approach to well-being is vital to the future success of all.

Surbiton High School is proud to be part of United Learning and the United Church School's Trust. Their Framework for Excellence sits at the heart of everything we do as a collegiate of schools, and we share its core mission statement "to bring out the best in everyone".

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and well-being in all staff and students
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues thereby removing stigma
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health and poor well-being
- Promote safe, physical environments essential to the support of positive mental health and well-being
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues

This policy applies to all members of our School community, including those in our EYFS setting.

Surbiton High School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this Positive Mental Health & Well-being policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunity Policy document.

Surbiton High School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.

In line with our Provision of Information policy, this document is available to all interested parties on our website and on request from the Principal's office and should be read in conjunction with the following documents

- Charter for Well-being & Happiness
- Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- ICT Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Agreement
- Staff Recruitment Procedures
- Social Media Policy

⁵ NHS (2017) *Mental health of children and young people in England, 2017* Available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2017/2017>

This document is reviewed annually by Sinead Ross Martyn, Senior Nurse or as events or legislation change requires. The next scheduled date for review is September 2026.

2. Lead Members of Staff

All staff members have a responsibility to promote positive mental health amongst themselves, their peers and their students. Staff with specific, relevant remits include:

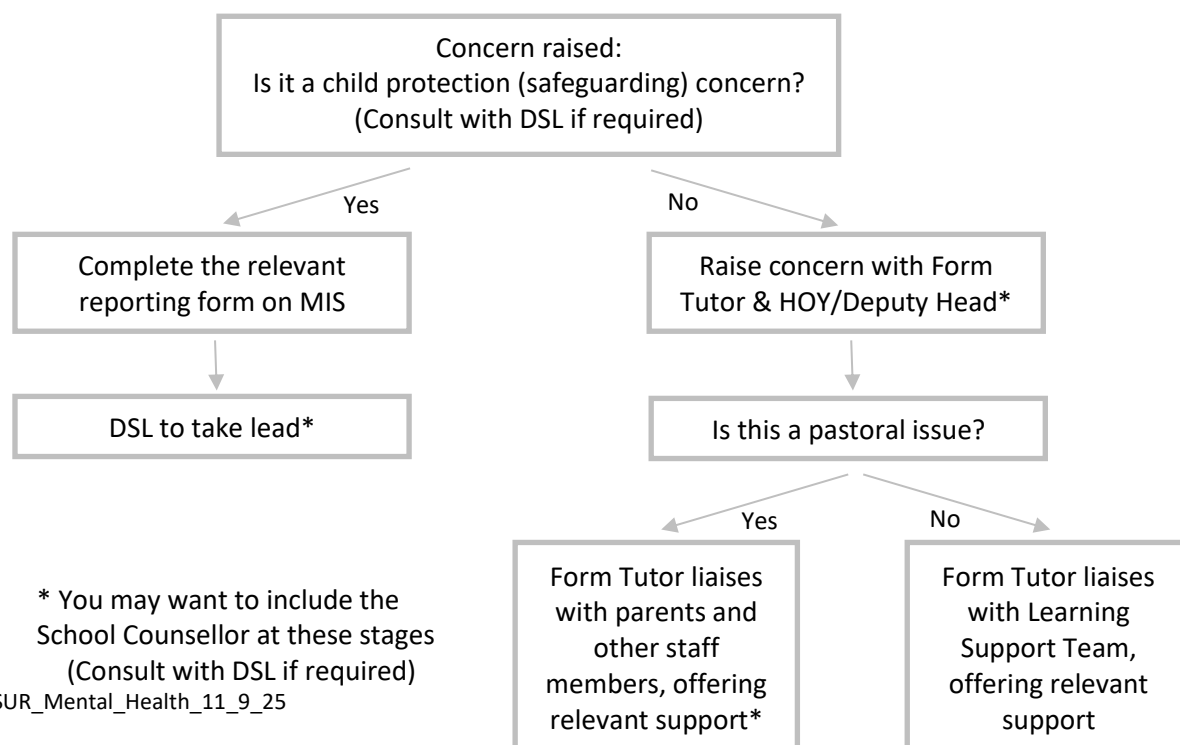
- Claudia Vincenzi – Named Governor for mental health of pupils & staff
- Paula McIntyre – Head of Girls' Prep & Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Byron King – Head of Boys' Prep & Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Matthew Close – Senior Vice Principal & Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Jon Owen – Head of Sixth Form & Deputy Designated Safeguarding
- Rebecca Francis – Assistant Principal and Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Sinead Ross Martyn – Senior School Nurse & Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mental Health Lead for pupils
- Garnette Watts – Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Danielle Kilpin and Adam Buckingham - Deputy Headteachers responsible for pupil well-being at the Boys' Prep
- David Williams – Deputy Headteacher responsible for pupil well-being at the Girls' Prep
- Debbie Shepherd – Lead School Counsellor
- Daisy Sunda – Head of PSHE
- Dionne King – Head of Learning Support

If any staff member is concerned about the mental health or well-being of a student, they should follow the suggested flowchart below, taking into account the immediacy of the situation. If first aid is required, this should initially be administered as laid out in the First Aid policy.

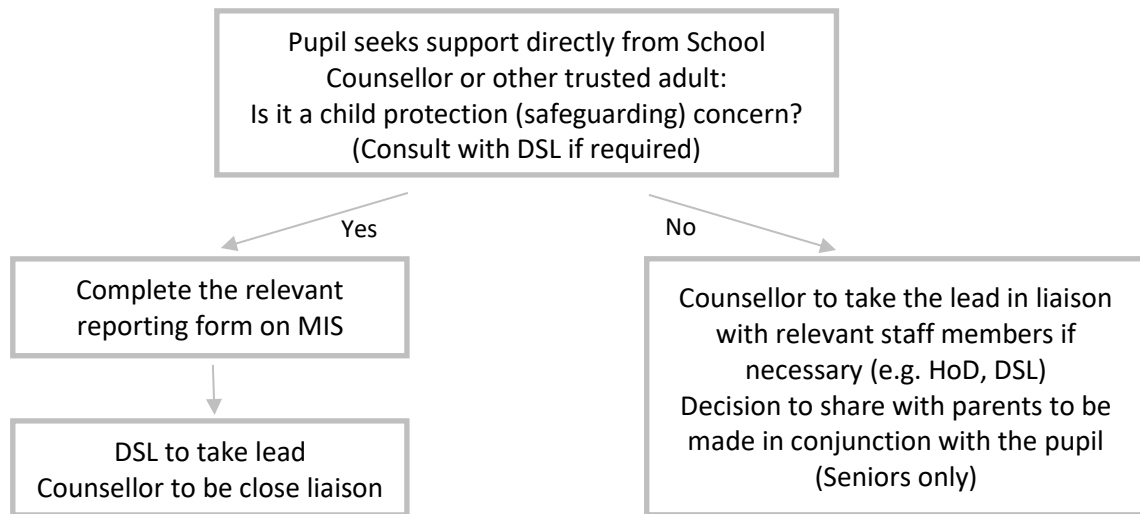
Where a referral to CAMHS is required, this will be led and managed by Matthew Close or Jon Owen and Sinead Ross Martyn, the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

3. Flowchart for reporting concerns

Pathway 1: Pupil support – staff referral



Pathway 2: Pupil support – self referral



4. Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can 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 & Well-being

***The most important thing we can do for our pupils and colleagues is to ask each other:
"How happy are you with life in general?"***

'It is remarkable that a single question about happiness with life was a more powerful predictor of self-harm than the 20-item measure of emotional and behavioural difficulties' ⁶. This highlights a) the value of asking people for their own views and feelings, and b) the value of asking about subjective well-being through less intrusive means. Therefore, we encourage everyone at Surbiton High School to first and foremost show empathy towards each other and our communities. Therefore, we expect the vast majority of teaching around mental health and well-being to be embedded implicitly through our daily interactions with one another.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons is determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language, and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. We follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. The Prep Schools specifically follow the 3D PSHE curriculum which takes its lead from the PSHE Association.

6. Signposting

We ensure that staff, students, and parents are aware of sources of support within School and in the local community.

We display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as common rooms and toilets and regularly highlight these to students within relevant parts of the curriculum.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chances of students seeking support by ensuring that they understand:

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

(See Appendix B & C for example posters to be displayed around school)

⁶ The Children's Society (2018) *The Good Childhood Report 2018*, Available at: <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/resources-and-publications/the-good-childhood-report-2018>

7. Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student (or staff member) 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 (if not an immediate safeguarding concern) seek consultation with the one of the safeguarding leads or with the School Counsellor (or in the case of a staff member, with their line manager).

Possible warning signs may 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
- 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
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

8. Managing disclosures

A student 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. Please refer to the Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy for a detailed explanation, along with the Flowchart for reporting a concern.

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 for the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'.

All disclosures should be recorded using the [Pupil Safeguarding Concern Report Form found in the Common Docs area of MIS](#). This written record should include:

- Date and time the pupil spoke to you, or date and time you first became concerned
- Your name and name/s of anyone else present when the pupil spoke to you
- The name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the child who has been raised as a concern
- Main points from the conversation
- Any agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the Safeguarding Team, who will offer support and advice about next steps, as well as store the record appropriately.

9. Confidentiality

Pupils often wish for conversations with someone they trust to remain confidential and do not want anything to be followed up. Never guarantee confidentiality but explain to the pupil that if you consider it right, you will have to refer the matter to the DSL. It is essential that any member of staff in this position makes a careful judgment about whether to refer the conversation to the DSL, bearing in mind that the welfare of the pupil is paramount.

However, it is advisable to share disclosures as this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing because we are no longer solely responsible for the student. It also ensures continuity of care in our absence and provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

School will contact the parents if the student is voicing any suicidal thoughts or any other matters which are of concern. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the DSL must be informed immediately.

10. Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions (on a case-by-case basis):

- Does the pupil have Fraser competence: do they have the maturity to make their own decisions and understand the implications of those decisions?
- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's 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 time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too, e.g., parent helplines and 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 step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues through this policy
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to access this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child

- Make our positive mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our information evenings and parent talks
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

11. Supporting pupils' 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 may be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering and/or their parents 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 help (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

12. Supporting Staff

The well-being and mental health of our staff is critical to the delivery of a positive and safe educational environment. It is statistically recognised that the well-being of staff members directly leads to better pupil outcomes, both attainment and value added ⁷. However, more importantly, 'good staff well-being is essential for cultivating a mentally healthy school, for retaining and motivating staff and for promoting pupil wellbeing' ⁸

At Surbiton High School, we value our staff, for we recognise that it is their dedication for pastoral and educational excellence that gives our pupils the very best opportunities. Our staff make the difference. They are interested in our pupils' lives, taking the time to notice where things may not be necessarily going so well.

This level of care takes time and energy; something that our staff give willingly but we recognise the need to protect and support them. Therefore, it is our aim to foster a culture of trust, wherein colleagues can be open about their needs and concerns. We ensure that alongside the fostering of good working relationships, we offer our staff several avenues of support, if they so require it.

⁷ Briner, R & Dewberry, C. (2004) *Staff well-being is the key to school success*, Available at: http://scholar.google.co.uk/scholar_url?url=http://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/5902birkbeckwbperfsommaryfinal.pdf&hl=en&sa=X&scisig=AAGBfm25yZk9_uBrTEh4s1tgy-aNUBZB8w&nossl=1&oi=scholar, University of London

⁸ Heads Together, (2018) *Supporting staff well-being*, Available at: <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/supporting-staff-wellbeing/#>

The first port of call for most staff will be their immediate colleagues, closely followed by line managers. Senior Leaders ensure their availability and visibility throughout the school.

Most importantly, however, we promote a culture and a desire to ensure that opinions and thoughts are shared and discussed, where gripes and negativities are opportunities to make marginal gains. The annual Staff Survey forms part of this; an opportunity for voices to be heard, opinions gathered and positive change to be driven through.

Where staff may begin to feel more overwhelmed with things and more specialised support may be required, the following can be accessed:

- Our School Counsellor is available to meet with members of staff in crisis and to help them think through options for further support and signpost as required. There is more information about this in the School Counselling Service Procedures document.
- The United Learning Employee Assistance Programme ([well-online.co.uk](https://www.well-online.co.uk)), is a free and confidential information, support and counselling service available 24 hours a day (0800 085 1376)

Appendix A: Further information and sources of support about common mental health issues

Below, we have sign-posted information and guidance about the issues most commonly seen in school-aged children. The links will take you through to the most relevant page of the listed website.

[Young Minds](#)

[Royal College of Psychiatrists](#)

[The Children's Society](#)

[Childline](#)

[Rethink](#)

[Minded](#) (for adults)

WHOM SHOULD I TELL?

Please feel free to talk about any concerns you may have with **any member of staff with whom you feel comfortable and confident**. In practice, this is likely to be your Tutor or Head of Year.

The information below should, however, serve as a guideline if you feel unsure of the best person to contact.

Day to day matters Appointments Co-curricular activities	Tutor
Change in family circumstance	Tutor Head of Year
Concerns about academic matters	Subject teacher Tutor Head of Department Head of Year
Concerns about medical matters	School Nurse
Concerns about personal matters	Tutor Head of Year School Nurse School Counsellor Mrs Francis Mr Close

You can also telephone Childline on 0800 11 11



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