

Priory Park Community School



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy 2023 - 2026

Reviewed by Priory Park Community School Governing Board

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Links to Relevant Policies and Supporting Documentation for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Priory Park Community School

[Priory Park Community School Safeguarding Information](#)

[Priory Park Community School SEND Information](#)

[Priory Park Community School Self Harm Policy \(2023-2026\)](#)

[Priory Park Community School Team Teach](#)

Dudley Borough

[All About Dudley](#)

[Dudley Mental Health Needs Assessment \(2016\)](#)

[Dudley Send Strategy \(2021-2024\)](#) [Dudley Safeguarding](#)

National

[Overview | Self-harm: assessment, management and preventing recurrence | Guidance | NICE \(2022\)](#)

[GOV. UK Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022](#)

[Safeguarding \(DfE update 2021\)](#)

[GOV.UK Equality Act \(2010\)](#)

[GOV.UK Bullying at School](#)

[RHSE Curriculum \(DfE update 2021\)](#)

[Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools and Colleges 2021 updated 2022](#)

[Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools and Colleges 2021 updated 2022](#)

[Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2021 - wave 2 follow up to the 2017 survey - NDRS \(digital.nhs.uk\)](#)

Promoting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing (GOV.UK 2015 updated 2021)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice: 0 – 25 years (GOV.UK Jan 2015 updated 2020)

Transforming Children and Young People's Mental health Provision: A Green Paper Outcome- (GOV.UK 2018)

Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE 2018)

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNICEF UK

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Safeguarding

Priory Park Community School Safeguarding Information

GOV. UK Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

Safeguarding (DfE update 2021)

Priory Park Community School Team Teach

SEND

Priory Park Community School SEND Information

Medical Conditions

Dudley Medical Conditions

Self-Harm

Priory Park Community School Self-Harm Policy (2023-2026)

Introduction

Priory Park Community School

Priory Park Community School is an independent school in the borough of Dudley, that provides education and support for young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties or who are at significant risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream school.

Here at Priory Park Community School, we choose the ethos and values 'Include, Inspire, Empower' in recognition that not all young people have the same life chances, and we want to change that by the provision of an excellent education, led by positive role models and relationships which support wellbeing and build a sense of belonging and community. We also recognise that the mental health of our young people is an important factor and can affect learning and achievement. In response, we provide a wide and varied curriculum which offers opportunities for young people to learn and achieve and improve by motivating and building self-confidence and improving attendance and engagement with education.

Staff are aware that behaviour, whether it is withdrawn, anxious, depressed, disruptive, or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

We recognise that all school staff including non-teaching staff and the Governing Board can play an important role in preventing self-harm, building resilience, and supporting young people and parents/carers of young people engaging in self-harm.

Policy Purpose

This document describes Priory Park Community School's Integrated Approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school with young people, staff, partners, parents, carers, and the local community. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff, including non-teaching staff and associates and the Governing body.

Policy Aims

This Policy Aims to promote the practice of positive mental health and wellbeing support for young people, staff, parents, and carers as part of an embedded Integrated Approach. In taking an Integrated Approach to mental health and wellbeing, we are committed to the following aims of this policy:

- Knowing the young person well
- Staff training and support
- Parental Involvement and Engagement
- A Multi-agency approach.

Named Supporting Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Roles

Named Mental Health Lead: Miss Stephanie Loftus

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mrs Julie Davies

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Mrs Natalie Kirby

SENDCO: Miss Stephanie Loftus

Pastoral Managers: Mrs Sally Webb and Mr Andrew Feledziak

Senior Leadership Team: Headteacher Mr Stuart Playford, Deputy Headteacher, Mr Tim Hucknall, Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs Julie Davies

Named Governor with Lead on Mental Health: Mrs Jo Wood

Priory Park Community School – An Integrated Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing

Knowing the Young Person well

We aim to identify young people with mental health needs, as early as possible to prevent deterioration and to ensure appropriate support is in place. We will identify needs by building a profile for each young person to include information gathered at referral, induction and analysing and understanding behaviour, so staff can respond with appropriate support and interventions.

We want all our staff to know each of our young people well, to build positive relationships and ensure that young people know they have a trusted team around them. We will offer our young people a targeted package of care and education so that they achieve the best possible outcomes.

Targeted Support

Priory Park Community School offers young people targeted support by following various processes to include:

- Provision of a safe environment to enable young people to express themselves and be listened to
- We ensure the welfare and safety of young people is paramount through our safeguarding procedures
- Early Identification of any unmet need and ensure the correct support is implemented
- Involvement parents and carers in all aspects of their child's care and education
- Involvement of young people in the decision-making processes in relation to their care and education; engendering open and honest relationships
- Monitoring, review and evaluate all aspects of care and education within the school.

Enabling and Empowering Young People's Voice

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNICEF UK says that children and young people should have a say in decisions that affect their lives. Priory Park Community School agrees with this statement. We have a School Council who provide an important voice in the decision-making process within the school.

As a staff team we are keen to hear young people's views about our approach, curriculum and how we promote an Integrated Approach to mental health and wellbeing. It is their school, and a shared responsibility supports a sense of pride and belonging.

Staff Training and Support

Priory Park Community School recognise that an Integrated Approach to mental health and wellbeing begins with the staff. If staff are cared for and emotionally and mentally healthy, this will empower them to provide the best possible service to our young people.

Leaders of Priory Park Community School work with other staff to coordinate activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing. Leaders will provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates. Leaders also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

The leadership team recognise that at times staff may experience stress or be exposed to stressful environments and will monitor and address stress levels within the staff team.

We will aim to do this through:

- Regular meetings with managers and mentors
- Daily Debriefings – a recorded process with action follow up
- Informal conversations
- Monitoring of sickness records (contact to be made, as and when required to offer support).

Staff at Priory Park Community School will have access to:

- Regular CPD
- Advice and Support from key members of staff
- Career progression.

The importance of staff self-care support is recognised, and training offered on the value of self-care and work life balance, alongside the opportunity to develop a self-care plan to support a work/life balance.

Staff at Priory Park Community School also have access to a 'Mentoring Young People' course through developing youth practice and the theory-based approach of William Glasser-Choice Theory, looking at basic needs, building positive relationships, behaviour, perceptions and developing conversations.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Information for all Staff

All staff at Priory Park Community School, have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, and to understand about protective factors and risk factors for mental health. Our young people will require additional help, and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of a decline in mental health and ensure that young people get early intervention and access to the support they need.

All staff understand the importance of reflecting on their work and acting as reflective practitioners to monitor, review and adapt their approach to ensure each young person makes progress.

Staff also understand about possible risk factors that might make some young people more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death, and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying.

Factors that protect young people from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, emotional literacy, a sense of worth and connection to others and belonging are also understood by staff.

Young People - Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a young person 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 to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs. Julie Davies (DSL) Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Mrs Natalie Kirby or a member of the Senior Leadership Team and enter concerns on our safeguarding database CPOMS.

Possible warning signs include but are not limited to:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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
- Changes to medication and/or not being compliant with medication prescribed
- If in doubt – check it out with the young person and/or other staff members.

Supporting Peers

When a young person 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 to do so properly. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that young people may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support and record our concerns on Priory Park Community School CPOMS system. Concerns also need to be reported Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs. Julie Davies (DSL) Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Mrs Natalie Kirby or a member of the Senior Leadership Team

Managing Disclosures

A young person 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 young person 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 and not advise, only asking questions to confirm what the young person said. The young person's emotional and physical safety is of paramount importance and therefore staff members are expected to record the information, rather than exploring reasons behind the concerning behaviour.

All disclosures should be recorded on the Priory Park Community School CPOMS system and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs. Julie Davis or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Remember listen, don't judge, take what is said seriously and report it.

For further information, please refer to [Priory Park Community School Safeguarding Information](#)

Confidentiality

Our young people understand that "confidentiality" does not equal "secrecy". Any disclosure will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Julie Davies, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, (DDSL) Natalie Kirby or a member of the Senior Leadership Team and reported on CPOMS. Further steps will be taken at the discretion of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Parents and carers will be informed of any disclosure at the discretion of the DSL or DDSL/Senior Leadership Team in the absence of DSL. If informing parents/carers is deemed appropriate, young people may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. If this is the case and the risk of harm is not imminent, the young person will be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents and carers. Young people will be given the option of the school informing parents for them or with them.

Parental Involvement and Engagement

Priory Park Community School offers a warm, welcoming environment and encourages high parental engagement, team support and places the importance of positive mental health and wellbeing at the centre of our work.

Working collaboratively with parents and carers

Priory Park Community School recognises the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting children who have mental health needs. We also recognise that effective communication between home and school is important to provide successful, robust, and cohesive support systems for our young people.

From our first meeting, our pastoral team will work to build positive relationships with our young people and their families. Our transition period will be tailored to meet the needs of our young people on an individual level. We will meet with our parent's/carers at the earliest opportunity to discuss the importance of positive mental health for learning. We ask parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child has, and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing.

The support of parents and carers and the sharing of information with the school assists us to better support their child from the outset and to accurately build a profile of young people attending our school.

To support our parents/carers, Priory Park Community School aims to:

- Offer open lines of communication, open days, parents' afternoon, and other events to encourage engagement and keep parents fully up to date with their child's progress through school
- Share strategies to support their child's needs
- Staff will keep in regular communication with parents/carers and carry out home visits when required
- Offer training programmes and support for parents/carers on a range of key issues and subjects
- Provide a room within the school that parents/carers can use to support their child during difficult transitions.

When a concern has been raised, Priory Park Community School will:

- Contact parents/carers (although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls
- Make a record of any meetings and agreed next steps
- Discuss how the parents/carers can support their child
- Keep parents/carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about support or any interventions provided

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and young people may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. We give young people the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health needs for themselves or accompanying and supporting them to do so.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the young person, and in the rare occasion that parents and carers are not accessing services, we will seek advice from the Local Authority, or other health care professionals.

We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs. Parental support and workshops are offered from partners of Priory Park Community School.

A Multi-Agency Approach

Priory Park Community School will always aim to work collaboratively and cohesively to meet the needs of our young people. We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some young people will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to young people with mental health needs and their families.

Community Partnership

As a community focused school which is unique to the borough, we offer a broad and balanced core curriculum and focus on mentoring through sporting activities. This is delivered through a strong partnership with Priory Park Boxing Club and outdoor education, making use of the Wren's Nest Nature Reserve, a geological Site of Special Scientific Interest and one of the most important geological locations in Britain. Wren's Nest is also a Local Nature Reserve, a National Nature Reserve (NNR) and Scheduled Ancient Monument, so lends itself perfectly to our cross curricular learning.

Our curriculum is also offered in partnership with the iCan Programme which provides a complete intervention for young people at risk of offending or those at risk of school exclusion. The iCan Programme is full time during the day with education provided by our school, alongside opportunities for additional hours at the boxing club for young people who wish to continue accessing the boxing club.

The iCan Programme has the capacity to support the completion of an Education Health and Care Plan if required for a young person on the programme, at which point the Programme can then support our young people when they leave Priory Park Community School and until the age of 25.

How our curriculum supports the mental health and wellbeing of our young people:

- The delivery and completion of The West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit's Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme is fully embedded into the curriculum delivered here at Priory Park Community School
- We offer delivery and completion of the Police Clubs Olympic Boxing Contender AM-Box programme at Priory Park Amateur Boxing Club
- We deliver therapeutic interventions and mentoring by qualified staff both here at Priory Park Community School and at Priory Park Amateur Boxing Club
- We deliver the continuation of key stage 3 and 4 curriculum and qualifications throughout the programme
- We offer enrolment onto the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme
- Support is ongoing with our out of school (evening/weekend) support and intervention from Priory Park Boxing Club.
- Parental support and workshops are offered by partners of Priory Park Community School

We will encourage and welcome support from partnerships and professionals in our area:

Partnerships

- YMCA
- RCL Partners
- Dudley Counselling Service
- Jasmine Road Community Gardens
- Millennium Gardens

Professionals

- CAMHS
- Social Care
- Youth Justice Service
- Youth Workers
- Family Support Workers

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, young people and parents and carers are aware of sources of mental health and wellbeing support within school and in the local community. We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to young people within relevant parts of the curriculum and during interventions. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we understand that we will increase the chance of young people accessing the support they need. We will support our young people to understand what help is available in terms of: Who it is aimed at, How to access it, Why to access it, What is likely to happen next.

Monitoring and Review – Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

APPENDIX 1

Current Statistics and Prevalence

The impact of mental ill health in young people Mental health statistics · MHFA England 2022. Mental ill health is the second-largest cause of burden of disease.

The economic costs of mental health issues in England have been estimated at £105 billion each year.

In an average classroom, ten children will have witnessed their parents separate, eight will have experienced severe physical violence, sexual abuse, or neglect, one will have experienced the death of a parent and seven will have been bullied.

Half of mental ill health starts by age 15 and 75% develops by age 18.

12.8% of young people aged 5-19 meet clinical criteria for a mental health disorder.

Women between the ages of 16 and 24 are almost three times as likely (26%) to experience a common mental health issue as males of the same age (9%)

The percentage of young people aged 5-15 with depression or anxiety increased from 3.9% in 2004 to 5.8% in 2017.

About 20% of young people with mental ill health wait more than six months to receive care from a specialist.

In a 2018 OECD survey of 15-year-olds, the UK ranked 29th for life satisfaction, out of a total of 30 OECD countries.

About 10% of young people aged 8-15 experience a low sense of wellbeing

Note: This report also states that older age groups have poorer wellbeing than younger age groups

Only one in eight children who have been sexually abused come to the attention of statutory agencies.

Up to 25% of teenagers have experienced physical violence in their intimate partner relationships.

The average wait for effective treatment for mental health problems is 10 years.

Imagine if you had a problem and it took that long to get the help you needed. You'd think it was unacceptable. You'd think something had to change. And you'd be right. (Children's Society, 2018).

APPENDIX 2

Emotional Health and Wellbeing Issues

Suicidal Feelings - Young people may experience complicated thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their own lives. Some young people never act on these feelings though they may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide apparently out of the blue.

[Help for suicidal thoughts - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Prevention of young suicide UK – POPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

[Suicide Prevention Young People \(rcpsych\)](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk)

[Suicidal Thoughts | Suicidal Ideation Signs & Symptoms | YoungMinds](#)

[Young Minds Information for Parents on Suicidal Thoughts](#)

[Suicide Prevention Young People \(rcpsych\)](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk)

Self-harm - Describes any behaviour where a young person causes harm to themselves to cope with thoughts, feelings, or experiences they are not able to manage in any other way. It most frequently takes the form of cutting, burning, or non-lethal overdoses in adolescents, while younger children and young people with special needs are more likely to pick or scratch at wounds, pull out their hair or bang or bruise themselves.

[Recommendations | Self-harm: assessment, management and preventing recurrence | Guidance | NICE 2022.](#)

[harmless](#) is an assessment and planning support resource for those who have contact with young people who are self-harming.

[MHF The Truth About Self-Harm A Guide](#)

[Self-harm : Mentally Healthy Schools](#)

[Self-harm - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

[Rethink Mental Illness self-harm-factsheet.pdf](#)

[Dudley safe and sound](#)

Crisis Support - If your child's life or the life of another child is in immediate risk or danger call 999. If it's not a 999 emergency, you can call 111. If the emergency is related to a young person's mental health then the **CAMHS** Crisis team can be contacted 01384 324689 (9-5) or out of hours 01922 607000.

Black Country Healthcare Foundation Trust offer a 24/7 mental health telephone support line where children, young people and families/carers can access advice and support from a **CAMHS** healthcare **professional**. This can be accessed by calling 0800 008 6516.

Information for Young People

Dudley Happierminds Information for young people, parents, carers, school-based staff

ChildLine (if you are under 18) - call 0800 1111 anytime for free or follow the link to see other online or chat options

Shout crisis text line - text SHOUT to 85258 for free, 24/7 support across the UK

Alumina (previously Self Harm UK) an online chat-based 7-week course for 11–19-year-olds, run in groups of up to 14 people by trained counsellors.

Self-harm | Signs of Self-harm And Getting Help | YoungMinds

Problems at school | How To Deal With Problems At School | YoungMinds has information and signposting for young people who self-harm.

Information for Families/Carers & Friends

Samaritans (if you are 18 or over) - call 116 123 anytime for free, whatever you're going through

SANE (for over 16's) - call 0300 304 7000 from 4:00pm-10:00pm any day of the year for emotional support

Harmless supports people who self-harm and their families and friends.

Depression

Ups and downs are a normal part of life for all of us, but for someone who is suffering from depression these ups and downs may be more extreme. Feelings of failure, hopelessness, numbness or sadness may invade their day-to-day life over an extended period of weeks or months and have a significant impact on their behaviour and ability and motivation to engage in day-to-day activities.

[Depression - for schools - stem4](#) For Staff

[Depression | Signs & Symptoms of Depression | YoungMinds](#) For Young People

[Depression in children and young people - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) For Parents/Carers

Anxiety, Panic Attacks and Phobias

Anxiety can take many forms in children and young people, and it is something that each of us experiences at low levels as part of normal life. When thoughts of anxiety, fear or panic are repeatedly present over several weeks or months and/or they are beginning to impact on a young person's ability to access or enjoy day-to-day life, intervention is needed.

[Get help with anxiety, fear or panic - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) For Staff

[Coping with anxiety | The Children's Society \(childrenssociety.org.uk\)](#) For Young People

[What is anxiety? - The Mix](#) For Young People

[Helping your child - Anxiety UK](#) For Parents/Carers

Obsessions and Compulsions

Obsessions describe intrusive thoughts or feelings that enter our minds which are disturbing or upsetting; compulsions are the behaviours we carry out to manage those thoughts or feelings. For example, a young person may be constantly worried that their house will burn down if they don't turn off all switches before leaving the house. They may respond to these thoughts by repeatedly checking switches, perhaps returning home several times to do so. Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can take many forms – it is not just about cleaning and checking.

OCD UK: www.ocduk.org/ocd For Staff

[What is obsessive compulsive disorder? - The Mix](#) For Young People

[Useful contacts - OCD - Mind](#) For Parents/Carers

Eating Problems

Food, weight, and shape may be used as a way of coping with, or communicating about, difficult thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that a young person experiences day to day. Some young people develop eating disorders such as anorexia (where food intake is restricted), binge eating disorder and bulimia nervosa (a cycle of bingeing and purging). Other young people, particularly those of primary or preschool age, may develop problematic behaviours around food including refusing to eat in certain situations or with certain people. This can be a way of communicating messages the child does not have the words to convey.

beateatingdisorders.org.uk For Young People

Childmind.Org Boys and Eating Disorders

Healthtalk.org Eating Disorders Physical Symptoms

[Eating Disorders - Advice](#) Staff and Parents/Carers

APPENDIX 3

Further Guidance and Advice Documents & Links to Websites

For Staff

Policy & Guidance

Children and young people's mental health: government response - GOV.UK
(www.gov.uk) (GOV.UK 2022)

Recommendations | Self-harm: assessment, management and preventing recurrence |
Guidance | NICE(2022)

Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges. (DfE 2021)

Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing (PHE 2021)

Keeping Children Safe in Education A statutory guidance for schools and colleges.
Department for Education (GOV.UK updated 2021)

UNCRC summary-1 1.pdf (unicef.org.uk) Summary of the UN Convention on the Right of a
Child (2019)

PHSE Association.org. Mental-Health Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental
health and emotional wellbeing (PHSE & DfE updated 2021)

Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Departmental advice for school staff. (DfE 2014,
updated 2018)

Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions A statutory guidance for governing
bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. Department for
Education (GOV.UK 2014 updated 2017)

Counselling in Schools

Counselling in Schools A blueprint for the future - departmental advice for school staff and
counsellors. (DfE 2015 updated 2016)

School counselling in England campaign (bacp.co.uk) (British Association Counsellors &
Psychotherapists BACP 2022)

BACP CYP Competence framework 2022 (Age 4-18)

Support & Resource Mental Health and Wellbeing

[Mental Health Resources for Teachers and Teaching Staff \(GOV.UK 2021\)](#)

[Schools and Mental Health | CYPMHC](#)

[Samaritans](#)

[Heads Together](#) (Challenges mental health stigma through conversation)

[NHS \(National & Crisis Mental Health Service Information\)](#)

[Information on Children's Health and Wellbeing \(Children's Society 2021\)](#)

www.cwmt.org.uk (Charlie Whaler)

annafreud.org School Resources

Support for Young People Whose Parents/Carers are in Prison

nicco.org.uk - Directory of Services and Resources for Staff and Families

Information for Young People

[ChildLine](#) (if you are under 18) - call 0800 1111 anytime for free or follow the link to see other online or chat options

[Shout](#) crisis text line - text SHOUT to 85258 for free, 24/7 support across the UK

[Alumina](#) (previously Self Harm UK) an online chat-based 7-week course for 11–19-year-olds, run in groups of up to 14 people by trained counsellors.

[Young Minds Downloadable PDF Information Leaflets](#)

Information for Parents/Carers

[Young Minds Parental information A-Z Guide](#)

[Young Minds Downloadable PDF Information Leaflets](#)

[Samaritans](#) (if you are 18 or over) - call 116 123 anytime for free, whatever you're going through

[SANE](#) (for over 16's) - call 0300 304 7000 from 4:00pm-10:00pm any day of the year for emotional support

[Prison Advice](#) Families Help Line

[Families outside](#) For Families

APPENDIX 4

Data Sources

Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing - OHID (phe.org.uk 2021) Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing profiling tool collates and analyses a wide range of publicly available data on risk, prevalence and detail (including cost data) on those services that support children with, or vulnerable to, mental illness. It enables benchmarking of data between areas.

Knowledge hub - School Health - ChiMat (2022) ChiMat school health hub provides access to resources relating to the commissioning and delivery of health services for school children and young people and its associated good practice, including the new service offer for school nursing.

WHO/Europe | Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) - Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Health behaviour of school age children is an international cross-sectional study that takes place in 43 countries and is concerned with the determinants of young people's health and wellbeing.

APPENDIX 5

Talking to Young People: Mental Health Disclosures

The advice below is from young people themselves, in their own words, together with some additional ideas to help you in initial conversations with students when they disclose mental health concerns. This advice should be considered alongside relevant school policies on pastoral care and child protection and discussed with relevant colleagues as appropriate. (www.cwmt.org.uk)

Focus on Listening

“She listened, and I mean REALLY listened. She didn’t interrupt me or ask me to explain myself or anything, she just let me talk and talk and talk. I had been unsure about talking to anyone, but I knew quite quickly that I’d chosen the right person to talk to and that it would be a turning point.”

If a young person has come to you, it’s because they trust you and feel a need to share their difficulties with someone. Let them talk. Ask occasional open questions if you need to encourage them to keep exploring their feelings and opening up to you. Just letting them pour out what they are thinking will make a huge difference and marks a huge first step in recovery. Up until now they may not have admitted even to themselves that there is a problem.

Don’t talk too much

“Sometimes it’s hard to explain what’s going on in my head – it doesn’t make a lot of sense and I’ve kind of gotten used to keeping myself to myself. But just ‘cos I’m struggling to find the right words doesn’t mean you should help me. Just keep quiet, I’ll get there in the end.”

The young person should be talking at least three quarters of the time. If that’s not the case, then you need to redress the balance. You are here to listen, not to talk. Sometimes the conversation may lapse into silence. Try not to give in to the urge to fill the gap, but rather wait until the young person does so. This can often lead to them exploring their feelings more deeply. Of course, you should interject occasionally, perhaps with questions to the young person to explore certain topics they’ve touched on more deeply, or to show that you understand and are supportive. Don’t feel an urge to over-analyse the situation or try to offer answers. This all comes later. For now, your role is simply one of supportive listener. So, make sure you’re listening!

Don’t pretend to understand

“I think that all teachers got taught on some course somewhere to say ‘I understand how that must feel’ the moment you open up. YOU DON’T – don’t even pretend to, it’s not helpful, it’s insulting.”

The concept of a mental health difficulty such as an eating disorder or obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) can seem completely alien if you’ve never experienced these difficulties first hand. Try to listen to what they are saying and encourage them to talk, and you’ll slowly start to understand what steps they might be ready to take to start making some changes.

Don't be afraid to make eye contact

"She was so disgusted by what I told her that she couldn't bear to look at me."

It's important to try to maintain a natural level of eye contact (even if you must think very hard about doing so and it doesn't feel natural to you at all). If you make too much eye contact, the young person may interpret this as you are staring at them. They may think that you are horrified about what they are saying. On the other hand, if you don't make eye contact at all then a young person may interpret this as you are being disgusted by them – to the extent that you can't bring yourself to look at them. Trying to maintain natural eye contact will convey a very positive message to the young person.

Offer support

"I was worried how she'd react, but my Mum just listened then said, 'How can I support you?' – no one had asked me that before and it made me realise that she cared. Between us we thought of some practical things she could do to help me stop self-harming."

Never leave this kind of conversation without agreeing next steps. These will be informed by your conversations with appropriate colleagues and the schools' policies on such issues. Whatever happens, you should have some form of next steps to carry out after the conversation, because this will help the young person to realise that you're working with them to move things forward.

Acknowledge how hard it is to discuss these issues

"Talking about my bingeing for the first time was the hardest thing I ever did. When I was done talking, my teacher looked me in the eye and said, 'That must have been really tough' – he was right, it was, but it meant so much that he realised what a big deal it was for me."

It can take a young person weeks or even months to admit to themselves they have a problem, let alone share that with anyone else. If a young person chooses to confide in you, you should feel proud and privileged that they have such a high level of trust in you. Acknowledging both how brave they have been, and how glad you are they chose to speak to you, conveys positive messages of support to the young person.

Don't assume that an apparently negative response is actually a negative response

"The anorexic voice in my head was telling me to push help away so I was saying no. But there was a tiny part of me that wanted to get better. I just couldn't say it out loud or else I'd have to punish myself."

Even though a young person has confided in you and may even have expressed a desire to get on top of their illness, that doesn't mean they'll readily accept help. The illness may ensure they resist any form of help for as long as they possibly can. Don't be offended or upset if your offers of help are met with anger, indifference, it's the illness talking, not the young person.

Never break your promises

“Whatever you say you’ll do, you have to do or else the trust we’ve built in you will be smashed to smithereens. And never lie. Just be honest. If you’re going to tell someone, just be upfront about it, we can handle that, what we can’t handle is having our trust broken.”

Above all else, a young person wants to know they can trust you.

That means if they want you to keep their issues confidential and you can’t then you must be honest. Explain that, whilst you can’t keep it a secret, you can ensure that it is handled within the school’s policy of confidentiality and that only those who need to know about it to help will know about the situation. You can also be honest about the fact you don’t have all the answers or aren’t exactly sure what will happen next. Consider yourself the young person’s ally rather than their saviour and think about which next steps you can take together, always ensuring you follow relevant policies and consult appropriate colleagues.
