



**STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING
POLICY**

INSIGHT MAT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CHANGE CONTROL

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Spring 2023	1.a	Updated following review by Trustees
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Next Review	Summer 2026
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AUTHORISATION

Approved at Board Meeting on 24th June 2025

Signed:



24-6-25

Chair of Board

Date

Student Health and Wellbeing Policy

Introduction

The Insight MAT (IMAT) recognises the importance of promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all students within the MAT. We pursue this aim using both whole school approaches and specialised, targeted interventions for individuals.

“Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”. (World Health Organization 2013).

We recognise that every member of our school community has mental health which needs looking after and that each individual has a responsibility to look after their own mental fitness and build emotional resilience. In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health, whether this be mild, moderate or severe.

By developing and implementing proven practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

Aims

Raise the profile of the importance of positive mental health and wellbeing for students within the IMAT:

- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health in students
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health, their peers and parents or carers
- Signpost parents/carers and students to organisations to aid self-help in order to promote positive mental health

It is known that good mental health starts in childhood, 75% of adult mental health problems start before someone is 18 years old (Action for Children 2020).

The IMAT want to ensure that all sites within our MAT make a positive impact on the mental health and wellbeing of our young people, as well as building resilience and reducing stigma around mental health.

Key Elements

Whilst this policy pertains to all employees and, as appropriate, Governors, Trustees, Members, contractors, visitors and volunteers connected with the Insight Multi-Academy Trust, Local Academy Committee of individual academies have been delegated responsibility to specify local

INSIGHT MAT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

arrangements for the operation of this policy within their academy. These are detailed within Appendix 1 of this policy.

Part of this will be equipping students to be able to articulate their emotions and have the right vocabulary to talk about their own mental health. This will enable our young people to look after their mental and physical health, build positive relationships, ask for help if needed and to set and follow their own academic and personal goals and reach their full potential.

Definitions

Mental Wellbeing: - for the purpose of this policy mental wellbeing is children and young people's happiness, life satisfaction and positive functioning.

Mental Health: - a person's condition with regard to their psychological and emotional wellbeing.

Mental Fitness:- *having and maintaining a state of well-being and cultivating a way of how to think, behave and feel.*

Emotional Resilience:- *the ability to respond appropriately to stressful or unexpected situations.*

Roles and responsibilities

Local Academy Committee (LAC)

To recognise that all students have mental health and to ensure that staff have the resources and training to be pro-active when discussing mental health with students. Also, to ensure that staff have the relevant knowledge to signpost students and parents/carers to support agencies and reputable charities who provide support for young people.

Headteachers

If students' health and wellbeing needs are unmet, the impact on teaching and learning will be considerable. The Headteachers of all schools within the IMAT have the responsibility to ensure that emotional wellbeing and mental health are integral to the work of the Pastoral teams. This will enable students, with the support of their teachers, to build mental fitness, emotional resilience, confidence and flourish.

Under DfE statutory guidance (Working together to improve school attendance (published February 2024, applies from 19th August 2024)) all staff have a responsibility for attendance. Therefore, where mental health is having a negative impact on attendance headteachers should be aware of the school's responsibilities to support students' mental health and to ensure that the leader responsible for attendance in each school acts to ensure high levels of school attendance by proactively working with the School Mental Health Support Team (MHST) (if the MHST is operating in the school's area), and working with students and their families to address any issues.

Staff

Teaching staff have a responsibility to deliver the Personal, Social, Health. Economic (PSHE) Education and the Form Time programme. The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our

INSIGHT MAT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally fit and to develop emotional resilience are included in these programmes.

The specific content of the PSHE, RSE and Form Time programmes will be constantly reviewed to suit the specific needs of the cohort that are being taught. There will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. The school's values will be continually woven into teaching delivery.

Student, staff and parent/carer feedback, as well as local and national evidence-based research will be used regularly to feed into all teaching of mental health and wellbeing.

School 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 communicate their concerns via the school's method of recording safeguarding concerns.

Possible warning signs include (this list is by no means exhaustive):

- 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
- Avoiding PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Loss of interest in hobbies

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students, and parents/carers are aware of sources of support within schools and in the local communities. What support is available within our schools and local communities, who it is aimed at and how to access it.

A range of relevant sources of support will be displayed around schools within the IMAT and will be communicated to parents.

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.

INSIGHT MAT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health and wellbeing 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 first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' Staff should be open from the beginning with students regarding the issue of confidentiality.

Disclosures must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is also the Mental Health Lead, or to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. This helps to safeguard staff's emotional wellbeing as they are no longer solely responsible for the student's mental health and wellbeing concern, it ensures continuity of care in staff absence; and it 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.

If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student, then staff should discuss with the student who we are passing these concerns onto, who we are going to talk to, what we are going to tell them and why we need to tell them.

Parents/carers must always be informed if a student is at risk without delay. In some circumstances, with lowered risk, students may choose to tell their parents/carers themselves, which is also encouraged. If this is the case, the student should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents/carers. School should always give students the option of us informing parents/carers for them or with them. If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, before parents/carers are contacted, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed immediately in person, with concern clearly documented on the schools' method of recording safeguarding issues.

Care Plans and Risk assessments

It may be helpful to draw up either a Care Plan or risk assessment for students causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health.

The plan should always involve the student, the parents/carers, Deputy Headteacher i/c PDW who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Mental Health Lead and relevant health professionals, where possible.

This can include:

- Details of a student's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Level of risk to self or others
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do and who to contact in an emergency
- Preventative measures

INSIGHT MAT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Parents/carers

Parents/carers have a responsibility to support their child's health and wellbeing by ensuring their children pro-actively look after their own wellbeing. Regular messages will be sent home via student bulletin, Safeguarding Newsletter, advice provided during parental meetings. Parents/carers should:

- Encourage your children to connect with others - talk about worries, look after physical wellbeing as this has an impact on their mental wellness and how they are emotionally.
- Use social media responsibly so as to avoid online fall-outs, toxic friendships, addiction to social media and exposure to potential dangers online (e.g unhealthy influencers). Monitor your child's use of their mobile phones, social media, the internet and online gaming to ensure their online safety.
- Regularly drinking enough water - 6-8 glasses per day
- Ensuring their children have enough sleep – As a guide, young people between the ages of 6-13 years old should have around 9-11 hours' sleep each night, and for ages 14-17 the guidance is 8-10 hours
- Diet – A healthy diet is important for children's health and wellbeing. Energy and nutrients from food will give the body the support it needs to go through the many physical changes of adolescence. Recommendations include don't skip meals - especially breakfast, eat your 5 a day (fruit and vegetables), healthy snacks and drinks, stay hydrated (6-8 glasses a day- water and lower fat milk are both healthy choices), avoid caffeine and high sugar drinks, iron can help if feeling run down (sources included red meat and lentils)
- Remain active - consider walking or gardening.

Supporting Parents/carers

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents/carers to learn of their child's issues. We should be accepting of this and give the parent/carer time to reflect.

We need to be sensitive in our approach to parents/carers. Before disclosing to parents/carers, we should consider the following questions (on a case-by-case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school or at their home?
- Who should be present? Consider parents/carers, the student, and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

We should always highlight further sources of information and give leaflets to take away where possible. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents/carers can also be helpful too, e.g. parent/carer helplines and websites.

Students

Students have a responsibility for their own mental health, mental fitness, emotional resilience and wellbeing. Advice to help with this include;

- Be Active... Go for a walk or run. Step outside.

INSIGHT MAT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Keep Learning ... Try something new. Rediscover an old interest.
- Give ... Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone.
- Connect ... With the people around you. ...
- Take Notice ... Be curious.
- Care for the Planet ... look after your community and the world.

Links to other Policies

- Achievement and Positive Behaviour Policy
- Attendance
- Safeguarding – Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions
- Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School
- Equality

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Staffing and Standards Sub-committee of the Insight MAT Board will formally review this policy annually or more frequently if circumstances or legislation suggest it is appropriate.

INSIGHT MAT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Appendix 1 (Specific elements agreed for Sir Graham Balfour School)

Roles and Responsibilities

Mental Health Lead (who is normally the Deputy Headteacher i/c Personal Development and Welfare)

- Will develop the strategic plan for Mental Wellbeing.
- Monitor and evaluate the RSE/PSHE and Form time programme to ensure it remains fit for purpose
- Provide training for all staff regarding the identification of mental health issues and how we can support students in and outside of school.

Staff

All teaching staff are Form Tutors and therefore have a responsibility to deliver the Personal, Social, Health, Economic (PSHE) Education and the Form Time programme. The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included in these programmes.

The Form Time programme incorporates Personal, Social, Health, Economic (PSHE) education. The statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) statutory requirements was implemented from September 2021. This element is delivered by the Deputy Headteacher i/c PDW and Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for PDW and the Student Support Manager. The curriculum has a specific strand for Health and Wellbeing.

The specific content of the PSHE, RSE and Form Time programmes will be constantly reviewed to suit the specific needs of the cohort that are being taught. There will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. The school's values will be continually woven into teaching delivery.

Signposting

A range of relevant sources of support will be displayed around the Student Hub, on the school website, social media and the Safeguarding Newsletters. These will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum.

Managing Disclosures

Any disclosures made must be communicated to parents within 24 hours and recorded on My Concern.