



A mentally healthy school is one that adopts a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. It is a school that helps children flourish, learn and succeed by providing opportunities for them, and the adults around them, to develop the strengths and coping skills that underpin resilience.  
(Mentally Healthy Schools)

This document is in response to the Scottish Government's Mental Health Strategy 2017 – 27. It will focus on:

- Vision
- Strategies
- Lead members of staff
- Teaching
- Working in Partnership
- Warning signs
- Managing a disclosure
- Supporting peers
- Signposting
- Training
- Review

This is linked to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) articles 3,12,13,17,24 and 29. It is intended to provide a framework for effective mental health and wellbeing in Paisley Grammar School through the NHS/GGC Mental Health Improvement & Early Intervention Framework for Children and Young People (6 Box Framework).

## Vision

At Paisley Grammar School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing which can affect their learning and achievement. We aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and children.

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise. This encompasses:

- Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
- Helping children to develop social relationships that support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Helping children to be resilient learners.
- Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
- Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
- Effectively working with parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience. We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

## Strategies

The school has a key role in promoting positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. We have developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Assemblies to raise awareness of mental health
- Buddy programme/ Mental Health Ambassadors/ Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)
- Transition programmes to secondary schools
- Celebrating pupil achievements
- Displays within the school



- It's okay to say ... (our whole school strapline)
- Use of the wellbeing wheel
- Group work eg Seasons for Growth, exam stress
- Mental health teaching programmes
- Place2Be and The Exchange Counselling Service
- Homelink inputs
- Staff mental health training
- Staff health and wellbeing sessions
- Parental training programmes
- Working with our Educational Psychologists
- Multi-agency working and planning

## Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of children, staff with a specific relevant remit include:

Our wellbeing ambassadors:

Miss Stockan  
Mrs Kennedy  
Mrs Ahlfeld  
Mrs Campbell

Mrs Kerr  
Miss Callaghan  
Mrs Hood  
Mrs McCrory

These staff play a key role in supporting our children.

Louise McCrory – Designated Child Protection Officer

Our Island teams:

	DHT	PT Pupil Support	PS Teacher
IONA	Mrs L McCrory	Mrs L Kerr	Ms L Kennedy
MULL	Mrs G Glover	Mrs J Campbell	Mr Denholm
SKYE	Mr G Crawford	Ms E Stockan	Miss S Pearson
LEWIS	Mrs N Hood/Mr A Davidson	Miss Callaghan	Ms Gibson

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to the Pupil Support staff in the first instance. **If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm, Child Protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated Child Protection Officer, or Head Teacher and Appendix 3 'Record of Concern Alert' form completed.** If the child presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services, if necessary.

If you need **general advice** regarding a child's mental health or a child needs someone to have a discussion with please see one of our wellbeing ambassadors.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the PT Pupil Support.

## Teaching about Mental Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental skills for learning, life and work and our Personal Support Curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling children to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.



## Working in Partnership

We recognise 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 do have mental health needs. We ask parents and 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. All information will be treated in confidence.

When a concern has been raised, the school will:

- Contact parents and carers and discuss/meet with them (In almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)
- Offer information to take away and signposting to further support.
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting.
- Agree a plan including clear next steps.
- Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child.
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

In order to support parents and carers we will: -

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website and app.
- Ensure that all parents and carers are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through parents and information evenings.

## Warning signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a child 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 Pupil Support.

Possible warning signs may include:

Evident changes in behaviour	Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental	Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
Changes in eating / sleeping habits	Secretive behaviour
Increased isolation from friends and family, becoming socially withdrawn	Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
Changes in activity and mood, for example, seemingly overly cheerful after a bout of depression	An increase in lateness to or absence from school
Reduced concentration	Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
Discontinued hobbies or interests	Failure to take care of personal appearance



## Managing a Disclosure

A child may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, so **all** staff need to know how to respond sensitively and appropriately to a disclosure.

If a child 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 advice and our first thoughts should be of the child's **emotional and physical safety** rather than of exploring 'Why?'.

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality with the child/young person. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns, we should discuss the following:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

## Supporting Peers

When a child 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 will be guided by conversations with the child who is suffering and 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 or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend may need 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

## Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children and parents/carers are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community – these will be available on our website and school app.

All of our staff have a QR code link on their ID badge to direct young people to appropriate resources to support them, this is also displayed throughout the school. There is also a QR code available for parents at our reception to direct them to supports.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help seeking by ensuring students understand:

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



## Training

Our aim is for all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do and where to get help.

As part of our in-service programme we will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning and understanding about issues related to mental health. We have several of our staff who have completed Seasons for growth training, Safe TALK/ASIST training and suicide awareness training. We have supported our S5 & S6 young people in training to become mental health ambassadors and they support younger pupils in the school.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing, such as annual health and wellbeing input, Wellbeing Wednesday, introduction of staff clubs, opportunities to talk together and our Social Committee.

## Document Review

This document will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in 2026.

Additionally, this document will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this document, this should be addressed to Louise McCrory our mental health lead via [enquiries@paisleygrammar.com](mailto:enquiries@paisleygrammar.com)

This document will always be immediately updated to reflect any staff changes.