

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy – Ipsley C of E Middle School Local Arrangements



1. School Commitment

As Team Ipsley, we strive to create a community where all flourish, following God's example by loving each other as He loves us. Together, we become the best versions of ourselves by being ambitious, courageous and kind, creating a community which can achieve anything we set our minds to.

To achieve this vision, Ipsley prioritises support for the mental health and wellbeing of its staff, pupils and wider community.

The designated senior mental health lead is Mr M Williams (Vice Principal).

He is supported in this primarily by the inclusion team, comprising Year Leaders, Behaviour and Wellbeing Leaders, Achievement Assistants and safeguarding leaders.

All staff who work at Ipsley are involved in supporting our colleagues, our pupils and our wider community. This shared care and compassion is a central tenet within the Team Ipsley philosophy.

2. Support for staff

Ipsley aspires to cultivate a culture where all staff feel supported to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing, to know when they need help, and have access to the right support at the right time. To foster this, Ipsley reviews its support for staff in line with the Department for Education Staff Wellbeing Charter. Through prioritising staff wellbeing in the School Improvement Plan, and active monitoring by all stakeholders, each strand of the wellbeing charter is regularly evaluated to ensure support for staff is robust.

Wellbeing Charter Commitment	Ipsley's Actions
Prioritise staff mental health	Staff mental health and wellbeing sits as a key area for development within the School Improvement Plan, reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team alongside other key priorities such as teaching and learning, curriculum, behaviour and attitudes and personal development. All middle and senior leadership line management meetings prioritise wellbeing as the first standing item on the agenda. Staffing concerns related to wellbeing are discussed weekly in Senior Leadership Team meetings. All staff participate in 'Friends and Family Weeks' at appropriate intervals throughout the year. In these weeks, no meetings take place outside of school hours to enable staff to leave school promptly if they wish to do so.

	The same considerations are given to mental health as to physical health in school absence procedures.
Give staff the support they need to take responsibility for their own and other people's wellbeing	The school has a trained Mental Health First Aider available to support staff at time of need. Leaders maintain an open-door policy, ensuring that they are available to support staff with conversations about wellbeing. The school actively promotes the Care First service, reminding staff of this availability at regular intervals.
Give managers access to the tools and resources they need to support the wellbeing of those they line manage	The Senior Leadership Team are equipped to support staff with tools to manage their wellbeing in relation to workload, including stress management. This is delivered supportively, with no sense of stigma. All middle and senior leadership line management meetings prioritise wellbeing as the first standing item on the agenda. Staffing concerns related to wellbeing are discussed weekly in Senior Leadership Team meetings. All middle and senior leadership line management meetings prioritise wellbeing as the first standing item on the agenda. Staffing concerns related to wellbeing are discussed weekly in Senior Leadership Team meetings.
Establish a clear communications policy	Weekly briefings ensure staff are aware of upcoming events each week. These briefings are emailed out and uploaded to Arbor to ensure all staff are able to read the updates if they are unable to attend or the briefing falls outside of their normal working hours. Daily calendar updates are delivered to all staff to remind them of key events in the next fortnight. Weekly updates are delivered to all staff to remind them of upcoming events, including Trust events, across the next term. Staff do not send emails between the hours of 6pm and 7am. Staff who wish do work during these times are encouraged to schedule delivery of messages within this time window.
Give staff a voice in decision-making	Leaders maintain an open-door policy, ensuring that they are available to support staff with conversations about wellbeing. Staff have opportunities to feed back to the Senior Leadership Team in anonymous surveys which measure staff wellbeing and encourage individual developmental comments. These are then fed back to staff, including actions taken by the Senior Leadership Team to make improvements.
Drive down unnecessary workload	Staff workload is a key consideration during implementation of all policies and procedures.

	Active work is undertaken to develop systems which minimise workload utilising the latest tools such as AI technologies, PowerAutomate processes and mobile devices. Staff are involved in anonymous surveys creating a channel to communicate areas where they feel workload may be onerous or there may be opportunities for improvements.
Champion flexible working and diversity	Flexible working requests are honoured where possible. Requests for leave are granted where possible to enable staff to attend important events such as children's school performances. The school actively participates in calendar events marking diversity, such as LGBT History Month and Black History Month. Staff are invited to play an active role within these where they wish to.
Create a good behaviour culture	Ipsley's behaviour and relationships policy is rooted in the latest educational research, and is reviewed regularly. Staff have opportunities to feed back at regular intervals around behaviour. Behaviour culture is supported and monitored by high levels of visibility from the Senior Leadership Team.
Support staff to progress in their careers	Staff are encouraged through performance management to consider their own career progression. The school fully engages with Trust continued professional development learning opportunities, including enabling staff to undertake their own Research Disciplined Inquiries (RDIs), NPQs, co-design programmes and ECT programmes. Professional development of staff is prioritised within the School Improvement Plan.
Include a sub-strategy for protecting leader wellbeing and mental health	All middle and senior leadership line management meetings prioritise wellbeing as the first standing item on the agenda. Staffing concerns related to wellbeing are discussed weekly in Senior Leadership Team meetings. Leaders are enabled to access coaching programmes where appropriate to support their own development and wellbeing.
Hold ourselves accountable, including by measuring staff wellbeing	Staff have opportunities to feed back to the Senior Leadership Team in anonymous surveys which measure staff wellbeing and encourage individual developmental comments. These are then fed back to staff, including actions taken by the Senior Leadership Team to make improvements.

3. Support for pupils

As detailed throughout this policy, Ipsley is committed to supporting pupils with developing the skills to maintain positive mental wellbeing, recognise when they need help and access the right support at the right time.

Ipsley's provisions are rooted in evidence-informed practice, primarily using approaches from Trauma Informed Schools UK. Ipsley also has a number of trained Youth Mental Health First Aiders, Emotional Literacy Support Assistant and Autism Lead Practitioner available to support pupils where required.

Provision is evaluated using the Anna Freud whole-school approach strands for a mentally healthy school. This is reviewed in partnership with external agencies, such as the NHS Wellbeing and Emotional Support Team (WEST) or other specialist partners where appropriate.

Key staff meet fortnightly at a filter meeting, bringing together the Vice Principal, Year Leaders, Behaviour and Wellbeing Leaders, the SEN team and the safeguarding team to discuss pupils in need of support. Any staff can refer a pupil to the filter meeting for discussion if they have concerns around their wellbeing.

A Team Around the Child (TAC) approach is then used to assess the pupils' needs, plan provision and put this into place. It is reviewed regularly. Pupils are allocated a 'wave' depending on their assessed level of need, and, in review, this can be increased or decreased in a graduated approach.

The wellbeing wave includes the following non-exhaustive provisions:

	Wellbeing Wave
Wave 4 <i>Highly bespoke support</i>	☐ Alternative provision ☐ EHC assessment request ☐ CCAS referral ☐ MET referral ☐ Reintegration timetable ☐ Curriculum enhancement provision ☐ SLT phone call(s)/meeting(s) with home
Wave 3 <i>Specialist/ Individualised support</i>	☐ SEMH/behavioural specialist referral ☐ CAMHS referral ☐ DDSL oversight ☐ Safety plan ☐ Be You programme ☐ External mentoring (CRUSH/RESPECT/Be You) ☐ Multi-agency meetings ☐ Vulnerable Managed Move request

Wave 2 Targeted support	☐ BWL (Intervention) mentoring group ☐ Signposting (Old Needleworks/Kooth) ☐ Be You programme ☐ External mentoring group (Reach4Wellbeing/CRUSH/Building Futures) ☐ Pastoral team strategies shared with staff (e.g. time out/journaling) ☐ Pastoral team enhanced pupil voice (three houses/SDQ/SNAP) ☐ WEST referral ☐ SEN referral
Wave 1 Universal support	☐ Tutor/teacher phone call home ☐ Tutor/teacher meeting with home ☐ Tutor support card ☐ Guidance shared with staff ☐ Tutor pupil voice ☐ 10% kinder

4. Support for the community

Ipsley is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its wider community. This is centred around a listening ear to the world around our school, creating channels to communicate inwardly and outwardly with care and compassion to support each other through times of challenge and hardship.

Ipsley recognises that schools hold an important role within the local area as a hub of support for the community. As a Church of England school, Ipsley considers this relationship to be akin to a church and its parish, loving our neighbours as God loves us.

Ipsley runs a series of regular events designed specifically to extend support into the community, such as:

Partnerships with Local Charities	Ipsley has a well-established and impactful relationship with local charity Redditch East Aspiring Community Hub (REACH). This enables joined-up working with families and across our local area to support families at times of need in relation to their mental health and wellbeing, signposting to appropriate supports, providing financial aid, offering safe and warm spaces and much more.
Support at Specific Times of Year	At particular times of year, such as the Christmas break or prior to the summer holiday, Ipsley recognises the additional pressures across our local community. As a school, we commit to working with local organisations to extend support to those in need. This has included working closely with the local church where pupil leaders attended to serve Christmas lunches to vulnerable members of the local community whilst enjoying performances from our school choir; partnering with a local charity for parents and carers in need to provide

	Christmas hampers including food and toys at a time of year where financial pressures are increased; and, networking with local activity funds and clubs to support families in finding free activities to enjoy safely and provide respite for parents and carers during the summer break.
Community Café	Twice a year, we invite all families from the local area to join our Community Café. Events have attracted between 400-600 people. The events provide opportunities to come together in a warm space with the provision of free food and drinks to participate in activities and access information. All staff at Ipsley participate in running the event. A range of information stalls are invited to the events guided by the needs of the community. These have included mental health specialists for children and adults, housing and financial support, SEND specialists, local clubs and activities, the Holiday Activities Fund, the Safer Neighbourhood Team, and more. Activities included in the event are free, and designed to be accessible for families to continue at home together. Feedback has been exceptionally positive from staff, pupils, families, external agencies and the wider community.
Harvest collections	Ipsley partners with Redditch Food Bank to collect for the harvest donation each year, with families invited to donate what they can to families in need. This relationship is long-standing, and an important feature of Ipsley's calendar.
Parenting groups/courses	Ipsley partners with Starting Well, REACH, Wellbeing and Emotional Support Team (WEST) and domestic abuse charities to offer parenting groups, courses and support to parents and carers in need. These close professional partnerships enable staff to target parents and carers in need and offer them support in a familiar safe space on the school site.