Speyside High School

Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

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Rationale & Policy Statement

Mental health can be defined as, "a state of well-being 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. With respect to children, an emphasis is placed on the developmental aspects, for instance, having a positive sense of identity, the ability to manage thoughts, emotions, as well as to build social relationships, and the aptitude to learn and to acquire an education, ultimately enabling their full active participation in society"
(World Health Organisation, 2014).

Speyside High School is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and the wider community – we use universal and specialised, targeted approaches to achieve this. Just as there are a huge range of things that support good mental health, there are many reasons, including adverse circumstances, why people develop mental health issues – poor mental health can affect anyone at any time. **It is OK not to be OK!**

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues. If staff, parents and pupils are alert to the early signs of poor mental health then appropriate supports can be accessed or put in place. Positive mental health is everybody's responsibility – we all have a role to play!

A Nurturing School

At Speyside High School we have a supportive and nurturing ethos where young people feel they belong, they are listened to and they and their families are valued. Our commitment to supporting both the pastoral and academic needs of our young people is reinforced through our vision of 'Happy, Healthy and High Achieving' and our four values:

Staff understand that supporting all young people and ensuring they make the best possible progress depends on the curriculum they provide, on learning and teaching of the highest quality and on their commitment to continuing professional development.

Policy Aims:

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all pupils, staff and the wider community.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues, including the early warning signs of poor mental health.
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues, including relevant continued professional development opportunities.
- Provide support to pupils and staff suffering poor mental health, including signposting to appropriate external agencies.

Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to support the mental health of pupils; staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Principal Teachers of Guidance	Miss Harley (Fiddich) Mrs Winwood-Young (Livet) Ms Rowley (Acting PTG)/Mr Craven (Rinnes)
Mental Health First Aiders	Mr Burns Mr Craven Mrs Goodbrand Ms Thornhill Mrs Winwood-Young
Year Heads	Mrs MacInnes (S1-S2) Mr Picksley (S3-S4) Mrs Duffy/Mr McWhirter (S5-S6)
Pupil Support DHT	Mrs MacInnes
Head Teacher	Mrs Goodbrand
Child Protection Co-ordinator Depute Child Protection Co-ordinator	Mrs MacInnes Mr Picksley
First Aiders	Contact the school office

Mental Health Supports

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school as well as the supports available externally.

We have a range of support available in school, as listed below:

- Principal Teachers of Guidance or any trusted adult
- Independent Counselling Service (referrals made through the Guidance Team)
- 'Chill-out Club' (Monday-Thursday break & lunch in the Wellbeing Hub)
- 'Seasons for Growth' programme (6-8 week programme which aims to strengthen the social and emotional wellbeing of young people who are dealing with significant loss and change) (referral made through the Guidance Team)
- School Library 'Self-help' section
- LGBT+ Support and Empowerment Group (see Ms Childs for further information)
- School Nurse (referrals made through the Guidance Team)
- Youth Workers (8-week group programme which focuses on areas such as friendships, self- esteem and resilience) (referral made through the Guidance Team)
- Inclusion Project Officer (short-term early interventions LIAM/My Star- mainly on a 1:1 targeted basis) (referral made through the Guidance Team)

The support available outside of school, including who it is aimed at and how the support is accessed, is outlined in **Appendix A**. This information is also available on our website.

LGBT+

Being in a minority or protected characteristic group can be challenging. If you are LGBT+, please know that we want Speyside High School to be a safe and secure space for you. The school's LGBT Group can support you in a number of issues including coming out, finding your support network, and signposting you to other agencies that can help (see P5 for further details). Speyside High School will support you to be your authentic self!

Warning Signs

We all go through times in our lives when we feel down, or anxious or confused – this is quite normal, but if we begin to find it difficult to carry out everyday tasks it could mean that we are experiencing a difficultly with our mental health.

If pupils become aware of signs which indicate a person could be experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues, these warning signs should be seriously considered. Here are some tips to support any peers that you have concerns about.

- Speak to the person in a quiet/private setting (if possible).
- Be calm, supportive, and non-judgemental but do not pretend to understand.
- Listen rather than give advice.
- Make appropriate eye contact and acknowledge how hard it is to discuss these issues.
- Never promise to keep a secret. Let them know who you are going to talk to; what you are going to tell them and why you need to tell them.
- **Pupils should discuss significant concerns with a member of staff.**

The **'Mental Health Warning Signs' poster**, found on the next page, summarises the signs of poor mental health, and the steps that pupils should follow if they are concerned about someone. The poster is also displayed across the school.

People may not always display signs of poor mental health – regular check-ins with friends are always a good idea!

It is OK, not to be OK!

If you are concerned about someone's mental health, please inform someone who can help.

In a **medical emergency**:

- Stay with the person and ask someone to alert the office.

Changes in behaviour e.g. withdrawn, exercising excessively or obsessing that something bad is going

Changes in clothing e.g. long sleeves in summer.

Changes in eating/sleeping habits and activities e.g. giving up hobbies, clubs.

Becoming socially withdrawn, disengaged or 'closed off'.

Aggressive responses to offers of support.

Regular illness e.g. stomach pains, headaches.

Deterioration in physical appearance.

Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness, or despair.

Changes in concentration levels.

Signs of distress e.g. breathlessness, trembling, fidgeting or tearfulness and/or self-harm.

Talking about self-harm or suicide.

Frequent absences from school.

Training

All staff receive training about Nurture and recognising and responding to mental health issues as well as annual Child Protection training in order to enable them to keep all pupils safe.

Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers

Parents/carers can be an important part of the support package put in place for a young person who is suffering from poor mental health. The Principal Teachers of Guidance will liaise with the young person about how this information is shared with their parents/carers - some pupils may choose to tell their parents/carers themselves before contact is made from the school. Pupils who are 16 or over have the right to ask that their parents/carers are not informed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years as a minimum (i.e. by Sept 2026). The voice of young people will be central in this review process.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, please contact Mrs MacInnes (Depute Head Teacher):

Tel: 01340 871522 Email: admin.speysidehigh@moray-edunet.gov.uk

This policy will be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

Appendix A: External Sources of Support for Young People

Organisation	Main Contact Details	Topic Addressed
Discover Pathways/ Moray Wellbeing Hub	www.discoverpathwaysmoray.org.uk	Website designed to help young people find the support they need, when you need it.
Samaritans	Call free on 116 123 (UK) Email: jo@samaritans.org	Confidential support service. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
ChildLine	0800 1111: www.chidline.org.uk	Get help and advice about a wide range of issues. Talk to a counsellor online.
Breathing Space	Call for free on 0800 83 85 87 www.breathingspace.scot	Advice and support if you need someone to talk to. Phone line is open 6pm-2am on Monday to Thursday and 6pm-6am on Friday to Monday.
Beat	The Beat Youthline is open to anyone under 25. Youthline: 0345 634 7650 https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/get-information-and-support/	UK's leading charity supporting anyone affected by eating disorders, anorexia, bulimia, EDNOS or any other difficulties with food, weight and shape.
Aye Mind	www.ayemind.com/	A digital toolkit for all who work with young people to boost their ability to promote youth wellbeing.
NEEDS (North East Eating Disorders Support)	Call 01224 557672 www.needs-scotland.org/	Self-help group for those affected by an eating disorder as a sufferer, parent, partner, relative, or friend.
Quarriers	Call: 01505 612224/616000 Out of Hours: 07812 228 410 Email: hello@quarriers.org.uk www.quarriers.org.uk	Free, confidential advice and support for young people with a physical or learning disability, young people with social emotional or behavioural difficulties and young carers.
Young Scot	https://young.scot/	Information on a range of topics including mental health.
LGBT Youth Scotland	Call us: 0131 555 3940 Text us: 07786 202 370 https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/ Email us: info@lgbtyouth.org.uk	Here to help support lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people
SAMH	www.samh.org.uk/	SAMH is the Scottish Association for Mental Health. SAMH believe there is no health without mental health. We're here to provide help, information and support.
See Me	https://www.seemescotland.org/	See Me is Scotland's programme to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination
TESS: Text and Email Support Services	Text: 07537 432444 or call: 0808 8008088 www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk follow links to email	For girls and young women affected by self-injury.
Doctor (GP)	Contact your GP at your local surgery	Speak to your GP if you are worried about your mental health, including an addiction to gaming. Your GP may decide that a referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is appropriate. See Appendix C for further information on CAMHS.
NHS Choices	https://www.nhsinform.scot/symptoms-and-self-help/self-help-guides/	Whether you're concerned about yourself or a loved one, the helplines listed can offer expert advice.