



Croydon High School GDST Whole School Mental Health Policy

Responsibility: Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Last review: October 2021
Next review: October 2022

1. Policy Statement:

Croydon High School and the GDST are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff.

The culture in the School is one of openness and compassion.

We recognise the value of interpersonal relationships and operate on the basis that each of us requires a “resilience network” of formal and informal connections.

The School seeks out opportunities to foster such connections, as well as educate explicitly on the subjects of wellbeing and mental health, so as to make conversation commonplace.

2. Scope:

This policy intends to describe and promote our approach to positive mental health and wellbeing, as well as provide information on the support available for pupils in need.

3. Aims:

- To provide experiences and opportunities for each pupil to develop a healthy outlook on the challenges of growing up and of life, including positive psychology.
- To put context and understanding around issues that pupils face during their time at school, and allow them to develop positive, healthy, cognitive skills in preparation for later life.
- Maintain a high profile for the discussion of mental health generally, while protecting the privacy of individuals.
- Provide on-site support for the pupils most in need.
- To work in partnership with parents and external agencies for an integrated support plan for individual pupils.

4. Key members of staff:

All staff are responsible for promoting healthy work practices for pupils, recognising achievements, building working relationships with pupils and enabling healthy levels of self-worth.

Pupils may speak with any adult at school with whom they feel comfortable. Upon identification of some level of support needed, this adult will connect the pupil with one of:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead Team
- School Nurse
- Place2Be counselling service
- School Counsellor
- Head of Year
- Mental Health First Aider (teaching staff who have received training).

5. Educating on mental health:

The positive and negative impacts of mental health are interwoven into work/school and personal lives. To divorce them is rarely possible. In the same way, contributory factors to mental health status exist in all areas of the School, and both pupils and staff should have regard to the wellbeing of themselves and others at all times.

It is important that pupils receive a balanced view of mental health. We aim to achieve this through the taught curriculum of PSHE (please see separate policy) which exists throughout the Junior and Senior Schools.

Moreover, opportunities are taken in assemblies/form times, relevant class discussions in other curriculum areas or on “off-timetable” days as well as in one-to-one conversations with mentors/coaches/teachers all of which are consistent in their messaging.

The School is part of the Positive Project, and offers the tools of this to pupils at age appropriate levels. Other techniques for protecting positive mental health are in the co-curricular timetable (e.g. mindfulness).

At each occasion the School seeks to recognise mental health concerns, offer preventative advice and signpost help in and out of school for those who feel they need it.

6. Support available at School and locally:

Pupils develop their “resilience network” at school through their interactions with adults in various contexts. Each of these adults is trained on responding to a disclosure and accessing the next stage of help with young people.

Pupils may seek help from:

- A trusted teacher
- Tutor
- Head of Year
- School Nurse
- Place2Be – on site 2 days a week*
- School Counsellor – on site two days a week.*

*pupils may self refer to these services, or be recommended by a member of staff through referral form. This process is coordinated by the School Nurse.

Each of the above record concerns on CPOMs (our online academic and pastoral monitoring system), and those cases which are of sufficient concern would follow the School's Safeguarding procedures (please see separate document).

We work closely with local services including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), as well as the Childrens' Mental Health and Wellbeing practitioner, via referrals.

Pupils are directed to Croydon Drop-in, as a local service, as well as larger national services such as Young Minds., NSPCC.

Kooth and SHOUT are signposted for those pupils who would find a text-based service more comfortable.

7. Identifying needs and warning signs:

Staff have a duty to report any concerns about a pupil in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) and are reminded of this regularly. The school environment is such that successful relationships exist between staff and pupils allowing teachers, in particular, to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, in line with those in KCSiE and including:

- Physical signs of harm
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in mood
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope
- Secretive behaviour
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:

- Attendance and absenteeism
- Punctuality and lateness
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education
- Family and relationship problems
- Bereavement and family health issues.

8. Signposting:

The School's partnership with Place2Be is acknowledged in the weekly newsletter. The School Project Manager for Place2Be has an office on the main teaching corridor, and is introduced to year groups in assemblies and delivers workshops on relevant issues to help promote the familiarity with the service.

Where pupil need is identified, options for support are discussed and signposting to relevant internal or external services are offered, usually done by or in consultation with those mentioned in Section 4.

9. Managing disclosure and confidentiality:

All disclosures will be handled in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy. Staff training makes clear that the emphasis is very much on listening and not-judging, appreciating the courage a child is using when speaking about a concern.

Confidentiality of the disclosure is never promised to a child, and they are reminded that the reason for this is to ensure they are kept safe. However, in all cases, the School takes an approach of allowing pupils to have as much control as is reasonable over the flow of information where possible.

10. Working with parents and external agencies:

Safeguarding concerns can be emailed to the School using safeguarding@cry.gdst.net at any time, though parents are reminded that this is not a responsive service for out of hours need. Outside of the school day, parents or guardians should call 999 if they have concerns for the welfare of a child.

The School commits to work alongside CAMHS and GP advice, and has a track record of early intervention with SLAM hospitals. The School recognises that it is not in a position of clinical delivery, but that it does have a big role to play in affording pupils support to establish healthy coping strategies for poor mental health.

Parents may access Place2Be support pages on topics related to mental health. The GDST offers parent webinars on related issues, and the School promotes other opportunities for parents to learn (e.g. the Let's All Talk Mental Health monthly seminars).

Parents would be asked to follow the normal communication pathways to the School, by emailing the child's tutor if they wish to discuss their child's mental health.

11. Supporting peers:

The School places great value in peer-to-peer interaction and that friendship is a fundamental pillar of emotional wellbeing.

The School also acknowledges that peers who are supporting a friend experiencing poor mental health may need guidance in how to achieve this, in order that they themselves are supported, and that the friend in question receives the correct adult support.

12. Staff training:

Staff receive training on mental health issues, both for their own wellbeing, and in order that they may respond to pupils appropriately. Those with particular responsibilities are supported in finding specific training, (e.g. Mental Health First Aid practitioners course, Positive Project Training, or similar)

13. Policy review:

The policy is reviewed annually and updated in-line with local and national policy requirements.