# Thomas Telford School

**Positive Mental Health and Well-Being Policy**

**Reviewed by Jamie Norman September 2023**

**Review date: September 2024**

# Positive Mental Health and Well-being Policy

**Last Updated September 2022**

<span style="color:red">**Policy Statement**</span>

*Mental health is 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. (World Health Organization)*

At Thomas Telford School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing 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.

## Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

## The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers

## Lead Members of Staff

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

- Jamie Norman - designated child protection / safeguarding officer / mental health and well-being lead
- Nicola Parknson - SenCo
- Louise Herbert - lead mental health first aider
- Claire Nock, Philip Nicholls and Heledd Jones – Deputy DSL's
- Jamie Norman, Jamie Wrenshall-Jones, Alex Bird, Chloe Wright and Kiren Bains – Heads of Year

- Julie Morgan - Head of RSE – Assistant Director of Science
- Alison Hunter- School Counsellor

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection officer, the head teacher or the designated governor.

If the student 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.

Where a referral to BEEU is appropriate, this will be led and managed by **Jamie Norman, mental health lead.**

## Warning Signs and indicators

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 with **Jamie Norman, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.**

Possible warning signs include:
- 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

## Signposting and referrals

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. The safeguarding section of the school website will contain all relevant information for staff, pupils and parents/carers to access.

## Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health.  This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:
- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

## 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.

If a student 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 advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be passed to **Jamie Norman** immediately who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.
This written disclosure record will include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

**Disclosure flow chart at Thomas Telford School**

1. Pupil makes a disclosure

2. Member of staff is calm and reassuring and outlines support available

3. Jamie Norman or deputy DSL's are contacted with name and details of student

4. Student is given opportunity to share information and details with MHWB lead

5. If appropriate parents are contacted*

6. Referral made to our **counselling team** including individual care plan if required

7. Student to work with MHWB team for as long as necessary.

*Parental contact and involvement will always take place unless student is deemed to be in immediate danger/if there is a child protection issue. In this instance immediate advice and guidance will be sought from our local safeguarding board and student will remain in our care until a suitable and appropriate conclusion is in place.

**Counselling Service**
Our mental health and well-being team is fully supported by one in school counsellors. Our counselling team supports students with:

- Mental health concerns

- Bereavement

- Anxiety and stress management

**All referrals to the counselling team are carried out by Jamie Norman-Mental Health Lead through referral forms. See Appendix 1.**

**Confidentiality**
We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality.  If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, then we should discuss with the student:

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

- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, **Jamie Norman** must be notified if any disclosures have been made. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our 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 a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection officer, **Jamie Norman** must be informed immediately.

## Working with Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, Thomas Telford School will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website via the safeguarding page
- Ensure that all parents 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
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

## Further Developments

In the coming 12 months the school will be introducing two additional areas to the support offered in school:

1. The training of more Mental Health First Aiders who will be allocated to specific year groups to support the identification and ongoing work in place to support students in school
2. The establishment of a peer networking system based on the work by the Anna Freud Centre on supporting mental health in schools.

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every year. It is next due for review in September 2024

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

Appendix 1

# Thomas Telford School

**CONFIDENTIAL**

## School Counsellor Referral Form

Name:          Tutor Group/Year group:          Date:

**Part A: Initial reason for referral** (to be completed by member of staff/parent) please describe as fully as possible the reasons for referring to the school counselling system.

Signed:

Name:

**Part B: Head of Year comments** (Including any previous support put in place and an overview of the students need.)

Signed:

Name:

| | |
|---|---|
| Parents informed and consent given to proceed with referral. Please attach confirmation or summary of comments below: | YES / NO |
| Personal Tutor informed<br>Include any comments below: | YES / NO |

**Designated Safeguarding Lead Comments:**

**Approval to proceed to waiting list:** YES / NO

**Priority Case:** YES / NO

**Date Referred :**