



# THE HERMITAGE SCHOOLS

## Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Person Responsible:	The Executive Headteacher
Date Adopted:	Spring Term 2025
Date of last review:	Spring Term 2025
Date of next review:	Spring Term 2028

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### **1. Promoting mental health and wellbeing at all times**

At The Hermitage Schools, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all our Community; pupils, parents and staff. We have a nurturing and inclusive ethos where everyone upholds our school values and where each individual and contribution is valued. We understand that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable at times and anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

At our school we:

- Help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Help children to form and maintain relationships
- Promote self-esteem and ensure children know we are all different and all valued
- Encourage children to be confident and 'Be the Best they Can Be'
- Help children to develop a growth mindset, resilience and 'bounce back'
- Promote a mentally and physically healthy environment through the 5 ways of Wellbeing (Appendix A)

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Providing access to appropriate support that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches through assemblies, special weeks and events and our Life Skills Curriculum
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties, including bereavement and parental separation
- Specialised, targeted approaches aims at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales
- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- One Page Profiles
- My Safety and Support Plan

## **2. Lead Members of Staff**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, staff with a specific responsibility:

- Clare Spires – Executive Headteacher, DSL
- Gilly Condon – Deputy Headteacher, DSL
- Juliet Larsen – Deputy Headteacher, DSL, SMHL
- Dawn Quirk - Inclusion Lead, DSL, SMHL
- Steve Greenwood, Assistant Headteacher, DSL
- Jackie Jones – Home School Link Worker, DSL
- Susan Boulcott – ELSA
- Carol Blackwell – ELSA

We also have Wellbeing champions throughout the school within our Wellbeing Staff Team and our Wellbeing Ambassadors.

## **3. Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our spiral Life Skills curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance and SCARF resources to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

## **4. Targeted support for children**

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities (Check ins)

- Targeted use of resources, including SEND and SEMH
- Managing feelings resources e.g. worry boxes and monsters
- Managing emotions resources such as Zones of Regulation and targeted use of 'the Incredible 5-point scale'
- ELSA support
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego, relaxation and mindfulness techniques
- Referral to external support such as CAHMS, Barnardos, Jigsaw etc
- Friendship Friends and Wellbeing Ambassadors
- Infants – My Safety Plan - [My Safety Plan :: Mindworks Surrey](#)
- Juniors – My Safety and Support Plan - [PDF MSS SI.pdf](#)

## **5. Targeted Support for Staff**

### **Role of all staff**

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff
- Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- Follow the trust's/school's policy on out-of-hours working, including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

### **Role of line managers**

Line managers are expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the trust's/school's policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Promote information about and access to external support services
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct return-to-work interviews to support staff back into work
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that lead to their resignation

## **Role of senior staff**

Senior staff are expected to:

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through surveys and structured conversations
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up to date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes are made
- Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school
- Establish a clear policy on out-of-hours working, including on when it is and isn't reasonable for staff to respond to communications, and provide clear guidance to all stakeholders
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- Promote information about and access to external support services, and make sure that there are clear routes in place to escalate a concern in order to access further support
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections

## **Role of the local governing body**

The board of trustees is expected to:

- Support the school in fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the Executive headteacher
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing
- Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly in regard to workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

## **6. Signposting**

We will ensure that staff and pupils and their parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support. See Appendix B and C.

## **7. Identifying Needs**

All staff will be vigilant and aware of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators

- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators
- Staff will talk with parents/carers and liaise with pastoral care team to access support.
- Boxall Profile completed and strategies/resources put in place

## **8. Identifying Warning Signs**

These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with a DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL) via CPOMs.

- Changes in:
  - Mood or energy level
  - Eating or sleeping patterns
  - Attitude in lessons or academic attainment
  - Level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Rapid weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

## **9. Working and collaborating with parents**

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child, preferably through a face to face meeting
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent/carer forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in our Life Skills Curriculum and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home
- If appropriate, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be created in collaboration with parents/carers

- Offer Home School Link Worker to be available for further support and signposting to enable them to access external agencies and partners.

## **10. Working with other agencies and partners**

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- STIPS
- Paediatricians/Health services
- CAHMS (child and adolescent mental health service) and allocated School Primary Mental Health Worker
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists (play and art)
- Surrey Young Carers

## **11. Training**

All staff will receive regular TAMHS and other training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as well as their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe. Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

## **12. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our:

- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour and Wellbeing Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- EAL Policy
- Home/School Agreement
- Inclusion Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Teaching and Learning policy
- Volunteers policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Young Carers Policy

## Appendix A

### Wellbeing Wheel



#### Connect with others

Good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing.

They can:

- Help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth
- Give you an opportunity to share positive experiences
- Provide emotional support and allow you to support others

#### Be active

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness. Evidence also shows it can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- Raising your self-esteem
- Helping you to set goals or challenges and achieve them
- Causing chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood

#### Take notice (mindfulness)

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness. Evidence also shows it can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing. This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

Read more about mindfulness, including steps you can take to be more mindful in your everyday life.

#### Learn and create

Research shows that learning new skills can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- Boosting self-confidence and raising self-esteem
- Helping you to build a sense of purpose
- Helping you to connect with others
- Even if you feel like you do not have enough time, or you may not need to learn new things, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your lives

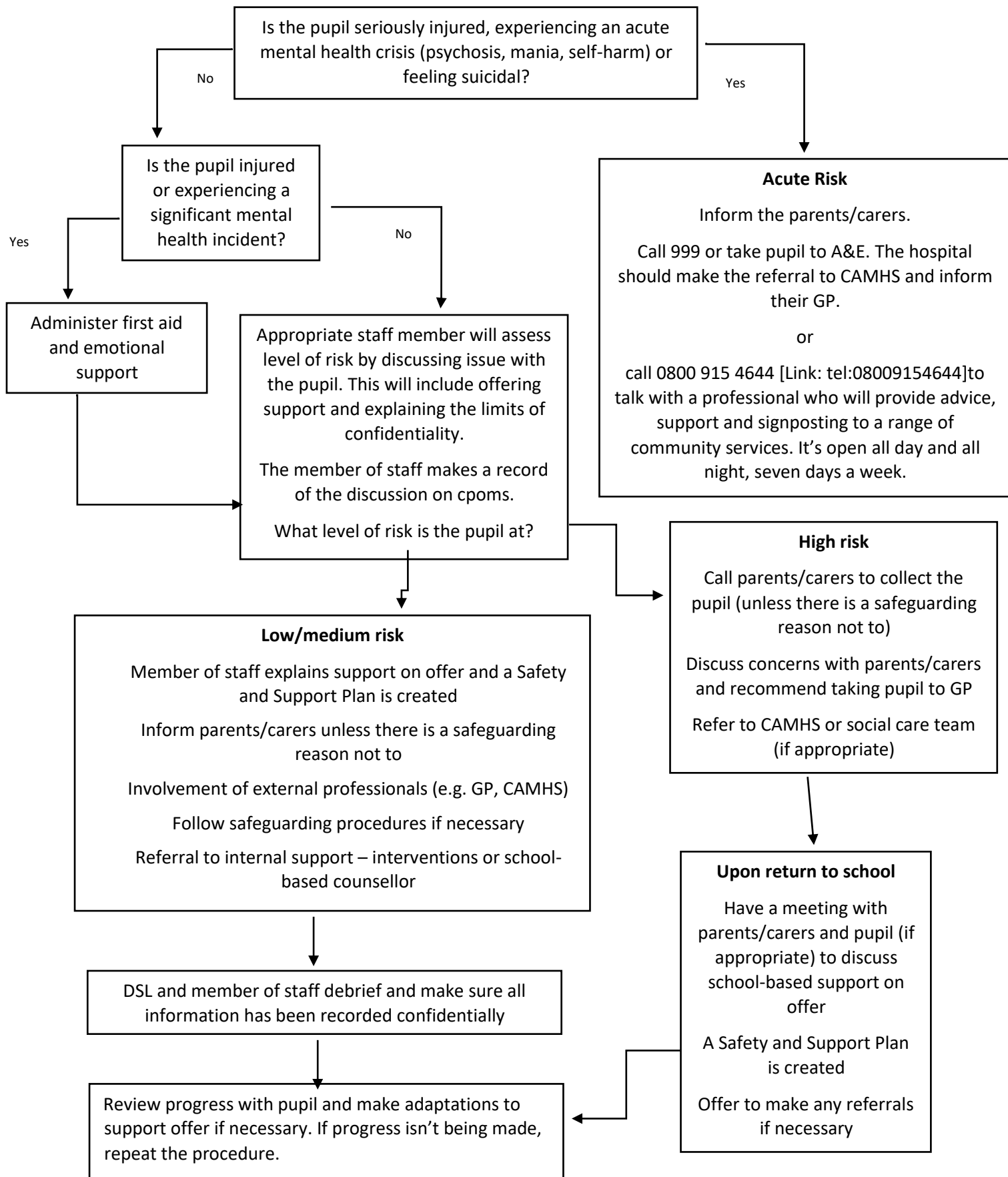
#### Give to others

Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing by:

- Creating positive feelings and a sense of reward
- Giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth
- Helping you connect with other people
- It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, or larger ones like volunteering in your local community.

## Appendix B

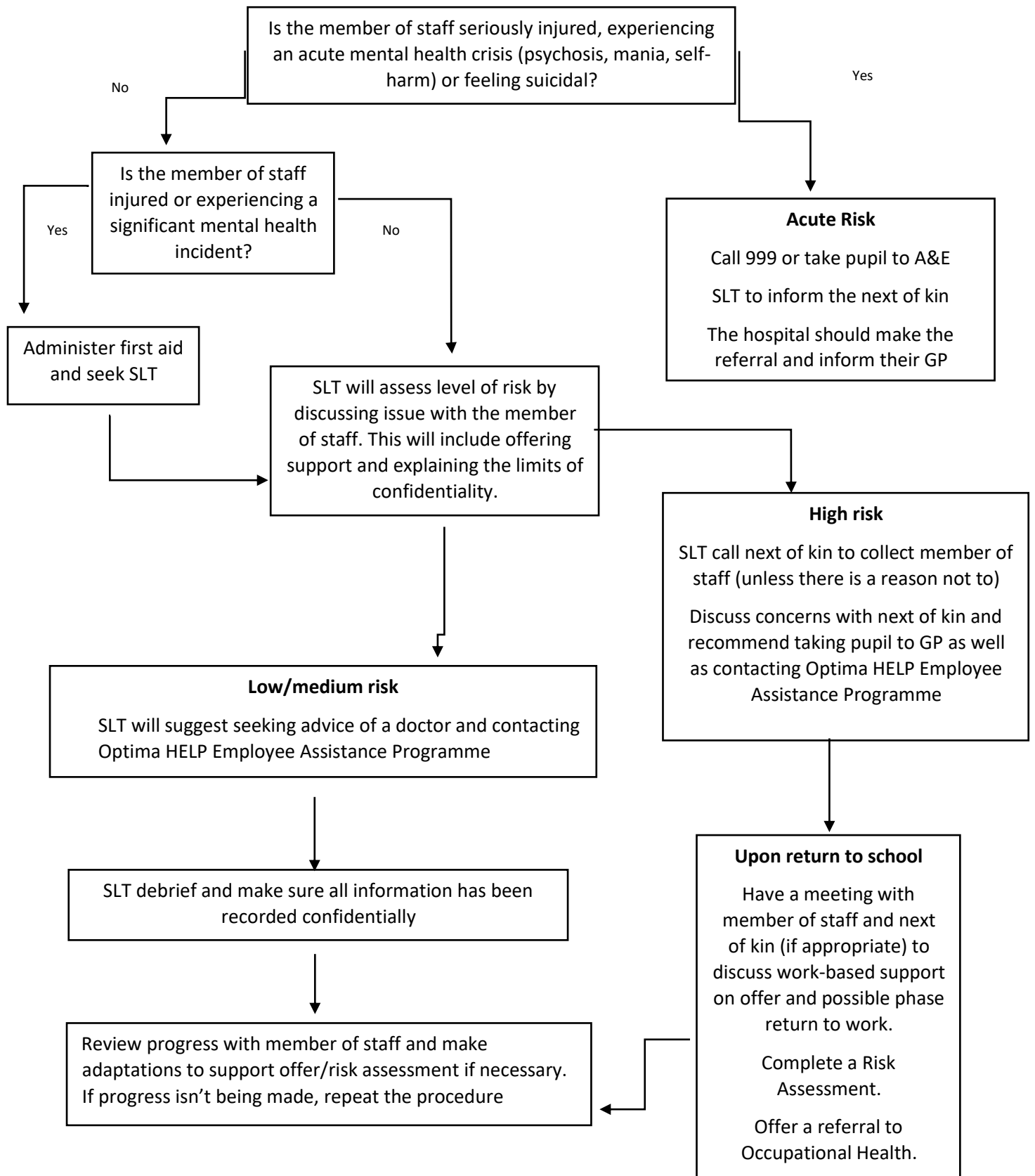
### Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis for pupils





## Appendix C

### Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis for Staff



## Appendix D

### Optima HELP Employee Assistance Programme



## CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT

**24 hours a day, 7 days a week**

Access to a team of trained wellbeing and counselling practitioners to support all employees. We offer confidential, independent and unbiased information and guidance by telephone, in writing, online and through face-to-face appointments for a wide variety of issues.

Contact us on **0800 028 5147**  
or for further information go to <https://strictlyeducation.optimise.health>



### Help Employee Assistance offers support and information on:

<h4>HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Mental health</li><li>- Physical health</li><li>- Bereavement</li><li>- Alcohol &amp; drug misuse</li><li>- Trauma</li></ul>	<h4>MONEY WORRIES</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Debt</li><li>- Gambling</li><li>- Financial Wellbeing</li></ul>
<h4>CARERS</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Childcare</li><li>- Eldercare</li></ul>	<h4>WORK / LIFE</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Bullying &amp; harassment</li><li>- Career / job stress</li><li>- Management support</li><li>- Sickness absence</li><li>- Work / life balance</li><li>- Personal effectiveness</li></ul>
<h4>CONSUMER &amp; LEGAL</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Family</li><li>- Neighbours</li><li>- Crime</li></ul>	<h4>FAMILY &amp; HOME</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Relationships</li><li>- Children</li><li>- Social</li></ul>

### OPTIMISE

Your overall wellbeing is important to us so we are also delighted to offer you access to Optimise – a comprehensive wellbeing assessment that you and your family can take at any time. It provides personalised wellbeing content tailored to your responses and has an extensive library of wellbeing information for you to access at any time, including videos, podcasts and Ted Talks.

