



Clapton Girls' Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Coordinator	Andreanna Bangura
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This policy is communicated by the following means:	
Trustees	Trustees consultation by e-mail when policy reviewed
Staff	Policy folders on staff SharePoint
Parents	Academy website
Students	Via PSHCE lessons as appropriate and posters in school

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Help is available

If you are reading this policy because you feel you are, or someone else is, in crisis there are a number of ways you can get help.

If it is an emergency where you are, or someone else is, at immediate risk of harm (likely to harm or hurt themselves or someone else), you should do any of the following:

- ✓ call 999, ask for the ambulance service and talk through your concerns with a trained professional who will help you to get the support you need.
- ✓ go to the Accident & Emergency (A&E) department of the nearest hospital if you do not feel able to keep yourself, or the person you are concerned about, safe.
- ✓ call the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) 24-hour crisis helpline in Hackney on 020 8432 8020.

If it is not an immediate emergency, you can contact one of the organisations listed in Appendix 1 of this policy, look at one of the suggested websites for advice and guidance or speak to any member of staff you trust when you are next in school.

1. Introduction

The World Health Organisation defines mental wellbeing as “a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.”

Wellbeing, including mental wellbeing, has been, and will continue to be, an important priority for the academy and a key strand of our Academy Improvement Plan.

This policy is very much a work in progress and we welcome any feedback you may have. Please email any suggestions or comments to cga@clapton.hackney.sch.uk

This policy has been written with all members of the academy community in mind. We are constantly updating it in response to student feedback.

2. Abbreviations

- Mental Health and Wellbeing has been shortened to MHWB throughout the policy.
- ‘Parent’ refers to any person with parental responsibility.
- Clapton Girls’ Academy has been shortened to ‘CGA’.
- Where other key terms are shortened within the policy, abbreviations are shown in brackets.

3. Aims

This policy has been written in consultation with students, staff, parents, governors and professionals from external agencies with expertise in mental health so that it reflects the unique needs and wishes of all members of our CGA community.

At CGA we believe that everyone has mental health as much as they have physical health, and will experience challenges to their mental wellbeing at some point in their life. This policy, therefore, outlines the academy’s strategies for promoting positive mental wellbeing as well as how to respond and access help when challenges to our own or someone else’s mental wellbeing arise.

This policy aims to:

1. Provide guidelines on how we can all work together to create a safe and stable learning environment in which our students can fulfil their personal and academic potential.
2. Raise our awareness and understanding of MHWB and minimise any stigma or embarrassment associated with talking about it: students should feel free to discuss their mental wellbeing with a member of staff they trust without fearing being judged.
3. Equip us to recognise and respond to the early signs of emotional or mental distress in ourselves and others.
4. Give us clear guidance on how to respond if we are concerned about our own or someone else's mental wellbeing.

4. Links to other policies

This MHWB policy – including the quick reference guide - is designed to be read alongside the following policies which will provide you with more in-depth information about specific topics linked to MHWB.

These policies are available on the academy website or as printed versions on request by contacting cga@clapton.hackney.sch.uk

- Child Protection, Safeguarding Children and Promoting Welfare policy No.14
- Attendance and Punctuality policy No.31
- SEN and Inclusion policy No.24
- Behaviour for Learning policy No.34
- Challenging Bullying policy No.28

The academy has a dedicated team of governors who meet as part of the Governors' Engagement Committee to consider the provision for mental wellbeing across the academy. Governors, amongst other roles and responsibilities, hold the Leadership Team to account for ensuring that there is an increasingly strong emphasis on MHWB in all of our policies as they are reviewed and not just in those mentioned here.

5. CGA values

This policy is underpinned by the academy's core CAIR values:

- Compassion - Be kind
- Ambition - Aim high
- Integrity - Be honest
- Resilience - Keep trying

6. If you are concerned about someone

Making the time to ask someone how they are can often be the first step in helping them to find the support they need. If you are concerned about your own or someone else's mental wellbeing, we advise you to seek help by speaking to someone. We realise that this can be difficult to do, especially if you have promised not to tell anyone. However, it is important that we all get the help we need when we need it. We recognise that students are able to offer each other meaningful support, but we never expect them to be responsible for the mental health of others. We would encourage you to let an adult know if supporting someone else is becoming difficult for you to manage.



The Mental health first aid action plan below illustrates 5 steps you can take to support someone you are concerned about.

If you really do not feel able to let someone know that you are struggling or that a friend needs help, you could

- speak to a member of staff without giving names.
- The academy has a number of sources of support in places for students, parents and staff and we can signpost you to reliable mental wellbeing organisations (listed in Appendix 1)

Information, including wellbeing directories, is also available on our academy website which can be accessed here [Mental Wellbeing — Clapton Girls' Academy \(claptongirlsacademy.com\)](https://www.claptongirlsacademy.com) as well as in our student and staff planners (see [Appendix 2](#)).



All staff at the academy know how to respond to mental wellbeing concerns and will use the academy's usual safeguarding procedures if they feel a student, staff member or parent is or may be at risk of harm (likely to hurt themselves or someone else). There are boundaries to what the academy can offer, as there are limits to the expertise of staff and limits to what support can be offered. However, the academy is always open to liaising with mental health professionals to seek the best support for staff and students.

Students can speak to any of the members of staff on the safeguarding posters displayed around school (see [Appendix 3](#)) or to another member of staff they trust. Parents and staff may wish to speak to one of the following members of staff in particular via the main switchboard on 020 8985 6641 or any member of staff they trust.

Ms Bangura
Deputy Headteacher (DHT)
aakinyemi@clapton.hackney.sch.uk
ext. 240

Ms Jayapal
Engagement Intervention Lead / Interim Mental Health Lead/ Deputy DSL (EIL/DDSL)
gjayapal@clapton.hackney.sch.uk
ext. 256

Mr Gall
Assistant headteacher/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo)
cgall@clapton.hackney.sch.uk
ext. 207

If your concern needs urgent attention, please make sure you have spoken to someone at the academy, either in person or over the phone as well as, or instead of, emailing as there may be a delay in emails being checked.

It is not always the case that we have to contact parents if a student speaks to a member of staff about feeling upset or distressed, although we prefer to be able to contact parents wherever possible so that they can be fully involved in supporting their children. If we feel a student is at immediate risk of harm (doing something which would harm or hurt them or someone else), we cannot keep this a secret, but we will always discuss any possible actions with students before taking them. We are committed to respecting the privacy of all members of our academy community and handling any concerns as sensitively as possible without judgement.

Outside of academy hours, if your concern relates to an emergency where someone is at immediate risk of harm, we advise you to go to, or take the person you are concerned about to, your GP or the Accident and Emergency (A&E) department of your local hospital. The closest hospital to Clapton Girls' Academy is Homerton Hospital.

You can also call 111 which is a telephone service provided by the NHS. It is the number you should call when you need advice or medical treatment quickly, and you cannot wait for an appointment to see your doctor.

7. How to spot the early signs of distress

It is not always possible to tell if someone is struggling with their mental wellbeing but sometimes there are some early warning signs. These signs in themselves do not automatically mean that someone is distressed but where there is a change in behaviour or someone displays several of these at once it may be an indication that the person is struggling.

If you notice any of these signs or any other behaviours which concern you, it may be that the person is experiencing difficulties with their mental wellbeing. Wherever possible, speak to the person to see if you can find out how they are and if you are still concerned. You should speak to one of the members of staff mentioned in section 6 of this policy as we may be able to prevent someone reaching crisis point if we can put appropriate support in place early.

As mentioned in section 6 above, we recognise that talking to someone about a friend may feel as though you are betraying them. If this is the case, you can speak in general terms. The important thing, however, is that the person gets the help they need when they need it.

Early warning signs might include any of the things listed below but someone displaying one or some of these behaviours does not automatically mean they are in distress:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Significant changes in appearance
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Isolation from friends or family or becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide – the academy always responds to comments made about self-harm or suicide even if is disguised or said as a joke
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing - e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Avoiding PE lessons or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Significant changes of behaviour online such as complete withdrawal from online friendships or online behaviour which is concerning or out of character

Some students may be more vulnerable to distress amidst particularly challenging circumstances such as a bereavement, loss or financial hardship and staff are trained to be particularly vigilant where we know these circumstances.

7.1 Responding to crisis

Students that are at risk of crisis are likely to be known to the mental health and safeguarding team. If a student is displaying signs of distress and is showing no signs of regulating, this may indicate that they are experiencing a crisis. If we have prior knowledge that a student has or is going through the below, this will support staff to recognise that the student is in crisis.

- Has made recent suicide attempts
- Mental health symptoms are unmanageable
- Has escalating self-harming behaviours
- Distress may not reduce when talking
- Not engaging at home or school

It is important that staff act promptly when a student is in crisis. A member of the mental health team, the SENDCo or a member of safeguarding team will respond to a student in crisis and decide on what actions are needed to ensure the student's safety. This might include calling the CAMHS crisis line and or contacting parents.

8. Support and training

At CGA we believe there are a number of things we can do to promote positive wellbeing as a way of life and base many of our strategies on the NHS 5 steps to positive mental wellbeing (see [Appendix 4](#)).

8.1 Support for students

When surveyed about mental wellbeing, CGA students stressed the importance to them of:

- being listened to. This includes having a 'substantial conversation with the student before contacting their parent(s)'
- having someone they feel they can trust to talk to when they are experiencing difficult emotions. This should be someone who is readily available and doesn't necessarily get involved in behaviour issues so that students feel comfortable sharing their concerns without being judged.
- having someone who can mediate for you when things go wrong or are difficult.
- being treated as individuals and recognising that some students like to be asked how they are while others find it awkward talking about their feelings
- making support available for all students and not just a small minority who appear to need it the most
- creating opportunities for students to talk to someone they don't see every day as a student may feel more comfortable talking to someone who knows them less well.



- staff where possible recognising when things are not OK and responding appropriately according to the personality of the student. For example, some students like to be given space when upset whilst others like to be asked how they are.
- Place greater emphasis on recognising when students do something right including when they demonstrate the academy's CAIR values: Compassion, Ambition, Integrity and Resilience.

At CGA we are constantly looking for ways to improve our support for students in relation to their mental wellbeing. Here are some of the things we currently offer:

- A structured and safe learning environment with clear boundaries coupled with flexibility and an understanding of individual needs
- A designated, trained team of staff with responsibility for pastoral care
- A clear and widely publicised system for students to access support if they need it
- Training for students in positive coping strategies provided through PSHCE lessons, assemblies, Focus Days, Collective Time, the student planner and the academy website
- Scheduled opportunities for students to have their voice heard and shape decision making by voting via Collective Time and PSHCE lessons on student-related issues such as topics for Focus Days, rewards and the content of the student planner.
- A range of mentoring opportunities, including peer mentor schemes such as More Than Mentors and homework coaches
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities including sports
- Referral to specialist agencies such as Young Hackney and CAMHS where appropriate
- Realistic expectations of students known to be experiencing distress or challenges with their mental health, making adjustments where possible and appropriate
- A fortnightly Inclusion Panel where key staff meet to share concerns about specific students and strategies for how they can be supported.
- Safe spaces within the academy environment
- A suite of designated mentoring rooms

8.2 Support for parents

Parents commented that they particularly appreciate the academy's support at times of crisis such as a bereavement, financial hardship, loss or illness.

The academy is equipped to respond to any concerns parents may have about themselves or their child/children, either with support available from within the academy, by signposting parents to useful sources of information (see [Appendix 1](#)) including the academy website or by making referrals to relevant agencies in consultation with the parent(s).

The academy also provides regular training sessions for parents on topics such as online safety and managing exam stress. Parents can also request training on a particular topic by emailing



cga@clapton.hackney.sch.uk or calling the main reception on 020 8985 6641 and the academy will do its best to meet this request.

Student feedback noted the importance of making sure parents know how to get help for their child and making it clear that a child needing help does not mean they have done something wrong or are 'in trouble'.

8.3 Support for staff

When surveyed, staff at CGA placed great importance on being trained in recognising and responding to distress in others so that they can provide students, other staff members and parents with the best possible experience of school life.

It is important to acknowledge that staff also have their own mental health needs and to provide for these effectively. This is largely achieved by protecting staff from excessive workload and unrealistic expectations in relation to contact, especially by email. Providing opportunities for relaxation and connecting with others is also crucial.

Staff are encouraged to speak to one of the members of staff in section 6 of this policy or to any colleague they trust if they are experiencing challenges with their own mental wellbeing or for guidance on how to support a colleague. Staff are encouraged to access the various sources of support available, including the Schools Advisory Service, as advertised in the staff handbook and via the daily staff briefing notices.



Appendix 1 - Directory of support

Here is a list of websites for organisations relating to mental health and wellbeing which you may find useful. You can also look at our wellbeing directories (separate directories for parents and students) by clicking on this link [Mental Wellbeing — Clapton Girls' Academy \(claptongirlsacademy.com\)](https://www.claptongirlsacademy.com) If you can't find what you are looking for, please feel free to speak to one of the members of staff mentioned in section 6 of this policy or to our receptionist who will be able to assist you.

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Beat - the eating disorders charity www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders

CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) Hackney 020 8432 8020

Child Bereavement UK www.childbereavementuk.org 0800 028 8840

Support and information for families experiencing bereavement

Childline www.childline.org.uk

A free, confidential helpline for children - 0800 1111.

MindEd www.minded.org.uk

Provides free, bite-sized chunks of e-learning to help adults to support young people with mental health concerns.

Mindfull www.mindfull.org

A free, online service for 11-17 year olds and provides self-help, access to Mindfull mentors, and counsellors

The Mix www.themix.org.uk

Confidential help and support for young people

National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk

Offcentre www.offcentre.org.uk

Counselling, therapy, advice & info for young people

Papyrus - Prevention of young suicide UK www.papyrus-uk.org

Parenting Programmes www.education.gov.uk/commissioning-toolkit

Samaritans email jo@samaritans.org or call 116 123 (24/7 helpline)

If you need to talk to someone without judgement

SelfHarm.co.uk www.selfharm.co.uk

Non-judgemental advice and guidance

Switchboard www.switchboard.lgbt or email chris@switchboard.lgbt

LGBTQ+ helpline

Women's Aid www.womensaid.org 0808 2000 247 (24/7 helpline)

Supports abused women



Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk/for_children_young_people or
www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents

Information on emotional wellbeing and mental health problems for a range of audiences including young people



City and Hackney Child and Adolescent Mental Health Pathway

<p>1. I AM FEELING WORRIED OR LONELY AND NEED SOME ADVICE</p>	<p>NHS</p> <p>The NHS has a handy list of Apps you can access for support with wellbeing and mental health https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/</p> <p>Think Ninja App</p> <p>ThinkNinja is an app with free resources for 10-18 year old young people with specific COVID-19 support ThinkNinja website click here</p> <p>Anna Freud</p> <p>The Anna Freud Centre's website has self-care resources and ideas in their "On My Mind" section https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/</p> <p>Stop, Breathe and Think</p> <p>https://www.stopbreatheandthink.com/kids/</p>
<p>2. I AM FEELING ANXIOUS OR DEPRESSED AND NOT COPING. I NEED SOME SUPPORT OR TO TALK TO SOMEONE</p>	<p>Kooth</p> <p>Offers free, safe and anonymous online support for young people 11-19 years old https://www.kooth.com/ 0 808 808 4 994</p> <p>ChildLine</p> <p>Offer free advice, resources, online and phone support https://www.childline.org.uk/ 0800 1111</p> <p>Samaritans</p> <p>Support and information. Online chat and support https://www.samaritans.org/ 116 123</p> <p>YoungMinds</p> <p>Online resources and support including Crisis Messenger text service providing free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK. https://youngminds.org.uk/</p>
<p>3. I HAVE BEEN RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM CAMHS/MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND NEED HELP WITH MY MENTAL HEALTH</p>	<p>Please follow your safety plan if you have one and contact your CAMHS clinician or the duty worker using the following numbers (Mon-Frid)</p> <p>Specialist CAMHS (9am-5pm) Telephone: 0203 222 5600</p> <p>Children and Families Service Telephone: 0208 356 5000 Emergency out of hours: 0208 356 2710</p> <p>First Steps (9am-5pm) Telephone: 0207 014 7 135</p> <p>CAMHS Disability (9am-5pm) Telephone: 0207 014 7071</p> <p>Off Centre (9am-6pm) Thursday: 12-8 pm Telephone: 020 8986 4016</p>
<p>4. I FEEL LIKE I CANNOT KEEP MYSELF SAFE AND/OR PLAN TO END MY LIFE</p>	<p>CAMHS</p> <p>If you are seeing a clinician from CAMHS then please contact the duty number</p> <p>Specialist CAMHS: 0203 222 5600 (9am- 5pm, Monday to Friday)</p> <p>24 hour Crisis Helpline</p> <p>Free, confidential, expert advice for anyone experiencing a crisis, including support and referrals to local services. 020 8432 8020 Lines open all day, every day</p> <p>A&E</p> <p>If you feel you cannot keep yourself safe, please go to A&E. You might be diverted to be seen by CAMHS a specialist to another site to avoid spread of COVID-19.</p>





Appendix 2 - Mental wellbeing guidance for students from student planner

Positive, long-lasting coping strategies to deal with difficult emotions



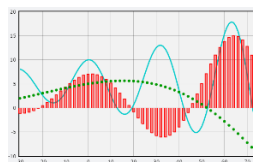
Not everyone on the internet has positive mental wellbeing. Ask yourself the question "Is this person I'm connecting with, or this information I am reading, going to help me to have positive mental wellbeing?" The Anna Freud Youth Wellbeing Directory has loads of useful and reliable advice:
<https://www.annafreud.org/children-young-people/youth-wellbeing/>



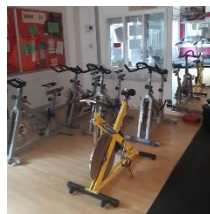
You might feel alone but there are people who love you, care about you and who can help you. If you feel alone, be brave and talk to someone. You could talk to a member of the safeguarding team (see p. XXX) or any member of staff you feel comfortable talking to.



Make sure you get enough uninterrupted sleep. Young people between the ages of 11 and 18 need at least 9 hours of uninterrupted sleep at night so if you're waking up in the night to check your phone this could be having a significantly negative impact on your mental wellbeing.



Poor food and drink choices will have a negative impact on your health, including your mental health, as will taking drugs, drinking alcohol and smoking. Try to think about the long-term effects of unhealthy habits on your body and health, including your mental health, not just on how they make you feel at that moment in time.



Exercise is one of the most effective ways to improve your mental health. Regular exercise can have a profoundly positive impact on depression, anxiety and more. It also relieves stress, improves memory, helps you sleep better, and boosts overall mood.



Hurting others and/or hurting yourself might seem like a good idea at the time but the chances are it will only make you feel worse later.
Try to stay calm.
Try to talk to someone.
Distract yourself by keeping busy.
Most importantly - remember, you are not a bad person!



Appendix 3 - Safeguarding

Safeguarding

The academy is committed to safeguarding all of its students in every sense.

You can speak to your Head of Year, ESA or any other adult if you are concerned about your own or someone else's safety. See the posters near your year group toilets for more information. You can also speak to a member of the academy's safeguarding team (see photos below). If something happens outside of school which concerns you, do not wait until you are back in school to tell someone: tell an adult you trust as soon as possible.

See page 7 of this student planner for numbers you can call in a crisis when school is closed.

If you are at immediate risk of danger, call 999 and ask for the service you need: ambulance, police or fire brigade.

CLAPTON GIRLS' ACADEMY SAFEGUARDING TEAM



MR FYLES
Assistant Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)



MS BERGAME
Assistant Headteacher
Deputy DSL

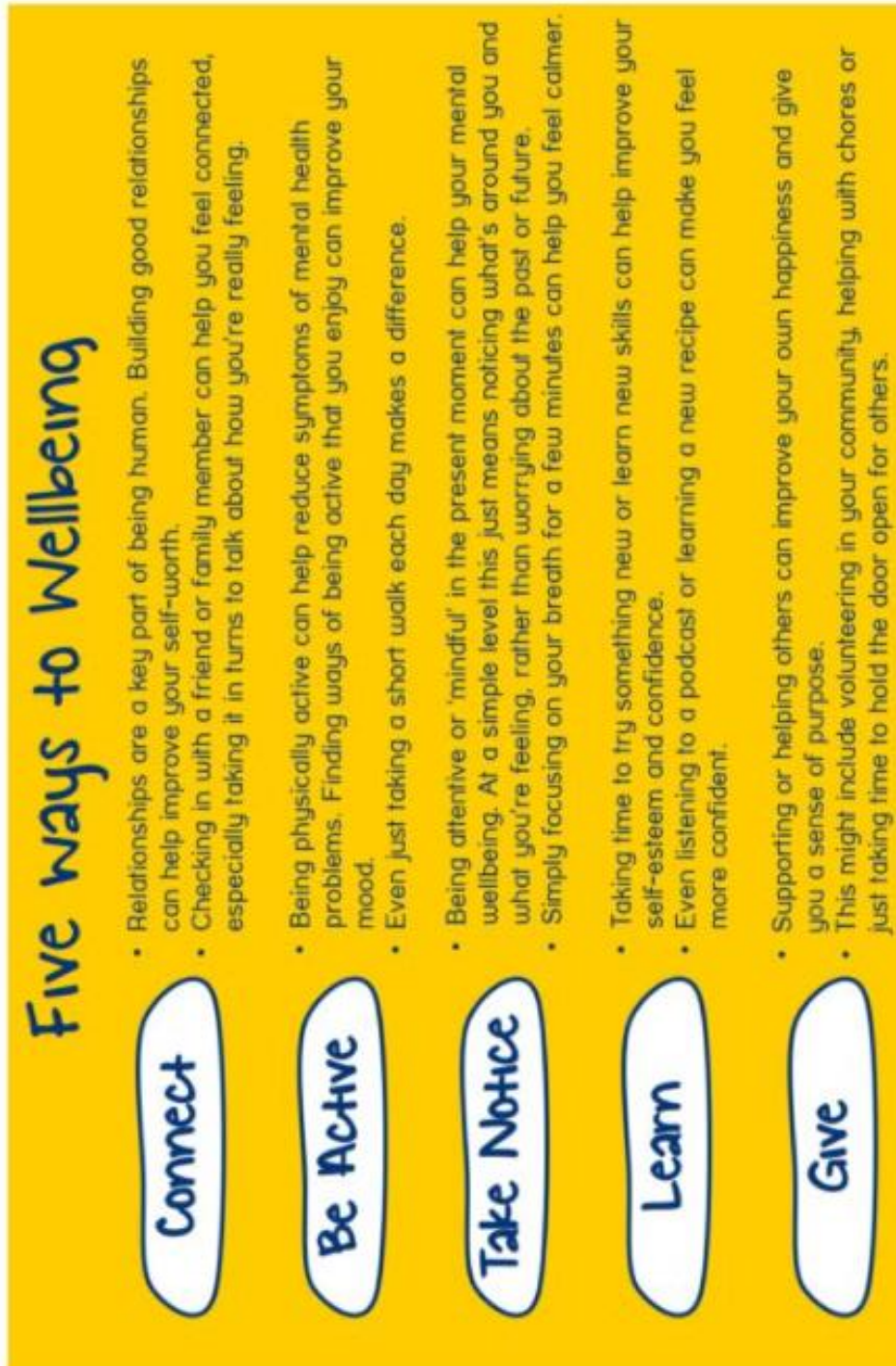


MS JAYAPAL
Engagement Intervention Lead
Deputy DSL



MS ANOKYE
SSC Manager/Home-School Liaison
Deputy DSL

Appendix 4 – NHS 5 steps to positive mental wellbeing



Five ways to Wellbeing

- Connect**
 - Relationships are a key part of being human. Building good relationships can help improve your self-worth.
 - Checking in with a friend or family member can help you feel connected, especially taking it in turns to talk about how you're really feeling.
- Be Active**
 - Being physically active can help reduce symptoms of mental health problems. Finding ways of being active that you enjoy can improve your mood.
 - Even just taking a short walk each day makes a difference.
- Take Notice**
 - Being attentive or 'mindful' in the present moment can help your mental wellbeing. At a simple level this just means noticing what's around you and what you're feeling, rather than worrying about the past or future.
 - Simply focusing on your breath for a few minutes can help you feel calmer.
- Learn**
 - Taking time to try something new or learn new skills can help improve your self-esteem and confidence.
 - Even listening to a podcast or learning a new recipe can make you feel more confident.
- Give**
 - Supporting or helping others can improve your own happiness and give you a sense of purpose.
 - This might include volunteering in your community, helping with chores or just taking time to hold the door open for others.