



Felsted

Felsted Wellbeing

At the heart of our pastoral care

"Happiness depends on ourselves"

Aristotle

Wellbeing is not a given in life and is something that needs to be worked on as much as physical health. Felsted's holistic approach to mental health challenges is to look at the needs of everyone within the broader school community. As such our focus is on supporting and promoting the wellbeing and good mental health of all our stakeholders, which includes pupils, staff and parents. We aim to create a culture of awareness of mental health needs, with no stigma or discrimination, providing high quality mental health training for staff, pupils and parents.

Felsted puts pupil wellbeing at the heart of everything we do and we have long had a range of strategies to help pupils negotiate the pressures of growing up and being adolescent in the changing modern world.

We teach all our pupils, from the youngest years, the importance of mental health, whether it be through PSHE lessons, peer counselling, yoga sessions or mindfulness lessons. It forms an integral part of our pastoral care offering with all our staff equipped to understand and look out for the mental wellbeing of their pupils, whether in the boarding houses, classrooms, at lunch or in co-curricular activities.

A massive support network underpins our care for each child, which includes a house parent, tutor, teachers, matron, chaplain, peer counsellors, house and school prefects and now an in-house Wellbeing Centre and Counselling Service.





At the heart of our school

Located in the heart of the school is our Wellbeing Centre, a calming hub where all members of the Felsted community can seek respite and access resources to support their mental health. The decor is natural, the furniture comfortable and the atmosphere calming, with a focus on a sensory experience. All pupils are introduced to the Wellbeing Centre through their PSHE lessons and activities associated with wellbeing, such as mindfulness, meditation, yoga and pilates.

The Centre is a shared facility for both our Senior School and Prep School, caring for over 1000 pupils, 300 staff and parents.

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I have been in the Wellbeing Centre several times for PSHE lessons and have found it a really calming place to be.

Year 9 pupil

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Felsted has taken an educational lead in this area, showing children that it is absolutely ok to seek support for their mental wellbeing. Children have an on site Medical Centre to go to for their bumps, bruises and fevers; now they have provided a Wellbeing Centre to seek support for their mental health.

Felsted parent

Our Wellbeing Services

1. Prevention

AS tracking

AS (Affective Social) Tracking is a short, online assessment, completed by pupils twice within each academic year. Year on year pupil data will build an emerging social and emotional narrative for each pupil. In many ways, this mirrors academic tracking processes; each pupil's academic development is tracked so that we can target academic support and challenge. In tracking pupils' emerging social and emotional development, we will be further targeting our pastoral support and challenge.

AS Tracking makes visible each pupil's voice, perhaps revealing what we may not have seen through our interactions, professional judgement and relationships with our pupils. Pupils' emerging AS Tracking narrative sits alongside and adds to our existing pastoral processes; it does not replace them. Pupil data guides our pastoral staff in targeting the particular experiences, opportunities and messages that would most benefit individual pupils.

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I understand the Wellbeing Centre is a place I can go to if I need some sanctuary and also that I can seek help if I feel I need it.

Year 12 pupil





Mental Health First Aid Training

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an internationally recognised training course, designed to teach people how to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis. The following areas are covered over a total of about 16 hours: what is mental health?; depression and anxiety; suicide and psychosis; self-harm and eating disorders.

Felsted has two MHFA instructors: staff, senior pupils and parents all have the opportunity to sign up to this training, held on a regular basis. This helps improve the emotional literacy of our entire community, so we can support each other to improve our own and others' wellbeing.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

PSHE is taught in Years 9-11 and its foundation is built around developing emotional intelligence and resilience. Skills for good mental health are covered, including a focus on the practice of mindfulness in Year 11, to support pupils to stay calm and focused during this important exam year.

Peer Counselling

Year 12 may volunteer to become peer counsellors, receiving training on MHFA, sexual health, substance misuse and digital safety. This means that they can be effective in supporting younger pupils with a range of issues.

2. Counselling

When a child or young person is in distress and needing support, there are a range of different techniques our counsellors may use. We firmly believe that everybody has it in their power to heal themselves and this can be done using creative therapies such as art, sand play or play therapy. These gentle and non-threatening methods allow each young person to work through what is troubling them at a very deep level. This is especially suitable for the very young or for those who find verbalising their feelings very difficult and they usually find it great fun!

Many young people just want somebody with whom to talk things through so that they can develop new coping strategies to help them build their resilience. For these, we offer the traditional 'talking therapy' type of approach.

The Wellbeing Centre is home to our in-school Counselling Service, where we have three experienced members of staff available. Several purpose-built counselling rooms can be used for meetings and one-to-one therapy sessions.

Our Senior School pupils are able to ask for counselling directly and in confidence, although they will always be encouraged to talk to their parents. Counselling for Prep School pupils is provided after consultation with parents. We offer six sessions free of charge, which is usually enough for most of our pupils. However, it is possible to offer long term work for those who need more; the cost of subsequent sessions can be added to the school bill with parental permission.



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Children are really taking advantage of the easy access counselling support which aims to provide fast and accessible intervention to prevent any on-going distress and long term problems.

Mrs Karen Megahey, Deputy Head, Counselling & Wellbeing, MBACP (Accred)



**Mrs Karen Megahey, Deputy Head,
Counselling & Wellbeing, MBACP (Accred)**
+44 (0)1371 822673
kam@felsted.org

Felsted Wellbeing Centre
Felsted School
Felsted, Essex
CM6 3LL
www.felsted.org



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