



# Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

The Axholme Academy

November 2024

Review Date: Autumn 2026

At The Axholme Academy, we are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of all our students and staff. We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help students and staff to become more resilient and to prevent problems before they arise.

We recognise that early identification is key to preventing problems becoming worse. At our academy we know that everyone experiences life-challenges that can make us vulnerable and that, at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. Furthermore, in children, it can create a barrier to learning that can affect their academic performance.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: *'in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy'*.

We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's responsibility and that we all have a role to play. At our academy, we aim to promote positive mental health for every child, parent, carer and for all staff.

We pursue this aim by using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised targeted interventions, aimed at identified vulnerable students and families and we recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives.

## **Definition of Mental Health and Well-Being**

Mental health is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

*"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 Organisation, August 2014)

At The Axholme Academy, we believe that taking a coordinated and evidence-informed whole school approach to mental health in our academy will lead to improved student wellbeing, which, in turn, will improve learning and outcomes for our students, supporting the Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing document:

[Public Health England](#) and [Department for Education](#)

Published 20 March 2015

Last updated 21 September 2021

At Axholme Academy we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy, be successful and prevent problems before they arise.

## **A whole academy approach**

The **8 principles** of the **Whole School Approach** are:

1. **Leadership and Management** that supports and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing
2. **Ethos and Environment** that promotes respect and values diversity
3. **Curriculum, Teaching and Learning** to promote resilience and support social and emotional learning
4. Enabling **Student Voice** to influence decisions
5. **Staff Development** to support their own wellbeing and that of students
6. **Identifying need and monitoring impact** of interventions
7. **Working with parents/carers**
8. **Targeted support** and appropriate referral



## Links to other Policies

to

This policy describes the academy's whole school approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors as well as parents. It should be read in conjunction with our policies Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity, Looked After Children, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Personal Social Health Education (PSHE), Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

## Policy Aims

Our aim is to develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems. We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of

mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues through the promotion of mental health and be a school community where we promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing, without stigma, for all staff and students, through our curriculum, assemblies, Pledge, pastoral support, academy website and social media.
- Ensuring that all students, staff and members of the wider academy community are valued.
- Ensuring that staff are supported in relation to looking after their own wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting.
- Enabling staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enabling staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Ensuring that pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe; establishing and maintaining an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Creating a positive ethos and environment where students feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma and that children have a trusted adult whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensuring that positive mental health is promoted and valued, including opportunities in the Complementary Studies (CS) curriculum.
- Ensuring that bullying is not tolerated and supporting children through anti-bullying initiatives, the school's curriculum and by giving students a voice as Anti-bullying Ambassadors.
- Promoting our school values and British values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice through the Wellbeing Ambassador programme, the school council and within the classroom.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements in class and in assemblies
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Ensuring early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
- Providing and signposting to appropriate support that meets the individual's needs.
- Using student, staff and parent/carer surveys to identify any areas that need support.
- Effectively working with parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Implementing strong transition to secondary school and moving up into the new year group with additional sessions offered for those children needing additional support.
- Promoting Mental Health campaigns, e.g Children's Mental Health Awareness Week and Mental Health Awareness Month

## **Roles and responsibilities**

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. Through training, all staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems; such as physical long-term illness, changes in their lives, having a parent who has a mental health problem, bereavement and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

## **The School's Mental Health Team**

### **Key members of staff:**

<b>Kate Causier</b>	<b>Assistant principal (inclusion) Designated safeguarding Lead</b>
<b>Doreen Milward</b>	<b>Deputy Designated safeguarding Lead</b>
<b>Liane Kinroy</b>	<b>Assistant Principal and Senior Mental Health Leader</b>
<b>Aimee Burton</b>	<b>Ready to Learn Leader</b>
<b>Sami Ackroyd</b>	<b>Ready to Learning KS3 Manager</b>
<b>Danielle Shipman</b>	<b>Ready to Learn KS4 Manager</b>
<b>Julie Harrison</b>	<b>SENCO</b>
<b>Emma Leigh</b>	<b>Deputy SENCO</b>
<b>Hayley Coel</b>	<b>ELSA</b>

By taking a whole school approach, this policy aims to ensure all staff take individual and collective responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however there are key members of staff who have specific roles within the academy:

## **Staff training**

All staff receive safeguarding training.

With regards to mental health and wellbeing, as a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection and safeguarding training to enable them to keep students safe.

Nominated members of staff have completed professional Mental Health Lead training and ELSA training.

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 developing situations with one or more young people.

## **Identifying Need**

At Axholme Academy, we recognise that early identification is key to supporting with the prevention of mental health and wellbeing problems developing.

Staff are aware that they are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions but may notice behaviours that may be of concern. Staff recognise that every child is different and therefore, a child or staff member can experience a variety of symptoms. Additionally, it is their responsibility to act and inform the appropriate member of staff. Staff may become aware of warning signs that may indicate that 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, as appropriate.

All staff will monitor pupils and report any noticeable changes to:

- Attendance or Punctuality
- Relationships (with family, peers, staff)
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

Staff will be aware to look out for the following possible warning signs:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood (emotional, fearful, low self-esteem)
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness, or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

- Behaviour
- Interpersonal behaviours (indiscriminate contact or affection seeking, overfriendliness or excessive clinginess; demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent disapproval; failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed; coercive controlling behaviour; or lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions).

### **Mental health disclosure or concern being raised**

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the DSL in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

The DSL will ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Child protection processes will operate with the best interests of the child at their core.

Staff will:

- listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm
- try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of school staff
- clarify the information
- try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. using TED technique – 'Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me....'
- try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise
- not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child
- explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the DSL. Children need to know that staff may not be able to uphold confidentiality where there are concerns about their safety or someone else's
- reassure and support the person as far as possible
- explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told;
- explain what will happen next and who will be involved as appropriate
- record details including date and what the child has said in the child's words and pass to the DSL, or on an electronic system and record any visible signs, injuries or bruises on a Body Map. (see Appendix 3)
- record the context and content of their involvement, and will distinguish between fact, opinion and hearsay.
- Record the disclosure on CPOMs

### **Non-Verbal Disclosures by Pupils**

Staff may also recognise persistent and unusual non-verbal disclosures in behaviours and that behaviour may be the result of an unmet need or message.

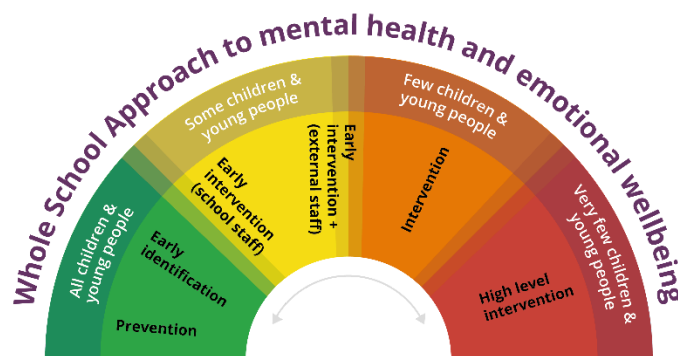
### **Targeted support**

At The Axholme Academy, we recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some students will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health

professionals and organisations that provide support to students with mental health needs and their families.

The academy has a comprehensive pastoral package in place to support students and staff with their emotional and mental wellbeing. The school has universal, whole school approaches, targeted approaches and specialised approaches for more complex or long-term difficulties. The academy sees every child as unique and therefore treats each case individually and inclusively. The academy recognises that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach. The package of support offered will be tailored to the child's specific needs and will include consultation with the child, parents/carers, pastoral staff and any other professionals involved in supporting the child. This is done to ensure that the right support is in place for the child at the right time.

The appropriate intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and students.



**Tier 1 - Prevention and early identification** This level is for all students and represents the basic level of mental health awareness and support strategies that all students need for positive emotional wellbeing. Students will access ways to support their mental health through the CS curriculum and have support from our student Well being Ambassadors.

**Tier 2 - Early intervention** At this level of need students will be showing early signs of distress that may be the start of an emerging mental health issue. Short-term interventions that build coping strategies are given to prevent these issues from developing – small changes to prevent bigger challenges. This might include Self help skills, signposting, in school interventions delivered by our pastoral team.

**Tier 3 - External Intervention** At this level students will need more specific support as their mental health problem will be more developed and significantly impacting their day-to-day life. There may also be other complexities such as trauma or neurodevelopmental conditions. Interventions are chosen to suit the needs of the student and will vary in modality, and intensity. This might be a referral to With me in mind, support from the school nurse or agencies such as Solutions. An Early Help Assessment might also be opened to support the student at this stage.



**Tier 4 - High level Intervention/ Specialist support** At this level students will need high-level support for mental health conditions that require support from CAMHS. Children may be at crisis point, require medication, or several different types of specialist support.

## Assessment

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

- Logging concerns via CPOMS
- Tracking student interventions and Tier stages on VSR (Vulnerable Students Register) tracker.
- Evaluating Tier 2 early interventions
- When a student has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS, WMiM the student will be added to the SEND register. A Pen Portrait will be produced for the student and shared with relevant staff.
- For students who self-harm or have had suicidal ideation, the academy will draw up a safety plan and share with relevant staff.

## Student Mental Health and Well-being

Teaching about mental health, the skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our Complementary Studies curriculum.

As an academy, we use a personalised scheme of work to ensure coverage of the national curriculum and to our academy community needs. This is taught discretely in weekly lessons in all year groups, with additional 'drop down' periods once a fortnight, as well as in a cross-curricular manner, where appropriate, including opportunities during assemblies and PLEDGE activities.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but we will also use the national curriculum DFE Guidance (updated September 2021) to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner. CS is currently a non-statutory subject however, **Relationships Sex Education (Secondary) and Health Education** are statutory elements of the curriculum, and core elements within the CS curriculum are statutory for years 7 - 11. The introduction of RSHE as a subject became compulsory in Sept 2020 (see Appendix 1).

## Supporting pupils with positive mental health

We believe we have a key role in promoting students' positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including;

- The academy Wellbeing Ambassadors
- Themed days/ weeks and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health
- ELSA support
- WMiM classroom workshops, online workshops, corridor workshops.

- WMiM supporting at Open evenings
- School Nursing team drop ins and workshops
- Transition Support both from year 6 and into further education
- Support for vulnerable children, for example, SEND interventions and support
- Small group work such as Lego Therapy or Social Communication groups
- Transition meetings with parent/carers, pupils and relevant staff
- Extra personalised transition for vulnerable children
- Key adults may support further education visits with vulnerable pupils
- Mindfulness activities during clubs time
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school
- Small friendship, social skills groups

### **Involving Pupils**

- We seek pupils' views and feedback about our approach and whole school mental health activities through Student Voice and surveys
- We have Mental Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors
- We have a School Council

### **Working with Parents and Carers**

#### **Promoting Mental Health**

We recognise that the family play a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels

#### **To support parents and carers:**

- We organise and signpost to a range of mental health workshops; this includes topics such as anxiety, stress management, behaviour and sleep.
- We provide information and signposting to organisations on our websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
- We have an open-door policy
- We support parents and carers with children with mental health needs through sensitive and supportive regular meetings and signposting.
- Signpost WMiM parental workshops

#### **When a concern for wellbeing and mental health has been raised the academy will:**

- Contact parents and carers and gain consent for any intervention work where necessary.
- Discuss the most appropriate way forward ie school intervention, parent support and/or signposting or involvement of other services
- Ensure that the concern/interventions are logged on CPOMs and tracked via the VSR
- Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger.

## **Involving Parents and Carers**

- We seek parent and carers' views and feedback about our approach and whole academy mental health activities through Parent and Carer Voice, surveys and questionnaires.

## **Staff mental health and Wellbeing**

At The Axholme Academy, we recognise, prioritise and promote staff health and emotional wellbeing as an integral part of the whole academy approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Therefore, training and signposting to materials about mental health and emotional wellbeing will be made available for all staff via the Mental Health & Wellbeing section of the bulletin. This will be continually updated with up-to-date information.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy academy and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing, such as:

- Supervision
- Staff also have access to a confidential counselling service, (if needed.)
- Supervision and appraisal will allow for mutual communication about personal health and emotional wellbeing if both felt it is necessary
- An open-door policy to senior leadership is always made available if staff want to speak to someone.
- Opportunities allow for staff to connect and raise any concerns with the Mental Health Lead.

## **Involving Staff**

- We seek staff views and feedback about our approach and whole school mental health activities through staff wellbeing surveys.
- We recognise staff contribution
- We signpost mental health and well being support in the staffroom, bulletin and staff toilets
- We arrange well being activities throughout the year for staff
- We have a [Staff Well being policy](#) and [Menopause Policy](#)
- We consider the [DfE workload reduction task force](#) recommendations
- We have a well-being charter (Appendix 2)

We aim to promote a healthy work-life balance for all staff, where hard work and dedication, as well as the challenges of working in the context of a one form entry school, are recognised.

We aim to do this by:

- Producing calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload.
- Investing in staff CPD, including professional and academic qualifications, such as NPQML, NPQSL or Masters courses.
- Reducing workload:
  - No expectation to mark every piece of learning or write extensive comments.
  - No formal lesson observations
- Engaging staff in annual wellbeing questionnaires to listen to and identify their needs.

- Enforcing the rule that no emails should be sent out before 08:00, after 18:00 or at the weekends.
- There is no expectation for staff to respond to emails or carry out work outside of typical school working hours (08:00 - 18:00).
- Offering easy access to occupational health/professional mental health support where necessary.
- Offering staff meeting time to complete specific tasks, such as medium term planning, action planning and theme week planning
- Providing refreshments and snacks in the staffroom for all staff
- Planning evening events with staff workload and well being in mind

Our policy is underpinned by the Government's Guidance contained within the: 'Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools and Colleges' document;

'Making a coordinated and evidence-informed approach to mental health in schools and colleges leads to improved pupil and student wellbeing, which, in turn, can improve learning.

The [guidance outlining a whole school or college approach](#) describes the areas to consider to enable good mental health and wellbeing practice:

[Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/promoting-and-supporting-mental-health-and-wellbeing-in-schools-and-colleges)

## **Appendix 1 -DfE Physical Health & Mental Wellbeing curriculum (updated September 2021)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education/physical-health-and-mental-wellbeing-primary-and-secondary#physical-health-and-mental-wellbeing-secondary>

### **Mental wellbeing**

Pupils should know:

- How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary
- That happiness is linked to being connected to others
- How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns
- Common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression)
- How to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health
- The benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness

# Staff Wellbeing Charter

We are committed to supporting and nurturing the health and wellbeing of our whole community - pupils, families and staff. Our bespoke wellbeing charter outlines some of the measures we have in place to support and assist staff to carry out their professional duties. Our staff are supportive of each other and work hard as teams both in their own departments and across the academy as a whole.



**Team ethos - collaborative approaches sought throughout**



**Flexible & generous approach to appointments and family events**



**Clear communication - deadlines carefully considered and well publicised**



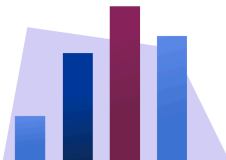
**Published PPA time**



**Measured approach to supportive lesson visits and drop-ins**



**Opportunities for career development actively encouraged and supported**



**No data collected for collecting's sake**



**Dedicated leadership time for all leadership roles**



**Employee assistance programme including counselling service, GP service and 24/7 helpline for practical information and emotional support**



**Childcare voucher scheme available to all staff**



**Cycle to work scheme**



**Free eye tests for VDU users**

**HR open door policy to answer any queries**



**SLT open door policy at all times including urgent out of hours**

## Appendix 3 - Information and support links

### Mental health and Wellbeing Information and support links

#### Local support:

- With Me In Mind <https://www.withmeinmind.co.uk/>
- <http://www.withmeinmind.co.uk/videos/>
- North Lincolnshire SEND local offer <http://www.northlincslocaloffer.com/parents-and-carers/emotional-health-and-wellbeing/>
- North Lincolnshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service <https://camhs.rdash.nhs.uk/north-lincolnshire/>
- A free on line mental health and wellbeing support service for children and young people (aged 11-25) has been launched in Hull, East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire. <https://www.kooth.com/>
- NHS "Every Mind Matters" campaign <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/childrens-mental-health/>
- The Talking Shop, Scunthorpe - offering free confidential advice and training about improving mental health and wellbeing <https://www.rdash.nhs.uk/scunthorpe-talking-shop/01724867297>.
- North Lincolnshire Healthy Lifestyle Service - support you to improve your wellbeing, including your mental and emotional health. The service can be accessed in numerous settings across North Lincolnshire. To make an appointment with our friendly team, please telephone 01724 298212 or email [nlc.healthy.lifestyles@nhs.net](mailto:nlc.healthy.lifestyles@nhs.net).
- Visit your GP or doctor.
- Speak to friends and family.
- For support on specific mental health needs:
- Anxiety UK [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)
- OCD UK [www.ocduk.org](http://www.ocduk.org)
- Depression Alliance [www.depressoinalliance.org](http://www.depressoinalliance.org)
- Eating Disorders [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk) and [www.inourhands.com](http://www.inourhands.com)
- National Self-Harm Network [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk) [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)
- Suicidal thoughts Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPHYRUS: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/> Mood self-Assessment tool and more information on specific mental health needs.

#### For support on specific mental health needs:

- Anxiety UK [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)
- OCD UK [www.ocduk.org](http://www.ocduk.org)
- Depression Alliance [www.depressoinalliance.org](http://www.depressoinalliance.org)
- Eating Disorders [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk) and [www.inourhands.com](http://www.inourhands.com)
- National Self-Harm Network [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk) [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)
- Suicidal thoughts Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPHYRUS: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/> - Mood self-Assessment tool and more information on specific mental health needs.

#### Self-help:

- <https://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/professional/index.asp>
- <https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/selfhelp.htm>
- <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/en/Resources/For-Clinicians>
- <https://www.therapistaid.com/>
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#### For general information and support:

- [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) champions young people's mental health and wellbeing
- [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) offers advice and support on mental health problems
- [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk) (e-learning)
- [www.time-to-change.org.uk](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk) tackles the stigma of mental health
- [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) challenges attitudes towards mental health
- <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/your-mental-health/looking-after-your-mental-health>
- Looking after your mental health.
- <https://www.samaritans.org/> offer support 24 hours a day 365 days a year. Call 116 123 (free)

