



Manchester High School for Girls
Well Being Programme



Welcome



At Manchester High School for Girls, our approach to wellbeing is proactive. We aim to encourage our pupils to develop those skills and characteristics that will enable them to flourish and, most importantly, to be happy.

Manchester High School for Girls has always prioritised the wellbeing of all members of its community - but I am delighted to be able to say that this central part of our ethos is now one of our five core values as well as being a crucial element in our ongoing strategic development.

The organisation, Young Minds, has carried out valuable surveys of young people over the last eighteen months and the results of the fourth survey, from January 2021, are of no surprise. 67% of those young people surveyed felt that the pandemic would have a long term, negative effect on their mental health. This is incredibly concerning and, therefore, for those of us who work in schools, it is the wellbeing of our pupils that must be our sustained focus both now and over the coming years.

At Manchester High School for Girls, we recognise that happy pupils succeed and this is fundamental to our approach to life in school. We know that teaching students to look after, and value, their health and wellbeing are incredibly important to the development of confidence and self-esteem, both of which are crucial to long term happiness and success beyond the school gates.

The opportunity for every young person to flourish is our aim as we approach and advance through this next school year.

Mrs Helen F Jeys
Head Mistress



What is Wellbeing?

How important is it at Manchester High School for Girls?

Wellbeing is based around a range of considerations - physical, emotional or psychological, social, spiritual, intellectual and economic – and at MHSG, we support students in their wellbeing, both in bespoke lessons and in our approach to school life.

At Manchester High, we want to embrace and celebrate individual goals and dreams, recognising that each individual student is unique.

A pupil's ability to manage emotions may support or impede their learning, their academic engagement, work ethic, commitment and ultimately their sense of success at school. We want to empower our students to make positive choices to improve their wellbeing and establish good habits for the future.

Wellbeing – a core value at MHSG and part of our vision:

Our vision is excellence: to deliver a pioneering, innovative and dynamic learning experience within a compassionate and caring environment for a needs blind, diverse community where the wellbeing and happiness of every individual and the fulfilment of their potential are our priority.

Wellbeing is one of our five core values: We believe in prioritising the all-round development of our pupils and encourage the pursuit of enjoyment, fun and mindfulness; recognising that happiness is fundamental to success.

Wellbeing is a key area in our current and future strategic objectives and integral to our pioneering approach at Manchester High School for Girls.

Our focus includes:

- Adopting a proactive approach to pastoral and mental health support
- Delivering a meaningful Well Being journey which focuses on the building of character
- Providing outstanding, varied and evolving extra-curricular opportunities
- Offering opportunities for all students to have fun and to enjoy school
- Celebrating and valuing contributions all students make to their community



The support I received from the pastoral team has created a welcoming environment at school. This has allowed me to gain confidence both inside and outside of the classroom.

India, S6



Digital Wellbeing and Social Media

Young people are growing up in a world where technology is ever-present.

Digital wellbeing is concerned with the positive and negative impact of online culture and how to ensure we look after ourselves and others whilst online.

Some children feel lonely and isolated when they spend too much time online whilst others may feel included and have an enhanced sense of belonging. We encourage our students to maintain a balance that serves to support their overall wellbeing.

There are a number of ways that you can support your children online including:

- Using parental controls for devices, such as adding time limits so screen time can be managed.
- Teaching that the internet is a resource and ensuring children put what they learn into practice. For example, if your child finds a recipe on the internet then encourage them to make it or if your child finds a Lego project to build, then encourage them to build it.
- Discuss how being online makes your child feel. For instance, does it make them feel tired? Does it give them headaches? Does it make them feel happy or sad, alone or connected?
- Set boundaries, including how often your child spends online, and when and where they can access the internet.
- Support your children with the online world. If anything online upsets them, let them know that you can help and that they can trust you to talk about all aspects - whether positive or negative.
- Model healthy digital usage such as charging devices downstairs and away from bedrooms. Children learn from watching others, and we, as adults, need to take the lead.



Social Media

Social media platforms have been around for nearly twenty years and they have many benefits. Social media can support development, give access to knowledge and can be used to complete school work. Young people value the social benefits of social media platforms and they may serve to help develop a child's identity. They can reduce feelings of social isolation and can help families that live apart maintain relationships.

However, too much time on social media platforms can increase social isolation as excessive use can restrict face-to-face interaction, as well as potentially impacting sleep quality. This can then affect a child's ability to concentrate and can, potentially, affect behaviour in and out of school.

We know that a school that promotes digital resilience and appropriate behaviour online can help address the issue of online bullying. We are aware that increased time on the internet can increase a child's risk to such forms of bullying so we promote digital resilience within School at all key stages and work hard with students to address these issues during wellbeing lessons and tutor time.

Resilience and Growth Mindset

Resilience

Resilience is a frequently used word in relation to our pupils and their mental wellbeing. Resilience refers to the ability to recover from difficult experiences and how well a person can respond and adapt to the events in their life. A person with a high level of resilience will 'bounce back' with less stress and more quickly than someone with a less developed level of resilience.

A whole-school culture that allows pupils to learn from their mistakes and understand how resilience can help them with challenges, both in and out of school, is a crucial life skill.

A conversation several years ago with a pupil who had experienced issues surrounding self-esteem resulted in the introduction of our 'thought for the week', a motivating message for students to see as they walk around school; from messages that mark anti-bullying week to those that encourage resilience. For us, resilience is key: every student must be helped to develop her self-esteem and confidence as well as the belief that she can deal with change.

The dedicated pastoral team at MHSG ensure every student's mental and emotional needs are addressed with care and compassion, whilst the weekly wellbeing lessons covering a variety of topics leave us feeling inspired, self-aware and educated!

Arwa, S6

Additionally, MHSG focuses on resilience through its Well Being programme by:

- Helping to create strong emotional connections; if a student feels supported they will seek out help and support.
- Promoting healthy risk-taking through encouraging (with parental support and approval) children out of their comfort zone by suggesting new sports and hobbies as part of our varied range of extra-curricular opportunities.
- Teaching and providing opportunity for pupils to develop problem-solving skills.
- Labelling emotions and ensuring that pupils know it is fine to feel 'sad', 'jealous', 'anxious', as well as providing reassurance that these emotions usually pass quickly.
- Teaching coping skills including deep breathing, relaxation and time out techniques.
- Encouraging pupils to embrace mistakes because they help us to learn.
- Modelling resilience because it is important that adults take the lead in this area.
- Encouraging pupils to be active and get outdoors. This is supported by our Sports programme and our lunchtime clubs and activities, alongside the weekly wellbeing session which provides opportunities for pupils to take part in activities such as skateboarding, circus skills, self-defence and more.

Growth Mindset

Pupils who possess a growth mindset rise to challenges and learn from the mistakes they make, rather than feeling distressed and defeated if they are unable to do or understand something. If someone has a growth mindset, they have a positive attitude towards learning and an ability to progress and achieve.

MHSG focuses on character education, and this is emphasised and reiterated through its Wellbeing Programme.



The Well Being Journey at the Heart of our School

Wellbeing and a 'character' education are integral parts of life at MHSG – we believe that a happy student is far more likely to achieve academic success.

Character and the building of character are particularly important to us. Helping pupils to develop the skills and experiences to be resilient, tenacious and confident as well as those strategies that aim to help them cope with stress will ultimately prepare them for their future, way beyond the school gates.

Our pupils embark on a meaningful Well Being journey right from the start of their MHSG career. Our Preparatory Department uses the 'My Happy Mind' programme which leverages the latest research, science, and technology to help children develop lifelong habits and learn to thrive. Once in the Senior School, students enjoy a bespoke Well Being programme which encourages our pupils to know themselves (Years 7-9), like themselves (Years 10-11) and develop themselves (Years 12-13). The weekly Well Being lesson supports our pupils in developing the knowledge, understanding, skills and characteristics needed to thrive personally and in their relationships with others.

Students are also supported through a series of themed weeks from Perseverance Week, where students share their own recollections on the importance of resilience, to Hug Your Monster Week which encourages pupils to embrace failure and learn from setbacks.

Whilst the Well Being timetable may be structured, there is also flexibility to respond to current affairs and subjects about which students are passionate. For us, a crucial part of the Well Being journey is making students feel valued by listening to them, which is why we have student councils for each year group within the School.

Our weekly wellbeing sessions equip us with the knowledge to face the real world. They cover finance, conflict resolution, abuses of power, breast cancer awareness, environmental ethics, and mental health related topics.

Natalie, S6

For instance in 2020, our pupils wanted to talk about the BLM movement. Under the guidance of our pastoral team, they were given the opportunity for this discussion to take place - sixth formers delivered assemblies to younger groups and all students enjoyed 'Diversity Day'. This was a day that celebrated the diverse nature of our school community; students attended workshops about the language of race along with personal heritage sessions that allowed them to celebrate the rich, social, cultural and religious mix in school.

Manchester High School for Girls aims to create a culture of awareness of wellbeing and mindfulness alongside mental health needs, with no stigma or prejudice. Wellbeing is not a given in life and is something that needs to be worked on just as much as physical health.



Example Timetable

Examples of activities and sessions from the Well Being Programme by year group:

YEAR 7

Assertiveness • Puberty • Form Games • Forced Marriage Information Session • Fundamental British Values • Activity Day • Introduction to Finance • Looking at Mindset • Exam Food • Social Skills • Careers • Mindfulness • Skateboarding • Fighting for a Cause • Circus Skills • Dealing with Disappointment • Study Skills • E-Safety • Black Lives Matters Session

YEAR 8

Sustainability • My Goals • Work/Life Balance • Careers Options • Looking at Mindset • Friendship • Self-Awareness • Sexting • E-Safety • Assertiveness • Tolerance & Respect • Law of the Land • Social Skills • Memory Games • Circus Skills • Nutrition • Primal Movement • Current Affairs • Skateboarding • Mindfulness • Black Lives Matters Session • Visiting Speakers

YEAR 9

My Goals • Study Skills • Careers and CVs • Poppy Project • Mindset • Staying Positive • Nutrition • Black Lives Matters Session • Zero Tolerance Day • Sustainability • Inspirational Women • Mindfulness • Having Healthy Relationships • First Aid • Contraception • Exam Nutrition • Discussing Democracy • Teenage Years • Career Options • Safeguarding

YEAR 10

Deaf course (over a period of six weeks) • Study Skills • Black Lives Matters Session • Staying Positive • Sessions on Business Management • Ace Your Exams • Careers and A-levels • Mindfulness • Contraception • Sexual Harassment • Primal Movement • Circus Skills • Visiting Speakers

YEAR 11

Black Lives Matters Session • Safeguarding • Careers and Work Experience • Assertiveness • Sustainability • Zumba • Managing your Finances • Staying Positive • Zero Tolerance • Ace your Exams • Politics Information Session • On-line Positivity • First Aid • Tolerance & LGBTQ+ • First Aid

YEAR 12

Unifrog Session • Black Lives Matters Session • Prevent Information • Form Games • Time Management • Democracy Session • Self Defence • Information on Soft Skills • CV Management • Nutrition • Eating Disorders • Memory Skills • Drugs Information Session • Mindfulness • Primal Movement • Form Games

YEAR 13

Interview Skills • Drugs Information Session • Tricky Interviews • Primal Movement • Managing Finances • Pension Information • Tax Information • Nutrition • Sex Health Information Session • Staying Positive • UCAS Support • Zumba • Black Lives Matters Session • Softcat Talk • Visiting Speakers

Our Values

Manchester High School for Girls nurtures...



Our Vision

Our vision is excellence: to deliver a pioneering, innovative and dynamic learning experience within a compassionate and caring environment for a needs blind, diverse community where the wellbeing and happiness of every individual and the fulfilment of their potential are our priority. As the School of choice for girls in the North-West, our pupils - like those who have attended the School before them - will go on to be global citizens and courageous motivators of change.

Safeguarding leads

Charlotte Hughes
School Nurse

Charlotte Railton
School Nurse

Head of Pastoral
Senior School

Mrs V Shingler
Preparatory Department

Ms R Anderson
Preparatory Department
including Early Years

We have listed some websites that might be helpful to further develop your understanding of this area:

[Mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk](https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk)

[Youngminds.org.uk](https://youngminds.org.uk)

[Place2be.org.uk](https://place2be.org.uk)

[Childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone](https://childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone)

[Time-to-change.org.uk](https://time-to-change.org.uk)

[Rethink.org](https://rethink.org)

[Mind.org.uk](https://mind.org.uk)

[Mentalhealth.org.uk](https://mentalhealth.org.uk)

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