



Harworth Brass

Mental Health Policy

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Positive Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Harworth Brass



Policy Statement

Mental health is 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 Organization)

In our bandroom, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for every member of our brass band. We pursue this aim using supportive and recognised methods.

In addition to promoting and protecting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. Musicians are three times more likely to be experiencing a mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for our musicians affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote and protect positive mental health and wellbeing in all band members
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert management and band members to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to band members working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to band members experiencing mental and their peers and parents or carers
- Promote positive relationships between peers and superiors

Lead Contacts

Whilst everyone has a responsibility to promote the positive mental and physical health of band members, the following individuals are key leaders:

- Lyn Howard/Darren Rogers - designated child protection / safeguarding officers
- Lyn Howard/Darren Rogers - mental health leads
- Lyn Howard/Darren Rogers - mental health first aiders

Any band member who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a fellow musician should speak to the mental health leads in the first instance. If there is a fear that the band member is in danger of immediate harm, then the mental health first aiders should be alerted.

Signposting

Band members should be made aware of sources of support online, within the local community and nationally.

Relevant sources of support should be displayed in communal areas such as



noticeboards to increase the chance of band members seeking help if required. These sources of support could include:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

Band members may become aware of warning signs which indicate a fellow musician is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and anyone observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with Lyn Howard/Darren Rogers the mental health leads.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- 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
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a band member on, then we should discuss with them:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a band member without first telling them.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the mental health leads, Lyn Howard/Darren Rogers. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the band member and ensures continuity of care in our absence.

It provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the band member and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with. Parents must always be informed if the band member is a child and these band members may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the child should be given 24 hours to share this information before the mental health leads contact the parents.

We should always give the child the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection officers (Lyn Howard/Darren Rogers) must be informed immediately.



Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions:

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? In the bandroom, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the child, other band members.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issue's and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too, e.g. parent helplines and forums.

Supporting Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the band about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings

Supporting Peers

When a band member is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends and colleagues. Friends and colleagues often want to support but do not know how. The following should be considered to help friends and colleagues:

- What it is helpful for friends and colleagues to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend or colleague may need help (e.g. signs of relapse) Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:
 - Where and how to access support for themselves
 - Safe sources of further information about their friend and colleague's condition
 - Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Training

As a minimum, all key band management will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues to enable them to keep band members safe.

Training opportunities for band members who require more in-depth knowledge will be offered such as Mental Health First Aid England Training.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host training sessions for all band members to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.



Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum.

It is next due for review in August 2028.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis in line with any changes to national policy and law.

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH LEADS ARE:

Lyn Howard

Darren Rogers

Both have completed the PERFORM (Accredited) Online Course for Brass Bands Mental Health Course

Your Mental Health Leads are a point of contact if you, or someone you are concerned about, are experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress.

They are not therapists or psychiatrists, but they can give you initial support and signpost you to appropriate help if required.