J. McGinty: Mental health in the teaching of psychology in England - a case study
Watford Grammar School for Boys

• Founded 1704

• ~ 1500 boys

• 200 take A-levels each year with ~50 psychology students
Teaching psychology guidelines

• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas

• Apply this knowledge and understanding

• Evaluate knowledge and understanding and make conclusions
Applied psychology

• Issues in mental health
• The historical context
• The medical model
• Alternatives to the medical model
Course content

• Definitions and categorisation of mental illness, e.g. ICD-11, DSM-5

• Characteristics of disorders, e.g. affective, psychotic, anxiety

• Explanations of mental illness, e.g. medical model - biochemical, genetic, brain abnormality: Alternatives – behavioural, cognitive, psychodynamic.

• Treatments of mental illness, e.g. biological – drugs, ECT: Non-biological – CBT, systematic desensitisation.
Teaching strategies

• Active learning

• Problem based learning


• Students create their own PALS
Teaching strategies

• Social constructivism

• Group work

• Peer tutoring and mentoring

• Effect of the COVID-19 pandemic
Teaching strategies

• Metacognition
• Critical thinking
• Retrieval practice
• Distributed practice

• Focus on OUTformation rather than INformation
The pastoral curriculum

• Tutors
• Head of year

• Wellbeing curriculum delivered in tutor time and assemblies
• Resilience, Initiative, Thinking, Collaboration, Respect and Kindness

• ‘Five ways to wellbeing’ activities - connect, be active, take notice, learn, give.
Counsellors for students

• Safespace

• CAMHS

• Kooth online
Training for teachers

• Mental Health First Aid England

• Herts for Learning

• National Health Service

• Time to change