




## Mental Health & Well-Being Policy

Approved by <sup>1</sup>			
Name:	Kirsty Fox		
Position:	Headteacher		
Signed:			
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## 1. Why Mental Health and Well-Being is Important

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health and well-being for our whole school community: pupils, staff, parents and carers. We recognise how important mental health and emotional well-being is to our lives in the same way as physical health.

Children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall well-being and can affect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age. As a school, we have adopted Anna Freud's *Thrive Framework for System Change* to ensure that we have a whole school approach to mental health and well-being.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice identifies Social, Emotional and Mental Health as one of the four areas of Special Educational Need.

The Department for Education (DfE, 2023) recognises that: "in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". Schools are also expected to consider wellbeing under the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework, within both the *Personal Development* and *Behaviour and Attitudes* judgements.

Our aim is to help develop protective factors that build resilience to mental health problems and be a school where:

- all pupils are valued
- pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- pupils feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling stigma
- positive mental health is promoted and valued
- bullying is not tolerated

We also recognise the importance of promoting staff wellbeing and commit to the DfE **Education Staff Wellbeing Charter** (2021).

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## 2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out:

- how we promote positive mental health
  - how we prevent mental health problems
  - how we identify and support pupils with mental health needs
  - how we train and support staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs
  - how we promote staff wellbeing and protect workload
  - where parents, staff and pupils can get advice and support
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### 3. Definition of Mental Health and Well-Being

We use the World Health Organisation's definition:

*"...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."*

Mental health and well-being is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children to:

- feel confident in themselves
  - express a range of emotions appropriately
  - make and maintain positive relationships with others
  - cope with the stresses of everyday life
  - manage times of stress and deal with change
  - learn and achieve
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### 4. Links to other Policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Inclusion, Looked After Children, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour and Discipline, RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education), SEND, and Online Safety.

The statutory RSHE curriculum (DfE, 2020) requires all schools to teach pupils about mental wellbeing. Our RSHE and SCARF programmes ensure this is embedded across EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2.

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### 5. Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health

We adopt a whole school approach, supported by Anna Freud's *Thrive Framework*, which encompasses:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support resilience and mental health.
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships and seek help when they need it.
3. Building pupils' resilience as learners.
4. Teaching pupils social, emotional, and digital wellbeing skills.
5. Early identification of pupils with mental health needs, with swift access to specialist services.
6. Working effectively with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their knowledge and resilience.

We aim to create a culture of openness around mental health, digital wellbeing, and resilience, with a strong *Open Door Policy*.

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## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, to understand protective and risk factors, and to spot early warning signs of mental health needs.

The school's Mental Health Team (Headteacher, SENCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead, ELSA staff and Senior Mental Health Lead) will:

- coordinate whole school activities
  - provide advice and training for staff
  - liaise with RSHE and Online Safety Leads
  - act as first point of contact with mental health services and local NHS **Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)**
  - make referrals and oversee support plans
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## 7. Supporting Pupils' Positive Mental Health

We use a range of approaches including pupil-led campaigns, assemblies, RSHE lessons, transition support, worry boxes, ELSA interventions, small group support, and links with the local community.

Digital wellbeing is taught explicitly through RSHE and Online Safety lessons, helping children to manage online risks and balance screen use.

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## 8. Early Identification and Intervention

We use staff observations, pupil surveys, parental input, attendance/behaviour monitoring and induction visits to identify pupils who may need support. Staff are trained in protective and risk factors and will report concerns promptly to the SENCO or DSL.

Where immediate risk of harm is identified, safeguarding procedures will be followed. A **crisis pathway** is in place, including emergency referral routes (CAMHS crisis line, 999, or social care) and escalation to the DSL.

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## 9. Working with Specialist Services

We maintain strong links with CAMHS, Educational Psychology, Early Help, and MHSTs to ensure timely access to support. Referrals are made in consultation with pupils and parents/carers.

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## 10. Involving Parents and Carers

We support parents by:

- regular mental health and wellbeing surveys
- meetings and action planning for children with identified needs
- signposting to local and national services (e.g. Young Minds, Mind, PAPYRUS)
- providing information on supporting digital wellbeing at home

Parents are always informed if a child is at risk of danger. Where parents are unable or unwilling to engage, the school will seek advice from the Local Authority to ensure pupil needs are met.

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## 11. Involving Pupils

Pupil voice is integral to our approach. Feedback is gathered through School Council, wellbeing surveys, suggestion boxes, and focus groups.

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## 12. Supporting and Training Staff

All staff receive training to promote positive mental health, identify concerns, and know referral pathways. Specialist staff have access to supervision where possible.

Staff wellbeing is promoted through workload protection, flexible approaches where possible, and engagement with the **DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter**.

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## 13. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy was developed collaboratively with staff, governors, parents and pupils.

Its effectiveness will be monitored through:

- Annual review by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors
- Analysis of wellbeing surveys (staff, pupils, parents)
- Data on attendance, exclusions, safeguarding, and pupil progress
- Staff workload monitoring
- Evaluation of interventions and referrals

The policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if needed.

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## Appendices

Appendix 1 – Protective and Risk Factors

Appendix 2 – Common Mental Health Needs (based on DfE, 2018/2023 guidance)

Appendix 3 – Sources of Support for Pupils, Parents and Staff