



Mental Health & Well-Being Policy

Approved by ¹			
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1. Why Mental Health and Well-Being is Important

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community: pupils, staff, parents and carers. We recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in the same way as physical health. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

Children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health difficulties 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 wellbeing. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice identifies Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) as one of the four broad areas of special educational need. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

The Department for Education recognises that schools have an important role in helping children and young people become resilient and mentally healthy. We also recognise that wellbeing is considered within Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework through both the Personal Development and Behaviour and Attitudes judgements. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

Our aim is to help develop protective factors that build resilience and create 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 worries without fear of stigma;
- positive mental health is promoted and valued;
- bullying is not tolerated.

We also recognise the importance of promoting staff wellbeing and remain committed to the principles of the DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out:

- how we promote positive mental health and wellbeing;
- how we prevent mental health difficulties;
- how we identify and support pupils with mental health needs;
- how we train and support staff to understand mental health issues and identify early warning signs;

- how we promote staff wellbeing;
 - where pupils, parents, carers and staff can access advice and support. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)
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3. Definition of Mental Health and Well-Being

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health:

"A state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to contribute to their community."

Mental health and wellbeing is not simply the absence of mental health difficulties. We want all children to:

- feel confident in themselves;
 - express a range of emotions appropriately;
 - make and maintain positive relationships;
 - cope with everyday challenges;
 - manage periods of change and uncertainty;
 - learn and achieve to the best of their ability. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)
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4. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Inclusion Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- RSHE Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Looked After Children Policy.

It also reflects current statutory guidance including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children;

- SEND Code of Practice;
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance;
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

The statutory RSHE curriculum requires schools to teach pupils about mental wellbeing. Our RSHE and SCARF programmes ensure this is embedded across EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

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 positive mental health.
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships and seek help when needed.
3. Building pupils' resilience as learners.
4. Teaching pupils social, emotional and digital wellbeing skills.
5. Early identification of pupils with mental health needs and timely access to support.
6. Working effectively with parents and carers.
7. Supporting staff through training, professional development and wellbeing initiatives.

We aim to create a culture of openness around mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience through our open-door approach and supportive relationships. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

6. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, understand protective and risk factors, identify concerns at an early stage and report safeguarding concerns in accordance with school procedures.

The school's Mental Health Team consists of the Headteacher, SENCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) and Senior Mental Health Lead.

The team will:

- coordinate whole-school wellbeing activities;
- support staff in identifying and responding to concerns;
- oversee targeted interventions and support plans;

- liaise with parents and carers;
- work with external agencies where appropriate, including Educational Psychology, Early Help services, health professionals and CAMHS;
- monitor the effectiveness of interventions and referrals.

All staff should understand that mental health concerns may, in some cases, become safeguarding concerns and should be reported in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

7. Supporting Pupils' Positive Mental Health

We use a range of approaches to promote positive mental health and wellbeing including:

- RSHE lessons;
- assemblies and wellbeing activities;
- pupil voice opportunities;
- transition support;
- worry boxes and trusted adults;
- ELSA interventions;
- small-group support;
- community links and enrichment opportunities.

The school recognises that children's wellbeing can be influenced by their online experiences. Through our curriculum and wider safeguarding work, pupils are supported to develop healthy online habits, manage screen time appropriately, recognise online risks and seek help when concerns arise. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

8. Early Identification and Intervention

We use staff observations, pupil voice activities, parental input, attendance and behaviour monitoring, safeguarding information and transition arrangements to identify pupils who may need support.

Staff are trained to recognise protective and risk factors and will report concerns promptly to the SENCO, Mental Health Lead or DSL.

The school recognises that changes in attendance, including persistent absence and emotionally based school avoidance, may indicate underlying emotional wellbeing or mental health needs.

Attendance concerns will be considered alongside wider safeguarding, SEND and wellbeing information to ensure appropriate support is put in place.

The school also recognises that children with SEND, including neurodivergent pupils, may experience additional barriers that affect their emotional wellbeing and mental health. Support will be tailored to individual needs and developed in partnership with families and relevant professionals.

Where immediate risk of harm is identified, safeguarding procedures will be followed without delay. A clear safeguarding pathway is in place, including referral routes to children's social care, health services, CAMHS and emergency services where required. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

9. Working with Specialist Services

We maintain effective partnerships with a range of agencies and services to ensure pupils receive timely and appropriate support. These may include:

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS);
- Educational Psychology;
- School Nursing Service;
- Early Help services;
- Children's Social Care;
- Local Authority Inclusion and SEND Services;
- voluntary and community organisations.

Where concerns do not meet safeguarding thresholds but additional support is needed, the school may work with families through an Early Help approach. This enables needs to be identified and addressed as early as possible and helps prevent difficulties from escalating.

Referrals will normally be made in partnership with pupils and their parents or carers unless safeguarding concerns require a different approach. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

10. Involving Parents and Carers

We recognise the vital role that parents and carers play in supporting children's emotional wellbeing. We aim to work collaboratively with families, sharing concerns at an early stage and identifying appropriate support strategies together whenever possible.

We support parents and carers through:

- wellbeing surveys;
- meetings and action planning where concerns have been identified;
- signposting to local and national support services;
- information and guidance relating to mental health and digital wellbeing.

Parents and carers will always be informed where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of harm, unless doing so would place the child at further risk.

Where parents are unable or unwilling to engage, the school will seek advice from the Local Authority and relevant agencies to ensure pupil needs are met. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

11. Involving Pupils

Pupil voice is central to our approach. We seek the views of pupils through:

- School Council;
- wellbeing surveys;
- suggestion boxes;
- discussions and focus groups;
- informal feedback opportunities.

Children are encouraged to contribute to decisions about support and wellbeing initiatives wherever appropriate. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

12. Supporting and Training Staff

All staff receive training to promote positive mental health, identify concerns and understand referral pathways.

Staff wellbeing is promoted through supportive leadership, consideration of workload, opportunities for professional development and access to support when needed. Leaders will consider the impact of decision-making on staff wellbeing and seek staff feedback to help maintain a positive and sustainable working environment.

The school remains committed to the principles of the DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter. Specialist staff will access supervision and support where appropriate. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

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

Its effectiveness will be monitored through:

- review by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors;
- analysis of wellbeing surveys;
- attendance, behaviour and safeguarding data;
- pupil progress information;
- evaluation of interventions and referrals;
- staff wellbeing and workload feedback.

The policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner in response to changes in legislation, statutory guidance, local procedures or the needs of the school community

Appendix 1: Protective and Risk Factors

Mental health difficulties rarely arise from a single cause. Staff should be aware of factors that may increase vulnerability, as well as factors that help build resilience and emotional wellbeing.

Protective Factors

Individual Factors

- Positive self-esteem
- Good communication skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Ability to manage emotions
- Positive coping strategies
- Physical health and healthy lifestyle habits

Family Factors

- Secure attachment relationships
- Supportive family environment
- Consistent boundaries and routines
- Positive parental involvement in education
- Good communication within the family

School and Community Factors

- Sense of belonging and inclusion
- Positive friendships
- Access to trusted adults
- Opportunities for achievement and success
- Participation in clubs, sports and enrichment activities
- Strong community networks

Risk Factors

Individual Factors

- Low self-esteem
- Communication difficulties
- Social isolation
- Physical illness or disability
- Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
- Neurodevelopmental differences

Family Factors

- Family conflict
- Domestic abuse
- Bereavement or loss
- Parental mental health difficulties
- Substance misuse
- Financial pressures

School and Community Factors

- Bullying
- Poor attendance
- Friendship difficulties
- Significant transitions or change
- Community violence
- Online harms and cyberbullying

Staff should consider both protective and risk factors when assessing the needs of individual pupils and planning support. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

Appendix 2: Common Mental Health Needs

The following list is not exhaustive and does not constitute a diagnosis. School staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions but should be aware of common indicators that may suggest a child requires additional support. [\[Mental Health Policy | PDF\]](#)

Anxiety

Possible indicators may include:

- Excessive worrying
- Reluctance to attend school
- Separation difficulties
- Physical symptoms such as headaches or stomach aches
- Difficulty concentrating
- Avoidance of specific situations

Low Mood

Possible indicators may include:

- Withdrawal from friends and activities
- Reduced motivation
- Persistent sadness
- Tearfulness
- Low self-esteem
- Changes in behaviour

Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

Possible indicators may include:

- Increased emotional outbursts
- Aggressive behaviour
- Risk-taking behaviour
- Difficulty managing emotions
- Friendship difficulties
- Poor engagement with learning

Trauma and Adverse Experiences

Possible indicators may include:

- Hypervigilance
- Difficulty regulating emotions
- Strong reactions to seemingly minor events
- Difficulty forming trusting relationships
- Changes in behaviour or presentation

Eating Difficulties

Possible indicators may include:

- Significant changes in eating habits
- Anxiety around food
- Obsession with body image
- Avoidance of eating with peers

Any concerns should be discussed with the SENCO, Mental Health Lead or DSL as appropriate.

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

School-Based Support

- Class Teacher
- Teaching Assistants
- ELSA
- SENCO
- Senior Mental Health Lead
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Headteacher

Local and Professional Support

- GP
- School Nursing Service

- Educational Psychology Service
- Early Help Services
- CAMHS
- Children's Social Care
- Local Authority SEND Services

National Support Organisations

YoungMinds

Website: www.youngminds.org.uk

Information and advice for young people, parents and professionals.

Mind

Website: www.mind.org.uk

Mental health information and support.

Place2Be

Website: www.place2be.org.uk

Resources supporting children's mental health.

Papyrus

Website: www.papyrus-uk.org

Support and information for young people and families.

Anna Freud Centre

Website: www.annafreud.org

Evidence-based resources on children's mental health and wellbeing.

NSPCC

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

Advice and support regarding safeguarding and child welfare.

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact school if they are concerned about their child's emotional wellbeing so that appropriate support can be discussed at an early stage.

Appendix 4: Early Help and Mental Health Referral Pathway

Concern Identified

Concern raised by:

- Pupil
- Parent/carer
- Teacher
- Support staff
- Attendance monitoring
- Behaviour monitoring
- Safeguarding concern
- External professional



Initial Discussion

Concern shared with:

- Class Teacher
- SENCO
- Senior Mental Health Lead
- DSL (where appropriate)

Information gathering takes place and the child's needs are considered.



School-Based Support

Support may include:

- Pastoral support
- Check-in/check-out arrangements
- Classroom strategies
- ELSA intervention
- Attendance support measures
- Parent meetings
- Reasonable adjustments for SEND pupils

Progress is monitored and reviewed.



Additional Support Required?

No

- Continue school support.
- Monitor and review.

Yes



Early Help Assessment

School works with parents/carers and professionals to:

- identify needs;
- coordinate support;
- develop an action plan;
- review progress regularly.



Specialist Referral

Where appropriate, referral may be made to:

- Educational Psychology
- School Nursing Service
- CAMHS
- SEND Services
- Children's Social Care

- Other specialist agencies



Immediate Risk of Harm

At any stage, if there is:

- risk of significant harm;
- suicidal ideation;
- serious self-harm concerns;
- immediate safeguarding concerns;

the matter must be treated as a safeguarding concern and referred immediately to the DSL, Children's Social Care, emergency services or other appropriate agencies in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.