



**Mental Health and
Well-Being Policy
Darrington CE Primary School**

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Shine, Share, Flourish

We **shine** our light for each other
We **share** peace, respect and friendship
We **flourish** and grow together

“Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light to my path.” Psalm 119

The World Health Organisation definition of mental health:

“Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to her or his community. “

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do and our values are grounded in our school policies, actions, and school development plans.

In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupils. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need. It also links closely to the Safeguarding Policy and should be read in conjunction with it.

1. Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

2. Aims

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

3. Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Mr Chris Lunn - Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer

Mr Chris Lunn - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead

Mrs Vicky Meadows – Mental Health First Aider

Mr Chris Lunn - CPD Lead

Mr Chris Lunn - Head of PSHE

Mrs Lindsay Howell – Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Leader/head teacher. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures

for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Mr Chris Lunn, Headteacher.

4. Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

5. Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

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

6. Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

6.1 Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- 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
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

7. Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMS and held on the pupil's confidential file. This record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

8. Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss with the pupil:

- 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 pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. Particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm. It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead, this helps to safeguard our own

emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. We should always give pupils 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed immediately.

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school 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 on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get 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
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

9. Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend 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's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

10. Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe. We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more pupils. Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

11. Staff Mental Health and Well-Being

At Darrington CE Primary School, we recognise that positive staff wellbeing is essential to creating a healthy, safe and thriving learning environment for our pupils. Our Christian vision — *Shine, Share, Flourish* — extends to our whole school community, including all adults who work within it. We aim to foster a supportive culture where staff feel valued, listened to and able to seek help without judgement.

11.1 Our Commitment to Staff Wellbeing

We are committed to:

- Promoting a workplace that supports good mental health and wellbeing for all staff.
- Reducing unnecessary workload and monitoring systems that may negatively impact staff wellbeing.
- Ensuring staff have access to appropriate support both within school and through external agencies.
- Encouraging open conversations about mental health, while respecting confidentiality.
- Ensuring staff know who to speak to when they have concerns about their own wellbeing or that of a colleague.
- Providing professional development opportunities that include wellbeing awareness and emotional resilience.

11.2 Sources of Support for Staff

Staff may access support through:

- **Internal support:**
 - Informal check-ins with the Headteacher or Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead
 - Mental Health First Aider
 - Line managers or phase leaders
 - Supportive peer networks within school
- **External support:**
 - GP or NHS services
 - Education Support Partnership helpline

- Local authority wellbeing initiatives
- Employee Assistance Programmes such as our school insurance provider or through Wakefield Council

Information about these services will be available in the staffroom and on the staff wellbeing section of the school website.

11.3 Recognising When Staff Need Support

We recognise that staff may experience mental health challenges for many reasons, including workload, personal circumstances or external stresses. Warning signs may include:

- Noticeable changes in behaviour, mood or performance
- Increased absence or lateness
- Withdrawal from colleagues
- Expressions of stress, anxiety or feeling overwhelmed

Any concerns should be raised sensitively with the Headteacher, Mental Health Lead or to the Chair of Governors.

11.4 Supporting Staff Experiencing Difficulties

When a staff member discloses concerns about their mental health, the school will:

- Respond with empathy, respect and confidentiality
- Agree appropriate support measures, which may include:
 - Adjustments to duties or workload
 - Flexible working arrangements
 - Access to external support services
 - Regular wellbeing check-ins
- Work collaboratively with the staff member to create a **Staff Wellbeing Support Plan**, where necessary

11.5 Confidentiality

We will handle staff wellbeing concerns sensitively, sharing information only when essential for safety or support, and always explaining why information is being shared and with whom.

11.6 Creating a Positive Work Culture

The school promotes a working environment where:

- Achievements are recognised and celebrated
- Staff are encouraged to maintain a healthy work–life balance
- Professional boundaries are respected
- Staff feel safe to express concerns and seek help early
- Rest breaks and PPA time are protected

We believe that emotionally healthy staff create emotionally healthy classrooms.

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. This policy is monitored by the Headteacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request. It will be reviewed annually or as appropriate to new legislation or to the needs of the school.

Policy title	Mental Health and Well-Being Policy
Monitoring and review	Reviewed March 2026
Links	Safeguarding Policy, SEND, RSHE, PSHE,
Staff responsible	Headteacher
Committee responsible	Pupils and Standards Committee
Date approved	March 2026
Review date	March 2029