

Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School

Mental Health & Well-being Policy



Written by:	S Butterfield
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Chairs Signature:	

Mission Statement

We provide quality first teaching in a loving Christian environment where everyone is respected and valued as a unique child of God.

Safeguarding Statement

Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and emotional welfare of every pupil both inside and outside of the school premises. We implement a whole-school preventative approach to managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring that the wellbeing of pupils is at the forefront of all action taken.

Vision

With God's help, we do all we can to be the best we can be.

Version Control

Change Record

Date	Author	Version	Section	Reason for Change
October 2025	S Butterfield	1		New Policy

School 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 Organisation).

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do:

‘With God’s help, we do all we can to be the best we can be’

As the World Health Organisation explain, mental health, ‘is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.’

If we want to enable the children at Wheatley Lane Methodist to ‘be the best we can be’ and reach their potential, they need good physical and mental health and well-being and strategies to support this long term throughout their lives.

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

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:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- EET RSHE Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- EET Work-Life Balance Policy

The policy aims to:

- 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.

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Designated Safeguarding Leader – Sara Butterfield / Deputies – David Metcalfe, Helen Hargreaves, Lyndsey Jennings
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Lead – Lyndsey Jennings
- Looked After and Previously Looked After Children lead – Sara Butterfield
- PSHE Lead – Helen Hargreaves
- Wellbeing and Pastoral Support – Helen Hargreaves
- Emotional Wellbeing Support Team – Melanie Latham, Avril Pollard
- Safeguarding Governor – Andrew Stickland

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to a Designated Safeguarding Leader 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 in line with the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

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 an outside agency is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Wellbeing and Pastoral Support or SENDCo, as appropriate.

Teaching About Mental Health & Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our school's developmental PSHE curriculum and Trust RSE Policy alongside our global well-being approaches listed later in the document.

At Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary, we work together consistently to instil behaviours and attitudes into our children that promote positive mental health. Our children:

- Access a programme of study (through PSHE) that supports them to develop their knowledge of mental and physical health at a developmentally appropriate age in line with the RSHE framework
- have opportunities to develop their resilience and perseverance in a culture where they feel safe to explore new ideas and step outside their comfort zone

- have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging
- have opportunities to participate in decision-making
- have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements
- have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed
- have opportunities to develop self-confidence and a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- have opportunities to reflect
- have access to appropriate support that meets their needs
- have a right to be in an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for
- are surrounded by approachable adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times

At Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary, we work together consistently to create a mentally healthy environment where all staff:

- can access the Epworth Education Trust wellbeing offer
- have access to SAS Employee Assist Programme through EET
- work collaboratively as a strong team
- celebrate and recognise success across the school
- have a range of strategies that support their mental health, e.g. wellbeing board, wellbeing newsletter, a named person to speak to
- have recognition of their work-life balance and have the mental health and well-being of the whole staff reviewed regularly
- feel equally valued and have opportunities to contribute to decision making processes
- are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- have their unique talents and skills recognised and opportunities are provided for development
- have time to reflect and be evaluative

At Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary, our mentally healthy environment is a place where parents/carers:

- can be positive role models who show respect and compassion
- support mental health in their children positively and proactively, encouraging resilience and a growth mind-set
- value regular talk with their children at an emotionally appropriate level
- guide their children consistently as a parent within clear boundaries
- are provided with opportunities where they can ask for help when needed, and use these to be open about issues they may have
- positively support the work of the school, recognising the efforts that staff go to in meeting the needs of their children
- are clear about their roles and expectations of their responsibilities in working

- in partnership with school
- are signposted to appropriate agencies for support

At Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary, a mentally healthy environment is valued because the whole school community:

- is involved in promoting positive mental health
- is valued for the role it plays in promoting positive mental health
- contributes towards the ethos of the school

Universal School Offer

As a school, we support children in understanding the importance of mental health from an early stage and actively promote how we can look after our mental health so that every child learns strategies if they should ever need them.

Mental health is how you feel about yourself emotionally, psychologically and socially. Everyone has mental health – some people have good mental health, some people don't, and a person's mental health can always change dependent on circumstances at any point. Mental health is just as important as your physical health, and just like your body, your mental health can be harmed by many different things, including:

- Abuse or neglect
- Experiencing trauma through crime or violence
- Social isolation
- Being bullied or discriminated against
- Feeling stressed or under pressure
- Living in poverty
- Having debts
- Losing someone close to you
- Having a physical health condition
- Having to care for a relative
- Substance misuse

When you're talking or reading about mental health, you may also come across the terms well-being and resilience. Your well-being is related to your mental health in that it describes how comfortable, healthy or happy you are. Your resilience (sometimes known as your emotional resilience) is your ability to react to and recover from the challenges you face. Just like your mental health, your resilience isn't fixed, and you can take steps to improving it by looking after your physical health, finding a support network of people you can trust, or making changes to your lifestyle.

At Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School, our work to promote positive mental health, well-being and resilience for all children includes:

- Wellbeing Ambassadors. This is a group of children who work with the Wellbeing and Pastoral lead to promote the NHS five ways to wellbeing. The five ways to well-being are cited in many places including on the NHS website- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve->

[mental-wellbeing/](#)

The Wellbeing Ambassadors run lunchtime clubs and provide information for our pupils on the five ways to wellbeing.

- **‘Infinite 8 activities’** A range of extracurricular experiences are provided, to the whole class, that explicitly link to the NHS 5 ways to wellbeing. These may include: mindfulness activities, sporting activities or activities linked to the arts.
- A daily **‘emotional check in’** system to ensure the emotional needs of all children are met. It is an open way to discuss different emotions and how we can deal with them.
- **‘Reflection areas’** - these are available in every classroom for all children to access. These are quiet spaces where children can pray, reflect, read, complete work or just have some time out.
- **Forest School** – Forest School is a child-centred inspirational learning process, that offers opportunities for holistic growth through regular sessions. It is a long-term program that supports play, exploration and supported risk taking. It develops confidence and self-esteem through learner inspired, hands-on experiences in a natural setting. The process helps and facilitates more than knowledge-gathering, it helps learners develop socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and intellectually. It creates a safe, non-judgemental nurturing environment for learners to try stuff out and take risks. Forest School inspires a deep and meaningful connection to the world and an understanding of how a learner fits within it. The approach to risk means that learners constantly expand on their abilities by solving real-world issues, building self-belief and resilience. Alison Salmon is a trained Forest School practitioner and works with all classes across the year.
- Access to a **‘visual timetable.’** This shows children what learning is taking place across the day in a visual way. The use of this also helps children who need to have clear structure and expectations.
- Access to **‘nurture and pastoral support’** from our EWE team when needed. This is organised by the Wellbeing and Pastoral lead.
- **‘Growth Mindset approaches’** – Growth mindset is a theory centred around the belief that intelligence and learning can be developed and improved. If someone has a growth mindset, they have a positive attitude towards learning and their ability to progress and achieve. Pupils who possess a growth mindset are said to rise to challenges and learn from the mistakes they make, rather than feeling distressed and defeated if they are unable to do or understand something. The theory was developed around 30 years ago, by psychologist Carol Dweck who studied student attitudes towards failure and found that those who were more resilient and not so disheartened by setbacks behaved in a way that led to greater success. Growth mindset is built into our PSHE curriculum and is also a whole school focus. This approach is promoted by all staff.
- Access to specialist **Workshops** – External partners are invited to school to

support the teaching of Mental Health and Wellbeing and being safe. Examples include the Mental Health Support Team and NSPCC.

Additional Support

Sometimes, children will require additional support for a short period of time linked to a specific incident or trauma and in this instance, it is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern so that the appropriate additional support can be put in place. It would also be vital for someone who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health to have an individual support plan. This will take the format of a Plan, Do, Review support plan and should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents/carers 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.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. It will be clear what support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it. The Trust, Pastoral team and Senior Leadership Team will provide or seek this information.

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

In some circumstances, referrals may be required to seek further specialist help e.g. CAMHS, GP referrals, Educational Psychologist, local authority early help teams / school nurse service

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 Sara Butterfield, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Helen Hargreaves, Wellbeing and Pastoral Support.

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.

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 using the CPOMS system. This written 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.

This information should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy DSL, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the DSL, as 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/carers should be informed if there are concerns about their child's mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents/carers themselves. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents/carers for them or with them.

Working with Parents/Carers

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents/carers, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents/carers we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents/carers, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents/carers to learn of their child's issues 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/carer time to reflect. We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible 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/carers can also be helpful too e.g. parent/carers helplines and forums. We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents/carers often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with an agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record on CPOMs. Parents/carers 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/carers we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website. Ensure that all parents/carers 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/carers.
- Share ideas about how parents/carers can support positive mental health in their children through our communication systems.
- Keep parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

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/carers 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 needs 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.

Policy Review

This policy was adopted by the Local Advisory Board in autumn 2025 and will be reviewed in line with the policy review schedule.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate if any key changes are required.