



# **Mental Health and Wellbeing of Pupils and Staff**

## **Mugginton Church of England Primary School**

Reviewed	September 2023
HT	J Green
CoG	C Stroud
Future Review	Autumn 2024

## **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

In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. 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.

## **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.

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
- Provide support and guidance to staff suffering mental ill health

## **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 Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer	Mr J. Green
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead	Mr J. Green
Lead First Aider	Mr J. Green
Lead Mental Health Aider	Mrs V. Horobin
Personal Development/Pastoral Lead	Mrs D. Wallen
Governor with responsibility for Mental Health & Wellbeing	Mrs C Stroud

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 Child Protection Office staff or the 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 Joseph Green, Mental Health Lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS and the Single Point of Access Referral Form is available on the CAMHS Derbyshire website.

### **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

## **Teaching about Mental Health and 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 developmental PSHE (Personal Development) curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are 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.

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance<sup>1</sup> to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

### **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 is outlined in the Appendix.

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

### **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 Joseph Green, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

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<sup>1</sup> Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing URL= <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and>

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?' For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively see the Appendix.

All disclosures should be recorded using school's Safeguarding Concern Form in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file. 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 mental health lead, Joseph Green who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. See Appendix for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS.

## **Confidentiality**

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If 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 Joseph Green, 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. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. 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 child protection officer, Joseph Green must be informed immediately.

## **Working with Parents**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents 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, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents 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 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 can also be helpful too e.g. parent 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 often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

## **Working with All Parents**

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

## **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

## **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 virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.<sup>2</sup>

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.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Joseph Green, our CPD Coordinator who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)



## Part 2

### The Mental Health and Wellbeing of Staff

Mugginton CE Primary School understands and accepts our duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our staff as far as reasonably practicable. Our school believes that by promoting and fostering emotionally and physically healthy staff, we achieve the best for our children. We are required to have in place measures to mitigate factors which could harm our employees physical and mental wellbeing, including work-related stress. This duty extends only to those factors which are work-related and within the school's control.

### Definitions

Workplace wellbeing represents a culture which places employee physical, mental and social health high on the school agenda. Wellbeing is here defined as the combination of physical and mental health of an individual.

*'Health and wellbeing is about being emotionally healthy as well as physically healthy. It is feeling able to cope with normal stresses and living a fulfilled life.'* (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

Workplace wellbeing is known to have a positive impact on happiness, engagement, recruitment and productivity. We recognise that improving the wellbeing of employees will improve the wellbeing of their families and the wider community we serve.

This policy accepts the Health and Safety Executive definition of work-related stress as

*'The adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.'*

There is an important distinction between 'reasonable pressures' which can stimulate and motivate and 'stress' where an individual feels overwhelmed and unable to cope with excessive pressures or demands placed on them. We believe that everybody needs a certain amount of pressure to remain alert, motivated and productive. In other words, an appropriate pressure at work is desirable for efficiency. However, when demands and pressures are excessive or prolonged, some people find that their ability to cope is negatively affected. This can manifest in a range of ill health effects for the individual and can have negative consequences for the school.

A person experiences stress when they perceive the demands of their work are greater than is their ability to cope. We define 'coping' as balancing the demands and pressures placed on you with your skills and knowledge. In addition, stress can occur from having too few

demands. People can become bored, feel undervalued and lack recognition. If they feel they have little or no autonomy over the work they do, this can also cause stress.

Finally, staff may have aspects of their personal lives that make them more vulnerable to stress at work or have an influence on their work performance. For example, illness, family issues or financial difficulties.

The legislative context is set out in the following documents:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Working Time Regulations
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Equalities Act 2010

Please read this policy in conjunction with Derbyshire County Council's Workplace Wellbeing Strategy.

Workplace Wellbeing can be evaluated using heuristic devices such as employee surveys and questionnaires and analysis of sickness absence, as well as more informal feedback from staff meetings and professional conversations.

In addition, primary sources of stress at work have been identified by Health and Safety Executives from other Counties, such as Oxfordshire. The following 6 standards are associated with poor health and wellbeing, lower productivity and increased sickness absence.

<b>Demands:</b>	Workload, work patterns and the work environment.
<b>Control:</b>	How much say the person has in the way they do their work.
<b>Support:</b>	Encouragement, positive feedback and resources provided by managers and colleagues.
<b>Relationships:</b>	Promoting positive working relationships to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
<b>Role:</b>	Do people understand their role and whether the school makes sure they do not have conflicting roles.
<b>Change:</b>	How organisational change is managed and communicated within the organisation.

## Statement of Intent

The Governors of Mugginton CE Primary School:

- Are committed to developing and maintaining a culture of collegiality, trust and mutual respect, in which all individuals are treated with dignity and can work at their optimum level.

- Recognise the potential impact that work can have on an individual's physical and mental health and there is a moral, legal and practical duty to take steps to promote staff wellbeing as far as reasonably practicable.
- Understand that work-related stress has a negative impact on staff wellbeing and that it can take many forms. Therefore, potential stressors need to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level.

## **What We Will Do**

- Create a working environment where potential work-related stressors are, as far as practicable, avoided or minimised through good management practices, discussion and feedback and staff development.
- Develop a culture which is open, collegiate, trusting and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental illness.
- Establish working arrangements which enable staff to maintain an appropriate work-life balance.
- Encourage and empower staff to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and their own work and effectiveness.
- Promote effective, honest communication and make sure procedures are in place for consulting with and supporting employees with stress-management, particularly at times of change in the organisation and after changes to working arrangements.
- Treat individuals with empathy, dignity and consideration and take decisive and impartial action if/when staffing issues arise.
- Make sure there are opportunities for individuals to raise concerns about their work, their mental health or the welfare of a colleague in a professional and private manner. Advice may be sought from Human resources, Occupational Health or the Health and Safety team.
- Attend training as appropriate in order to increase awareness of work-related stress and best practice in prevention.
- Take action in the interests of all colleagues when performance by a member of staff may cause stress to their colleagues.

## **What Our Staff Will Do**

- Treat colleagues and all other persons with consideration, respect and dignity.
- Co-operate with the school's efforts to implement our mental health and wellbeing policy and initiatives to raise the profile of our work to combat stress and poor mental health.
- Raise concerns with the Headteacher if there are work issues causing them stress and having a negative impact on their well-being.
- Demonstrate the appropriate behaviours associated with the following competences:

- 1) Avoid behaviours which give rise to stress
  - 2) Develop a balanced and responsible approach to work and their personal lives
  - 3) Be aware of the signs and causes of stress in the workplace and in their personal lives.
- Recognise that acknowledging and dealing with stress is not a weakness.
  - Report matters of concern relating to theirs or a colleague's mental health at work in an appropriate manner.
  - Support colleagues dealing with stress and inform the Headteacher when personal stress is affecting their work.

## **Implementation**

### **Risk Assessment**

It is only after possible causes of stress or particularly stressful periods have been identified that preventative strategies can be put in place. Therefore, the Derbyshire County Council's General Health & Safety Risk Assessment for Stress will be conducted on an annual basis and actions to minimise stress will be recorded.

Managers must complete a risk assessment form for any staff member who reports symptoms of work-related stress or has been absent because of stress or mental health issues. This will be a supportive process and key actions will be identified to help the individual manage their situation.

Staff with sensitive or confidential personal issues should be referred to the Occupational Health Service. Support from Human Resources may also be requested.

### **Key Actions School Will Take**

- Appoint a Mental Health First Aid Lead and access the St John's Ambulance two-day training course.
- Complete DCC General Health and Safety Risk Assessment for Stress and prepare action plan
- Review marking policy with staff. Take pupil voice on feedback which does and does not help them and amend work expectations accordingly.
- Using Google Questionnaire, collect staff opinions on particular stressors and particular times in the school year where stress is more likely.
- Make sure staff are able to attend family and special performances which involve their children (e.g. Nativities, music concerts, parents' evenings etc).
- Discuss morning arrangements with all staff, particularly those with split families. Are staff members able to maintain contact with their child's school? Are they able to drop their child at school or collect them at a point in the week?

- Reinforce message that Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time can be taken at home.
- Staff survey/feedback will be taken on an annual basis.
- Absence management and return to work procedures to be reviewed to make sure individuals are supported back into work following illness or injury.

## **Communicating the Policy**

The policy will be shared and approved by governors before being posted on the school website. A copy will be available in Rainbow Room and the policy will be promoted at staff meetings and INSET days. The policy will be included in the Staff Induction folder.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in September 2024.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Joseph Green our mental health lead via phone (01335 360261) or email ([info@mugginton.derbyshire.sch.uk](mailto:info@mugginton.derbyshire.sch.uk)).

This policy will always be updated to reflect personnel changes.