



Puttenham  
Church of England School

## Mental Health and Well-being Policy

**Date of policy review: Summer 2022**

**Date of next review: Summer 2025**

**Governing Body: Full Governing Body**

### ***Mission statement***

***'Our village school strives to provide the best possible education for its children in a caring and happy Christian community.'***

### **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 Organization)*

At Puttenham Church of England Infant School our Christian vision and values shapes all we do. Our mission is provide an environment where everyone is valued, happy and safe through promotion of our school values of love, resilience, respect, hope and wisdom.

Our ethos is supportive, caring and respectful. We understand that children's mental health is a vital factor in their overall wellbeing and how it can affect their development and achievements. We are committed to our statutory duty of promoting the welfare of our children including supporting their positive mental health and wellbeing to ensure they can flourish as individuals and 'be the very best they can be'. We will follow the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. We recognise that it is everyone's responsibility at the school to take action to ensure the best outcomes for the children in our care.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we recognise the essential role we play in enabling children to be resilient, safe and happy to learn.

## **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.

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:

A De Filippis – Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated teacher for looked after children

L Dynan – Deputy DSL/SENco/Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead and RSHE and PSHE lead

K Jones – Child protection and Safeguarding governor

Wendy Hazzard – Paediatric First Aider

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 child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher or Deputy Safeguarding Lead/SENco. If the child 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 the SENco.

## **Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP)**

Individual health care plans may be written for children causing concern or who receive 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 child'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

A risk assessment may also be written in conjunction with the IHCP.

## **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 Personal, social and health (PSHE)/Relationship, sex and health curriculum (RSHE).

There will always be an emphasis on enabling children 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.

Children will be given the opportunity to learn about mental health and well-being through:

- discrete PSHE/RSHE lessons
- curriculum topics e.g. people who help us, healthy eating, hygiene etc
- circle times
- assemblies
- resources to identify feelings and worries such as: what I would like my teacher to know boxes, worry monsters and lego feelings pictures in all classes

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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> (accessed 02.02.2018)

- resources to manage emotions and behaviour e.g 5 point scale (3 point for reception class)
- ELSA support
- Lego therapy
- Forest School
- Mindfulness activities/time to talk to the teacher at the beginning of the school day
- Huckleberry Farm – nurture farm

### **Assessment and tracking**

We will assess and track wellbeing using observations and pupil voice. We will also use assessments such as The Boxall Profile, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and ELSA referrals. At Puttenham we have established a good pastoral system where the children know all members of staff, know they can seek help and support from them and they will be listened to and helped.

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community (see appendix 1)

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. We will also ensure that staff are aware of the Help Employee Assistance Programme and how this can be accessed. 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 L Dynan our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead or A De Filippis our Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing is as follows:

- Prevention: creating a safe, happy and calm environment;
- Early support: early identification and helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions;
- Access to specialist support: working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

### **Risk Factors**

Certain individuals and groups are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others. These risks can relate to the child, their family, community or life events.

Research suggests that there is a more complex link between the risk factors and the protective factors. The key protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems are shown alongside the risk assessment in Appendix 2.

The school will be aware of these protective factors to enable children to become more resilient when they encounter problems and challenges. Teaching staff will ensure that there are opportunities to explore these factors through promotion of good mental health, building relationships, modelling actions, discussions, resources and the curriculum.

### **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
- reduced academic achievement or interest in learning
- Talking or joking about self-harm or harming others
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- 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 on a 'cause for concern' form and held on the pupil's confidential file. This written signed record should include:

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

This information must be shared with the mental health lead and the designated safeguarding lead who will provide store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

## **Confidentiality**

If it is necessary for a member of staff to report any concerns about a pupil, they must inform them of:

- who they will pass on their concerns to
- what we are going to tell them
- why we need to tell them

Staff should tell the pupil that they will be sharing the information. Ideally, staff should receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead as this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing. This ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support for the child and member of staff. 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 must be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead must be informed if there is reason to believe that there may be a child protection issue.

### **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.
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?
- What are the next steps.

We understand that it can be upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the meetings. We are accepting of this (within reason) and will give the parent time to reflect.

The school will provide parents and carers with appropriate information, websites, helplines and forums.

We will provide named members of staff to liaise with and their contact details. Staff may arrange follow up meetings or phone calls following the initial meeting. Each meeting will end with an agreed next step. Records of the meeting must be kept.

### **Working with All Parents**

The school will support parents by:

- highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website;
- ensuring 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;
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE/RSHE 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. Through regular discussions, assemblies and the curriculum, the children will understand who they can go to for help both at school and outside of school.

## **Training**

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.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of their 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, the school will host training sessions for members of staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

## **To be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:**

[Mental Health and behaviour in schools](#) (DfE 2018 guidance)

Child protection and Safeguarding

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Antibullying

Behaviour

Relationship, sex and health education

Pupil's with medical needs

Physical Education

Exclusions

Signed ..... (Chair of Governors) Date: .....