



Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

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)

This policy runs in line with our vision around the school community being **rooted and grounded in love** (Ephesians 3), and is delivered through our 5 Commitments of Care, Creativity, Collaboration, Courage and the Christian Faith. It also takes into account the fundamental British values of respect and tolerance.

The Staff and Governors of Forest of Galtres Anglican and Methodist Primary School consider the emotional health and wellbeing of all children and staff as being extremely important in our modern-day world. In our school our Christian vision and our school values provide a caring and supportive ethos for all members of our school community, where each individual and contribution is valued.

Objectives at Forest of Galtres:

- Promoting mental health as part of school life
- Improving the emotional wellbeing of their staff and students
- Ensuring mental health problems are identified early and appropriate support provided
- Offering provision and interventions that matches the needs of its students and staff
- Engaging the whole-school community in the importance of mental health awareness
- Capturing the views of parents, carers and guardians, students and teachers on mental health issues

Therefore, these objectives will be the basis for the aims of this policy

Aims

At Forest of Galtres we will:

- support children and adults to understand and talk about their emotions and feelings
- encourage children and adults to feel comfortable and able in sharing any concerns or worries they may have
- help children and adults to develop emotional resilience and to manage challenging situations which arise
- help children and adults to form and maintain appropriate relationships with others.
- promote confidence and self-esteem
- teach children and adults that their views and thoughts are important and valued

These aims will be achieved through:

- Our whole school agreed approaches
- Following our Home School agreement
- A whole school family team approach to supporting each other
- Providing support for pupils going through recent difficulties e.g. bereavement



- Accessing specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties e.g. attachment disorder

This policy will use the 8 principles of mental health as outlined by Public Health England to outline how our school will provide mental health care.



Our school promotes a mentally healthy environment and ethos through:

- Promoting our Christian ethos through our school values and aims
- Encouraging a sense of belonging to our whole school family
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating and valuing academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect and learn from experiences
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs when appropriate
- Displays of our school values and actively valuing children's contributions through display
- Each classroom having a designated reflection space, available to children throughout the day.

Our school provides targeted support and provision through:

- Whole class discussions / teaching time
- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Use of SEAL resources to support curriculum teaching.
- SMSC lessons and activities
- PSHCE lessons
- Worship focus



- Chaplain's lunch time club
- Class reflection time and reflection areas
- Strategies for promoting communication in raising issues, asking questions and sharing feelings; Class question box
- Approaches to managing children's worries e.g 'A Huge Bag of Worries' text by V Ironside, 'Worry Boxes' and 'Worry Monsters'
- Therapeutic activities including drawing, painting, lego, listening to music and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Signposting and promoting before or after school clubs
- Group intervention (ELSA)

Our school will work closely with outside agencies:

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

The NYCC Prevention Team to access:

- The School Nursing Service
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Compass Buzz
- Family support workers
- EMS
- Educational Psychology services
- Behaviour support
- Paediatricians
- Further therapists as guided by professionals

Our school will identify children's needs through:

Children are discussed by school staff at regular intervals in staff meetings and during assessment tracking. Any concerns, changes of behaviour or queries about individuals are discussed as a teaching team and shared with senior leaders.

Staff wellbeing is promoted through regular opportunities to review workload and approaches to working within our school.

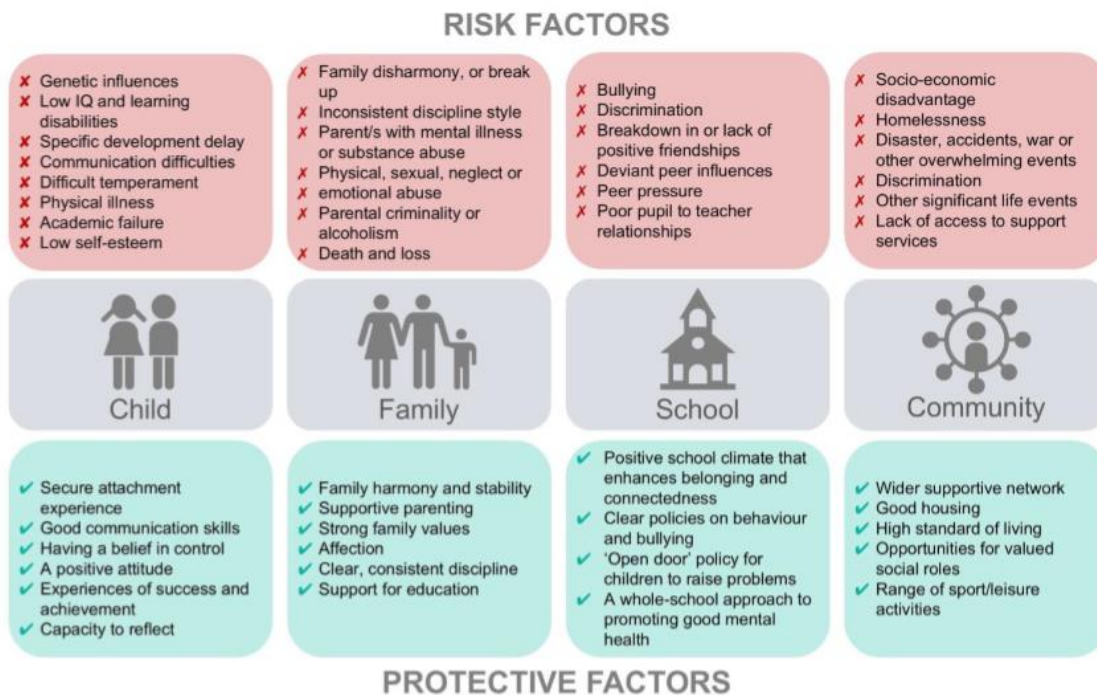
Warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism



Risk and Protective Factors for Children and Young People's Mental Health¹⁴



This diagram has been taken from Public Health England, The mental health of children and young people in England (Public Health England, 2016), p. 5, available at www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575632/Mental_health_of_children_in_England.pdf

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 in writing and held in the secure DSL records and followed up in line with the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy as appropriate

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 & actions

This information should be shared with the mental health lead, [Kirsty Mills] who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

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 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



It is always advisable to share disclosures around mental health with a colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead [Kirsty Mills]: 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.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about pupil mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. 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 leads [Allyson Buckton and Gemma Sutton] must be informed immediately.

Our school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Informal pupil interviews / reviews
- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- Formal assessment audits as guided by support agencies

Our school will promote positive mental health through curriculum teaching and learning:

- Reflection time is particularly given during RE, PSHE AND SMSC lessons as well as Collective Worship
- Reflection areas are available in all classrooms and in the school library to allow pupils time to think/reflect and talk
- Through all curriculum areas the promotion of a positive mindset is emphasised
- Through all curriculum areas children's contributions are valued and respected

Our school will promote positive mental health through pupil voice:

- The school council has a say in up and coming events or issues in school
- All classes undertake pupil conferencing regularly throughout the year, to hear the pupils voice about their progress in school
- Children are listened to informally whenever an issue occurs

Our school will promote positive mental health through working with parents, carers or guardians through:

- Raise Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing as an important focus
- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.

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 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.

Our school will provide staff training and support:

- School staff have received Mental Health and Wellbeing Level 1 training provided by Compass Buzz
- Key members of staff to receive Level 2 and 3 provided by Compass Buzz
- Head teacher and Inclusion lead to attend level 4 training provided by Compass Buzz
- All staff and Governors complete regular Child Protection and Safeguarding training to ensure our children's safety and wellbeing
- Regular mindfulness training from our specialist teacher Marie Willis
- Staff wellbeing is reviewed during individual Performance Management review meetings annually
- We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support

Responsibility:

All members of staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of our children and staff. In addition, the following staff take a lead in monitoring, promoting and planning provision:

- Mrs Allyson Buckton and Mrs Gemma Sutton: Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Mrs Sarah Cope Hope Trust SEND Leader
- Ms Kirsty Mills Inclusion and Pupil Premium lead
- Mrs Lorraine Jones School Chaplain
- Mrs Heather Lewis ELSA lead
- Class teachers – support for children within own class
- Teaching Assistants – intervention groups / individual support

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Child Protection Policy and SEND policy in cases where pupils' mental health needs are supported in addition to other needs. This policy should also be read in conjunction with our school's Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying, RE and SMSC/PSHCE policies.