



Mental health and wellbeing policy

Headteacher:	Debbie Calvert	Date approved;	Sept 2024
Responsible governor:	Chair of Governors	Approved by:	FGB
Date for review	Sept 2025		

Aims

At Scotton Lingerfield Primary School we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders. We recognise that good mental health is as important as good physical health. Our pupils are taught self-care techniques, including recognising and managing emotions, exercise, relaxation and how to build relationships through a rich, broad curriculum.

We use the DfE's guidance [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#), as a guide.

- Prevention: creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos;
- Identification: recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible; Early support: helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions; and
- Access to specialist support: working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.
- Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school

This policy should be read alongside:

- SEND policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy

Legislation and guidance

This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#),

Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the headteacher/DSL.

We recognise having designated members of the school community to promote Mental Health education in school.

The headteacher is the Mental Health lead, DSL and SENDCo. We employ a pastoral Teaching assistant who is the first port of call in meeting pupil's Mental Health needs and provides targeted intervention.

Culture and curriculum

Learning about Mental Health is part of our personal, Social and Health education (PSHE) curriculum. We follow the Kapow scheme of work from Reception to Year 6. In this Prevention stage, pupils are taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

Children engage in PSHE lessons weekly. Beyond this time, our school culture embeds good mental health. We discuss mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma and encourage pupils to disclose when their mental health is deteriorating. Zones of regulation are used across school. Any pupils indicating that they are not regulated are identified by a staff member and encouraged to talk about how they are feeling.

All pupils access Forest school throughout the school year and a calm area has been developed in the school grounds for those pupils who wish to enjoy a calmer activity such as reading or colouring.

Recognising need

In the Identification phase, we have a number of ways that children can let us know how they are feeling. Every class uses Zones of Regulation that pupils engage with at the beginning of each day and after lunch each day. Staff are able to identify any pupils who are not regulated and chat to them about it. We also have a pastoral teaching assistant in school every morning who the children or parents can speak to.

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. The acronym MASK can help to look for signs. [Action for Children](#) has more information.

M – Mood – a change in mood. They may be irritable, argumentative, withdrawn.

A – Actions – change in eating and sleeping habits, signs of drugs, alcohol, bullying or self-harm

S – Social – easily bored, lonely or withdrawn, getting into trouble. Losing interest in friends, missing school.

K – Keep talking – refusing to talk about how they feel. Keep listening and keep asking how they are.

Supporting pupils

As part of our school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, our school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on our school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of our school that is negatively impacting their mental health – school council, pupil voice surveys, pupil interviews

- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support, from all staff and specifically from the pastoral TA
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
 - Zones of regulation

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the headteacher will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide. Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs, such as: nurture group, reduced timetable, time-out.

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer, we will signpost parents to the external support they can make a referral to. This may be the GP, CAHMS, Mental health charities such as Samaritans, Mind, Young Minds Kooth, or Local counselling services.

Supporting and collaborating with parents/carers

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent/carer forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents/carers about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face-to-face.

These meetings can be difficult, so our school will ensure that parents/carers are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment
- Offer an employee assistance programme through Health Assured

All staff will be offered training so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis

