

Reference Number G3	Shared with Staff September 2023	Review Date September 2023
Headteacher A. Wilkinson Date: September 2023		Governing Wellbeing Committee Date:
Policy Title	<i>Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy</i>	

Reviews of this Policy

Version Number	Our Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original Writings	September 2023

As a Church of England school, we are concerned for the 'wholeness' of any individual or group involved in our school life.

Mental and spiritual support and development are just as important to God as physical or educational support and development, and so will be to us. In all decisions and actions the school takes, we strive to consider the impact on the whole being.

Mental Health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective skills to make decisions, build relationships and shape our world. Mental Health is an essential human right and it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

World Health Organisation - <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response> (June 2022)

School Vision Statement of Mental Health and Well-being

At Lanercost, we are driven towards a lifelong love of learning, equipping every child to become forward-thinking, passionate young adults prepared for the ever-changing world. As a school family rooted in Koinonia¹, we enable every child to reach their

¹ Koinonia is the Christian fellowship or body of believers (Merriam-Webster.com)

divine potential, celebrate their individuality, and grow in wisdom and knowledge. Throughout each child's journey, we ensure that everyone in our diverse community is treated with dignity and respect.

We foster an environment where children are equipped to become mature young adults who uphold British values and are prepared for the ever-changing world, including every adult and child's well-being and mental health. This policy operates within the Christian ethos of the school. It has been written to reflect an understanding that each of us is equally cherished and valued as God's children and all deserve and ought to be allowed to achieve their full potential.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and well-being, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and well-being policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for children directly and indirectly affected by mental health and well-being issues.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and well-being. This policy is intended to guide all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy will be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a child's mental health and well-being overlap with or are linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a child has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and well-being in all staff and children
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and well-being
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and well-being issues
- Provide support to children suffering from 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 children. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Designated Child Protection/Safeguarding Officer	<i>Alexandra Wilkinson</i>
CPD Lead	<i>Alexandra Wilkinson</i>
Mental Health and Emotional Well-being Lead	<i>Alexandra Wilkinson</i>
SEND Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator	<i>Kate Natrass</i>
Lead First Aider	<i>Kirsty Ruddick</i>
PSHE Lead	<i>Alexandra Wilkinson</i>
Pastoral care and presence to staff and children	<i>Canon Benjamin Carter</i>
Wellbeing Governor	<i>Giles Saldana</i>
Staff Mental Health Assistant	<i>Hayley Irving</i>
Children's Mental Health Assistant and ELSA	<i>Anna Fisher</i>

Any staff member concerned about the mental health or well-being of a child will speak to the Mental Health Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm. In that case, protection procedures will be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Child Protection Officer/head teacher. If the child presents a medical emergency, then the procedures for medical emergencies will 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 Kate Natrass, Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator.

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for children causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This will be drawn up involving the child, 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

Teaching about Mental Health and Well-being

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum (SCARF), through collective worship, through the teaching of KIDSAFE and through our values which are at the core of our daily school life.

The specific content of lessons is determined through SCARF and by the particular needs of the cohort being taught, but 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.

As a school, we follow the sequential PSHE scheme, SCARF, which builds on the values of Safety, Caring Achievement, Resilience and Friendship. SCARF prides itself on strengthening our school's approach to both children's and staff's mental well-being. It aids in keeping our children safe, mentally well, ready for learning and able to develop the skills needed to grow into caring, respectful citizens who can achieve their full potential. SCARF also ensures that we teach mental health and emotional well-being issues safely and sensitively, which helps rather than harms.

Additionally, KIDSAFE is taught bi-annually in school by trained members of staff. KIDSAFE is a leading provider of child safeguarding and mental health education and provides an evident, simple, but effective programme that is delivered across the school, promotes preventative measures, along with the underlying message of talking to a trusted grown-up and having an open culture of respect for difference.

All our school programmes are child-friendly, preventative, and age-appropriate. They teach children the skills and knowledge they need to stay safe and thrive. We have over 20 years of experience, and our programmes are supported by parents, carers, school staff, governors, and most importantly, by the children themselves.

Both in the classroom and around the school, children, staff and teachers can create a space for their own mental health and well-being, as well as being supported throughout the whole environment in school. These opportunities include a variety of well-being activities within each classroom and more comprehensive occasions linked to the church calendar (for example, opportunities to remember and pray for loved ones around All Souls).

Ways of supporting mental health for all through the environment²

² It is noted that many of these strategies aid the learning of SEN children and adults.

1. Clean, tidy and organised classrooms
2. Meaningful yet simple displays
3. Clear visual timetables
4. Consistent lesson structures

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children 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? This information is available on the School Website under Mental Health and Well-being and SEND.

We display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to children within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of child help-seeking by ensuring children 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 child is experiencing mental health or emotional well-being issues. These warning signs will always be taken seriously, and staff observing any of these warning signs will communicate their concerns with the Mental Health and Emotional Well-being Lead or the SENDCo either in person or via CPOMS.

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
- 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 child 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 child 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 will always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff will listen rather than advise, and our first thoughts will be of the child's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' Mrs Wilkinson, Miss Kennedy and many of the other teachers have knowledge and experience in listening to children's needs and to signpost what support is appropriate.

All disclosures will be recorded on CPOMSs. This record will 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 must be shared with the Mental Health Lead, Alexandra Wilkinson (also DSL), who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about the next steps.

Confidentiality

We will be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a child on, then we will discuss with the child:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What are we going to tell them
- Why do we need to tell them

We will only share information about a child after 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. Mainly if a child is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Well-being Lead, Alexandra Wilkinson; this helps to safeguard our own emotional well-being as we are no longer solely responsible for the child, and it ensures continuity of care in our absence, and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We will explain this to the child and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents will be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and well-being, and children may choose to tell their parents themselves. We will always give children the option of informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents will not be informed, but the child protection officer, Alexandra Wilkinson, must be notified 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 will consider the following questions (on a case-by-case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where will the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who will be present? Consider parents, the child and 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 will be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We will 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 explicitly aimed at parents can also be helpful, e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We will always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking a follow-up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each session with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the discussion 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
- Have a Mental Health section in our weekly newsletter to highlight the work we are doing in school
- 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 and Well-being 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 child 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 child who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they will not be told

- How friends can best support
- Things friends will 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 complex emotions they may be feeling

Training for Staff

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 children safe.

The Mental Health and Well-being Lead has begun their Senior Mental Health training and continues to attend relevant training sessions to ensure that children's needs are met within school.

We will provide relevant information for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal offers free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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 to developing situations with one or more children.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will use staff meetings to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD will be discussed with an entire staff team who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Our ELSA assistant and Staff Mental Health assistant will receive yearly training to help them in their role.

Supporting Staff

In addition to a Staff Mental Health assistant, the Mental Health Lead, approved by the Governing Well-being Committee and shared with the staff, has created a list of

'Norms' within our school. These 'Norms' are to ensure that the staff can create a happy work/life balance, where they feel fulfilled and informed about their work within school, but there is consistent respect and space for their life outside of school.

- Teachers can take their PPA at home or at school
- Protected staff room space for all
- Open door policy with the Headteacher
- No questions asked for appointments and family events
- Simple process for requesting resources (ask the Headteacher)
- Collective worship every day for everyone
- All subjects have a scheme that teachers can use as a starting point for their lesson planning
- Staff development sessions will be based on learning rather than meetings
- All emails denote that they can be replied to within 5 days
- All staff are part of the 'WhatsApp' group to allow arrangements for out-of-school meet-ups, congratulatory wishes and emergencies (e.g. road closure). This group will not be used for school-related queries. This can be subject to change in an emergency situation, e.g. Lockdown, Medical emergency, etc. Failure to comply with this will mean the removal of an individual from the group once the Senior Mental Health lead has raised this with the staff member.
- If a staff member feels that they are contacted too frequently outside of school hours by another member of staff, they will speak to the Senior Mental Health Lead or the Chair of Governors.
- Discuss mental health and well-being with all staff in their yearly performance management and having surveys for feedback.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years at a minimum.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis.

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

Related Policies

All school policies will adhere to the Mental Health and Well-being policy. Where a policy contradicts this, the Senior Mental Lead will be alerted to this and dealt with immediately.

Mental Health Support Websites:

MindEd - <https://www.minded.org.uk/>

CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Cumbria)

<https://www.cntw.nhs.uk/services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-service-west/>

Young Minds - <https://youngminds.org.uk/>

Mental health - <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/c/children-and-young-people>

ELSA - Emotional Literacy Support - <https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/about-elsa-support/>

HOPE - Helping Our Children Emotions - http://www.burdenbasket.co.uk/hope_project

The Education Support Partnership -

https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/?mc_cid=6c63a38e3a&mc_eid=e7e4402f52