Mental Health Policy

Reviewed by	Teaching & Learning committee
Reviewed when	September 2026
Next Review	September 2028
Source and date of model policy, if applicable	The Key
Added to website (if applicable)	Yes
Added to Google Drive	Yes
Added to review schedule	Yes

Please note that references to the Headteacher can be taken to mean Executive Headteacher or Head of School. References to the Chair of the Governing Body may refer to Co-Chairs of the Governing Body.

Overview

At the Trumpington Federation, we believe that learning should be a lifelong adventure. We aim to inspire and encourage all members of our community to grow and learn together. Through determination, communication and collaboration, we encourage each other to reach for the stars, no matter who we are or where we come from. We believe that children, whatever their barriers, should be given the support needed to overcome these and reach their full potential.

To ensure that all members of our community can fulfil and represent this vision, we believe in working as a team to reach a common understanding of the term 'mental health', adopting a two-pronged approach to developing this: firstly, a universal approach whereby all members of our community are supported to be mentally healthy and secondly, a targeted approach that provides additional support to any member of our community with their mental health, whenever the point of need. We work holistically, recognising the overlap and relationship between SEMH, SEN and ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience), supporting children to overcome their barriers and live fulfilled lives.

We take our definition of mental health from the World Health Organisation: *Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.*

Scope:

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, SEND and PSHE Policies.

Aims:

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where pupils feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly
- Celebrate all of the ways pupils achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Allow pupils to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice
- Give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Provide support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warnings signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/ carers

Legal basis

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

Lead members of staff:

Whilst every staff member has a responsibility to promote the mental health of our pupils, our Inclusion team is able to provide additional individual support.

- Senior Mental Health Leads
- Family Partnership Workers/School Social Workers
- Inclusion Coordinators
- SENCo
- Designated Safeguarding Leads
- PSHE Lead
- Mental Health first aiders

If any member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, they are expected to raise their concern with the DSL and DDSLs at the school, following the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy. If there is concern a child is at risk of immediate harm, these normal child protection procedures will be followed.

The Universal Approach

All members of our community have mental health, all of the time. Never has it been more apparent that the mental health of our community is central to their ability to be socially, emotionally and academically successful. Therefore, talking about and recognising social, emotional and mental health is at the heart of what we do at the federation, in producing the citizens of the future. We aim to develop the protective factors of our pupils (social skills, self-confidence, resilience) by integrating these throughout our curriculum: they are addressed most explicitly in our PSHE teaching but also through assemblies, class discussions and through the books we read and the examples we share. Pupil voice is embedded within our academic year to ensure the needs and wishes of children are taken into account when developing our school. We promote high standards of behaviour and attendance, and train all staff in their safeguarding and pastoral responsibilities.

At our schools we:

- Teach children about their emotions and support them to gain a deeper understanding of them. This is done through a universal approach through assemblies and using a structured, progressive PSHE curriculum from Early Years to Year 6.
- Help children to feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Promote self-esteem and encourage children to be confident
- Help children to develop emotional resilience
- Provide specialised and targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties
- Promote pupil voice and opportunities to take part in decision-making
- Help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- Celebrate academic and non-academic achievements

- Provide all pupils from Reception to Y6 with Forest School opportunities, to help build their self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Develop our outdoor learning provision through the OPAL programme, focused on developing pupils' social and emotional skills.

The Targeted Approach

At the Federation, we believe that early intervention is the key to successfully supporting those with social, emotional or mental health needs. Whilst the protective factors we promote will help the majority of our community to be mentally healthy, at times some of our community will find their risk factors (including but not only socio-economic disadvantage, historic trauma, SEN needs) require them to receive additional support. All staff take their safeguarding and pastoral responsibilities seriously, alert to the needs of our children and are quick to work with other staff to support those in need. Our highly-trained Inclusion team, including our Family Partnership Worker and School Social Worker, are able to provide evidence-based support, as needed, to those children in need of additional support. We will use a range of different interventions, alongside dramatherapy, music therapy, time with our school counsellor or SEMH teaching assistants, and incidental conversations and more informal support, to ensure all children have the secure foundations required to succeed, whatever the nature of their needs. Staff are also on hand to support those families in need, working with other agencies to deliver the support that is required, as we recognise that a stable, emotionally healthy home environment is a key requisite for achieving well at school.

This targeted approach may include resources for managing emotions, including the following:

- The Incredible 5 Point Scale and Zones of Regulation.
- Sensory interventions and managing feeling resources (Lego Therapy; Circle of Friends; opportunities for small group or one-to-one opportunities; targeted SEAL resources).
- Small group Bushcraft sessions focused on SEMH.
- Dramatherapy
- Play therapy
- Therapeutic activities such as Art and Gardening Club
- Music therapy
- Good to be me
- Anxiety Gremlin
- There's a volcano in my tummy
- Comic strip conversations
- Therapeutic 1 to 1 intervention with SW
- Talk and draw
- Calm down box
- 1 to 1 work with FPWs/social work students when on placement

Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the DSL/DDSL. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file, Myconcern.

Confidentiality

Staff should not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school
- Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures with at least one appropriate colleague. This will usually be one of the DSLs. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern.

Working with parents

We work in partnership with parents to promote children's health and well-being. Our Inclusion team works closely with parents and will signpost parents where needed to ensure that they are aware of who they can talk to and how to access support. Our mental health policy can be accessed from our website and parents are informed about the mental health topics that their children are learning about in PSHE. Parents are informed about the available resources surrounding our participation in Mental Health Awareness week and the Young Minds website has several resources that can support parents further: https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent

We will work with parents and 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 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 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 the school will ensure that parents 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, Myconcern.

Training

We provide on-going training for staff on health and wellbeing - including mental health - and work closely with the PSHE service. We have accessed training provided by Cambridgeshire County Council on 'Promoting Positive Friendships', 'LGBT, Inclusion and Diversity', 'Conflict Resolution' and 'Anxiety'. We provide training for our TAs and have clear systems and procedures in place to enable staff to identify children who may need further support and ways this support can be identified. As part of regular safeguarding training, all staff are trained how to recognise and respond to child protection incidents and issues.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue. Staff will be able to access additional training throughout the year according to situations arising and according to pupils' needs.

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

Working with other agencies

As part of our targeted provision, we work with other agencies to support children's mental health and wellbeing including:

- Send Specialist Services
- Family Support Workers
- Cambridgeshire School Nursing team
- Paediatricians
- Dramatherapy students
- Mental Health Support Team
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service

Children can be referred to the Emotional Wellbeing Service and YOUnited, the Cambridgeshire children's mental health service.

Identifying needs and recognising warning signs

As part of our safeguarding procedures, teachers will share any children who they feel may require some form of social, emotional or mental health support with the Inclusion team, who can then guide on the appropriate next steps. When teachers identify these warning signs, they will always be taken seriously and will be handled by the Inclusion, and safeguarding, team as appropriate. Teachers will identify those they feel need support but they will not try and diagnose mental health conditions.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating/ sleeping/ learning habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking 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
- Low self-esteem
- Secretive behaviour
- Isolation
- Physical signs of harm
- Lowering of academic achievement

Staff Mental Health

We recognise that anyone can experience mental health issues for various reasons which may be out of their control. There may also be work-related factors that could contribute to poor mental health such as work-life imbalance and workload pressure; we aim to recognise and address cases of workplace pressures that contribute to mental health issues. The Federation invests resources in supporting staff mental health and all staff have access to an Employee Assistance Programme as and when they need.

We aim to:

- Treat staff mental health illness seriously
- Proactively support resolution of issues causing concern
- Support staff members who face mental health problems
- Signpost staff to mental health resources
- Create pleasant workplaces
- Encourage communication

Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging pupils to disclose when they think their mental health is deteriorating