

# Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing policy

East Sheen Primary School



**Approved by:**

CFC committee

**Date:** Autumn 2024

**Next review due by:**

Autumn 2027

## **Policy Statement**

East Sheen Primary School is dedicated to fostering a community where positive mental health and emotional wellbeing are essential aspects of daily life for students, staff, families, and governors. We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive atmosphere where every voice is valued, and open conversations about mental health are encouraged.

This is central to enabling us achieving our vision: 'Our purpose is to nurture happy, confident children who think deeply about themselves and others in preparation for the challenges ahead.

We do this by inspiring and celebrating:

- Curiosity and love for learning
- Collaboration and kindness
- Creativity and enthusiasm
- Resilience and achievement

## **Aims**

1. To promote and sustain positive mental health for students, staff, and families through education, support, and advocacy.
2. To maintain an open, supportive culture that encourages communication and shared responsibility in nurturing mental wellbeing.
3. To identify and support individuals facing mental health challenges early and effectively through targeted resources and services.

## **What is Positive Mental Health?**

Positive mental health is the state in which individuals can realise their abilities; learn, work and play productively; make meaningful contributions to their communities; experience happiness; develop a sense of right and wrong; and develop a sense of self and identity. It includes emotional resilience, self-awareness, social connectedness, and the capacity to experience, manage, and express emotions in a constructive way.

## **Section 1 – Health and welfare of students**

### **Mental health problems in children:**

Some children experience a range of emotional and behavioural problems that are outside the normal range for their age. These children could be described as experiencing mental health problems or disorders.

Mental health professionals have defined these as:

- emotional disorders, e.g. phobias, anxiety states and depression;
- conduct disorders, e.g. stealing, defiance, fire-setting, aggression and antisocial behaviour;
- hyperkinetic disorders e.g. disturbance of activity and attention;

- developmental disorders e.g. delay in acquiring certain skills such as speech, social ability or bladder control, primarily affecting children with autism and those with pervasive developmental disorders;
- attachment disorders, e.g. children who are markedly distressed as a result of an extremely abnormal pattern of attachment to parents or major care givers;
- other mental health problems including eating disorders, habit disorders, post- traumatic stress syndromes; sleep disorders; and psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and manic-depressive disorder.

Many of these problems will be experienced as mild and transitory challenges for a child and their family, whereas others will have serious and longer lasting effects. When a problem is particularly severe or persistent over time, or when a number of these difficulties are experienced at the same time, children are often described as having mental health disorders.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student or parent, in the first instance, they should speak to the Senior Mental Health lead at school. If there is a concern that the student is deemed at 'high-risk' or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures will be followed. If the student presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

### **Our approach to student mental health and wellbeing is holistic and embedded within our school:**

#### **1. Teaching and learning**

At ESPS we use the [Jigsaw PSHE curriculum](#), which teaches students to recognise and manage emotions, establish healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions. This framework is reinforced through assemblies and our school ethos of being Happy, Curious, Resilient and Kind. Language is displayed and modelled in school to help children express their emotions. Zones of Regulation and [The Habits of Mind](#) provide a common language throughout school and help children understand the importance of feelings, of reflecting and of the need for resilience. We use emotion coaching to support children to understand, regulate and reflect on their emotions and their behaviour choices, in line with our Attachment Aware informed approach. Information about this can be found in our [Behaviour and Discipline Policy](#). For students with mental health needs reasonable adjustments will be made by the teachers, these may include: breaks from class when required, provision of a concentration tool (stress relief toy) and a soft-start to the day.

#### **2. Signposting**

Students (or their parents) are provided with information on where and how to seek help within the school and the wider community. Clear, accessible materials can be provided, such as information on [Emotionally Related School Avoidance](#) and links to the Mental Health Support Team webinars and workshops. Information about advice and other charities that offer support for students and their families are included in the weekly newsletter and on our designated '[Health and Wellbeing](#)' area on the school website. Our pupil 'Wellbeing Ambassadors' also champion pupil wellbeing in whole school initiatives and activities.

### **3. Training for staff**

Our staff are trained to recognise early signs of mental health issues, such as withdrawal, changes in behaviour, or a decline in academic performance. Identifying these signs early allows us to offer timely interventions, preventing escalation and supporting student needs as they arise. The staff are trained in how to have potentially difficult or upsetting conversations and know to discuss this with the Senior Mental Health Lead if required.

### **4. Targeted support**

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental health illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with other professionals such as:

- Educational Psychologist
- Early Help service (AfC)
- School nurse
- Mental Health Support Team
- EarlyBird and EarlyBird Plus programmes
- ADHD Embrace
- Beautiful Minds

In addition, we offer the following in-house provision:

- Time to Talk box
- ELSA sessions
- Individual mentoring
- Use of restorative approach
- Zones of Regulation
- Nurture Group
- Lego Therapy
- Wellness lunchtime sessions
- Breakfast Club for invited students

Adults supporting at ESPS:

Pastoral Inclusion Manager – manages the wellbeing / nurture programs which supports the students' social and emotional development.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) – ensure students' safety and mental health support, particularly in cases involving safeguarding concerns.

Senior Mental Health Lead – oversees the mental health strategy for the school and provides targeted interventions for students.

PSHE subject lead – oversees the teaching of the PSHE Jigsaw curriculum, ensuring staff have the appropriate training, tools and resources to do so effectively.

Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) - supports identified students manage their emotions through regular individual or small group sessions.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) – works as part of the Senior Leadership Team to create policies for SEND students, arranges tailored support, provides professional guidance to other members of staff on best practices and strategies, and liaises with parents/carers when necessary.

Mental Health Support Team (MHST) – provide direct therapeutic support. All referrals to this team are made through the school's Senior Mental Health Lead.

When thresholds are met referrals may be made to:

- SPA
- MASH
- CAMHS
- Children's Services
- School Nurse

## **Section 2 – Health and welfare of parents/carers**

Our commitment to positive mental health extends to family members, who play a crucial role in students' wellbeing. We work closely with families to build a strong, understanding community that promotes resilience and positive mental health.

**How we support families:**

- Communicating and engaging regularly with parents/carers through newsletters, assemblies and parent meetings
- Holding termly 1:1 SENCO/ teacher review meetings
- Offering in-person coffee mornings for the parents/carers of students with SEND.
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (e.g. flagging local charities that support families through the newsletter)
- Offering in-person coffee mornings around common mental health issues with the MHST (e.g. separation anxiety), which help create a supportive network among families, as well as providing valuable ideas and resources
- Offering online support through the "How to Help With..." series of webinars, where families can learn practical skills for supporting their children's wellbeing
- Arranging supportive meetings with the Educational Welfare Office if attendance is a concern
- Ensuring family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the financial support they need to enable the child to participate fully in activities that promote social and emotional wellbeing (such as providing funding for trips and clubs)
- Working with the MHST, referrals can be made to support parents as well as individual students. These sessions are held on site.

## **Section 3 – Health and welfare of staff**

The Headship Team and Governing Body recognise that a healthy, happy workforce is required to deliver the best education for all our students. Our expectation is that staff have a responsibility to support their own mental health by accessing appropriate support, looking after their own mental health and to develop resilience and coping strategies. As a school we are committed to encouraging staff to develop a good work life balance and lead healthy working lives.

We offer the following to support our staff's positive mental health:

- taking staff mental health and wellbeing into consideration when deploying staff to various roles around school
- making reasonable adjustments for staff with recognised mental health issues
- encouraging staff to set professional boundaries for themselves, such as not sharing their direct work email addresses
- considering flexible working applications within the confines of what is best for the students
- access to an employee wellbeing assistance programme, which is fully-funded by the school

We also ensure that there is:

- a clear system of line management, with opportunities for staff and line managers to 'check-in'
- an open-door policy for the Headship office for all staff
- a named Senior Mental Health Lead for staff to talk to
- a bi-weekly phase group meetings to discuss concerns around vulnerable children in confidence
- a dedicated staff room for relaxation and healthy eating
- a dedicated staff work room
- a number of planned social events throughout the year for all staff to participate in
- a provided lunch on all INSET dates to promote good relationships and give time for staff to socialise
- regular wellbeing INSET sessions

### **Celebrating Positive Mental Health:**

We celebrate and highlight the importance of mental health through school-wide events such as Kindness Week, Anti-Bullying Week, Odd-Socks Day, and Outdoor Learning Week. These events reinforce the importance of kindness, inclusivity, and emotional health, while fostering a culture where positive mental health is visible and valued.

Through a united approach and ongoing commitment, our school strives to be a community that promotes positive mental health and supports the wellbeing of everyone involved. This policy is our pledge to nurture an environment where mental health is prioritised, and every voice is heard and respected.

**Links with other policies:**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

[Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)

[Equality Statement](#)

[Healthy Eating Policy](#)

[Inclusion and Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Policy](#)

[Supporting students with medical conditions](#)

[Behaviour and Discipline Policy](#)

Menopause Policy