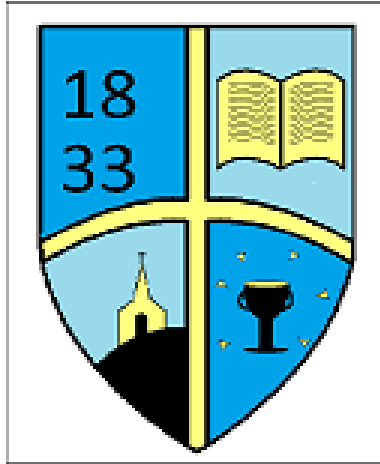


## *Mellor St Mary CE Primary School*



*Believing, Learning &  
Sharing Together*

# **Mental health and Wellbeing Policy**

**2023-2025**

## *Believing, Learning and Sharing Together*

Through our Christian Faith, we acknowledge our responsibility to all, to enrich lives and show love and respect within our school family. This **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy** has been created to ensure our vision permeates all aspects of school and all its people.

We believe in lifelong learning aiming to equip our children to live life today and for tomorrow rooted in Christian love. All members of our school community are constantly learning about life and themselves and this supervision policy has been designed to help them evaluate their own practice and work in order to keep themselves safe and well.

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with our Supervision Policy for Staff, Medical SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. It should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Respecting All -Anti-bullying, and PSHE / RSE and SMSC policies. It sits alongside child protection procedures.

At Mellor St Mary CE Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play. It is our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are our pupils. This means that we have a Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedures in place which we refer to in our prospectus. All staff including our volunteers and supply staff must ensure that they are aware of our procedures. Parents and carers are welcome to read these on request.

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will always ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with their parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that this is not in the child's best interests.

### **School Policy Statement**

*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).*

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do and is based on the scripture:

**(Luke 1:37) For with God nothing shall be impossible.**

Because of this we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

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

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils'
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues;
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing;
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues;
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers.

**Therefore in our school we:**

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better.
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- promote self esteem and ensure children know that they count
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks

**We promote a mentally healthy environment through:**

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
  - Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

**We offer different levels of support:**

**Universal Support-** To meet the needs of all our pupils through our overall Christian ethos and our wider curriculum. For instance promoting Growth mindset and developing resilience for all.

**Additional support-** For those who may have short term needs and those who may have been made vulnerable by life experiences such as bereavement.

**Targeted support-** For pupils who need more differentiated support and resources or specific targeted interventions such as wellbeing groups or personal mentors.

### **Individual Care Plans**

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents/carers and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil'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.

### **Lead staff members are:**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

**Mrs Embley-Peers- Designated Child Protection officer / Safeguarding Lead / Designated Teacher for Looked After children / SENDO**

**Mrs Embley-Peers: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead and accredited Mental Health First Aider**

**Mrs Fielding: ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)**  
**Mrs Hounslow: ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)**

**Mrs Fielding: lead First Aider**

**Mrs J Taylor: Safeguarding Governor**

**Rev Karen: Wellbeing and Spirituality support**

### **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE and Relationship Education curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.



### **Targeted support**

We offer support in many different ways including through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Targeted use of Social and emotional literacy resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes'
- Managing emotions resources such as the use emotional barometers and de stressing toys.
- Individual mental health and wellbeing small group activities.
- ELSA support groups or on an individual basis
- Therapeutic activities including yoga, art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Physical activities including the Mellor Mile
- Spiritual activities linked to church and the community e.g. Kiddie Choir

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

- Pupil voice questionnaires
- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire for pupils and staff
- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and local area and know how to access further support.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available?
- Who it is aimed at?
- How to access it?
- Why to access it?
- What is likely to happen next?

### **Identifying needs and Warning Signs**

All staff will report any concerns to the Mental Health and Wellbeing lead in school or if connected with safeguarding to the DSL. Weekly staff briefings identify vulnerable pupils and staff are made aware of how to support individuals on a case by case basis. These include concerns about:

- Attendance and Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning

- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances and changes
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These 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 officer or the emotional wellbeing 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

If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should 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 the school SENDCO.

All concerns are recorded electronically on CPOMS.

### **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 using the CPOMS system and kept on the pupil data file. 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.

This information should be shared with the Mental Health Lead, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the DSL/Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead/Supervisor 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. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents/carers should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents/carers themselves. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents/carers for them or with them.

### **Working with Parents**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents/carers, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents/carers 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, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents/carers, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents/carers 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/carer 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/carers can also be helpful too e.g. parent/carers 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/carers often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with an agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record. Parents/carers 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 mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website.

- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through local charities and organisations.
- 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.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE / Relationship Education and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

### **Supporting Peers**

When a pupil 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 pupil who is suffering and their parents/carers with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told;
- How friends can best support;
- Things friends should avoid doing/saying which may inadvertently cause upset;
- Warning signs that their friend needs 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 difficult emotions they may be feeling.

### **Working with other agencies and partners**

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

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support through pupil referral units in Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Early Help
- Children and Family Wellbeing service
- Family support workers
- Therapists including Child Action North West

### **Training**

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 students safe.

The MindEd learning portal provides 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 pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the DSL and CPD Coordinator who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

### **Useful links**

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

A public health England and NHS site to help people take simple steps to look after their mental health, improve their mental wellbeing and support others.

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/>

Quality-assured information, advice and resources to help primary schools understand and promote children's mental health and wellbeing.

### **REVIEW Date:**

The policy will be reviewed every 3 years

**Signed:** *J. Embley-Peers* (Head teacher)

**Signed:** *P Skupski* (Chair of Governors)

**Date:** 20.11.2023

**Next full review:** September 2025

**Reviewed by:** Curriculum Committee

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.



# Mellor St Mary CE Primary School

*Believing, Learning and Sharing Together*

## Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategies for Pupils and Staff in School

80% of young people with existing mental health needs say that the Covid-19 pandemic has made their mental health worse, (according to a [Young Minds](#) survey of 2,036 young people), it's time to put mental health awareness first in schools.

And it's not just students who have been feeling the impact; according to a report by [Education Support](#), 52% of UK Teachers say their mental health declined during the first stage of the coronavirus pandemic.

## Mellor St Mary CE Primary School's 7 Top Wellbeing Initiatives

### 1. Wellbeing Weeks and Focus

Organising "Wellbeing Weeks" is a great way to raise awareness of the importance of wellbeing and gives our pupils the resources to help them support their own mental health. Termly workshops can also be used with a focus on mental health and wellbeing.

#### Actions:

- Develop a partnership with a specialist charity like [Young Minds](#) for support with this.
- Use the Mental Health Foundation [free downloadable pack](#) to plan MH activities based around the [5 Ways to Wellbeing](#): Connect, Get Active, Be Mindful, Keep Learning and Give to Others.

## 2. Appoint Wellbeing Ambassadors

As a school we are working towards embedding a whole-school culture of wellbeing which includes building supportive and respectful relationships between pupils, teachers and parents. Having already appointed a Senior Mental Health Lead ( Mrs Embley-Peers who is trained in Mental Health First Aid for children , young people and adults), we also have recently appointed a Wellbeing Governor (Mrs N Burtonwood-Wilson). In addition to these, Mellor St Mary has two Wellbeing Ambassadors who are appointed from Year 6 with the primary aim of support children with their emotional health and wellbeing at playtimes through supported play, talking time and mindfulness activities.

Actions:

- Use **Worth-it** training for Wellbeing Ambassadors to equip them with approaches and strategies to support the wellbeing of their peers as well as their own.

## 3. Encourage Mental Health Literacy

Mental health is often talked about in our PSHE lessons using 1 Decision, MyHappyMind and PSHE resources. We find that being open and honest and allowing children time to talk about Mental Health issues is the best ways to combat some of the misconceptions they may have around children and young people's mental health.

In addition to these and in preparation for KS3 **Stem4** offers free teaching resources for that cover topics such as anxiety, stress and depression to empower students with knowledge about mental health.

Actions:

- Continue to work with Children Family Wellbeing service for their focused Inside Out groups, Whole class teaching and transition units for Year 6-7
- Use **Worth-it** training for Wellbeing Ambassadors to equip them with approaches and strategies to support the wellbeing of their peers as well as their own.

## 4. Create Wellbeing Lessons and Resources

There are lots of ways we link wellbeing into lessons across the curriculum, especially in Drama, English or Art. These subjects in particular can be useful to process their emotions and experiences through creating personal projects or pieces of work.

We also spread awareness of wellbeing and mental health around school through physical noticeboards, where children can share posters with their own wellbeing tips on. You'll also find some great.

Actions:

- Use NSPCC resources for displays in communal areas.
- Use visuals online like this one from the [Anna Freud Centre](#)

## 5. Mindfulness-based interventions in the classroom

Mindfulness has a profound impact on our overall wellbeing, which includes:

- positive effects of meditation to reduce **stress and anxiety**,
- improved **memory and focus**,
- better **relationships and reduced emotional and physical pain**.

The **benefits of practicing mindfulness in schools** help children to build attention span, emotional regulation and resilience.

Actions:

- Introduce a five minute mindfulness session each day e.g. during worship, in class or to begin or round off the school day.

## 6. Create Safe Spaces In School

One of the impacts of the pandemic, is that children are coming to school with difficult experiences that they haven't been able to process. As part of our weekly PSHE lessons, we dedicated some time in age appropriate groups for "circle time", which creates a safe space for children to share what they're going through.

Actions:

- Give each children the opportunity to share either a word, picture or a sentence that describes how they are that day, and create a culture of no judgement from their peers.

## 7. Gratitude Recognition

Gratitude practices are proven to boost our moods. This may be an empty jar, strips of paper, and pens or through notes, certificates and pictures which can be celebrated at an individual, group, class or whole school basis depending on the child's own preference.

Actions:

- As part of the class daily routine, children write down something specific that they're grateful for on a strip of paper and put it in the jar. Towards the end of the week, ask them to come up and read out items from the jar!

## Promoting Staff Wellbeing In Schools

Wellbeing initiatives are only used if staff are happy and healthy to support them as this must come first. Through our staffroom and weekly diary, we promote a culture of staff wellbeing with staff being signposted to professional support as and when needed. This may be through EAP – Employee Assist Programme which is a free and confidential helpline for staff and their families or through other charities such as Maundy Relief and Anna Freud Centre. Supporting staff and building trust leads to a happier team, higher performance, better retention and a motivated environment.

Actions for Staff Wellbeing ideas:

- **Monthly wellbeing workshops** – When school staff have limited time, carving out time for staff to connect with each other whilst doing something different can really boost their mood. 1 x workshop each term such as cooking or meditation?
- **Designated Mental Health Champions** –selected staff have ownership over promoting mental health to their colleagues using **Mind** "Mental Health Champions guidance and resources.

- **Mental health training for staff** –SLT staff have the background knowledge they need to support mental health at school should be a top priority. E.g [Place2b](#) and [MHFA England](#) courses.
- **A wellbeing noticeboard** – the staffroom has a go-to space where staff can check out all the wellbeing initiatives that are going on. This includes a “menu” of events and activities, Mental Health Champions or Wellbeing Ambassadors details and how to sign up for training
- **Staff Stars** – Consider how you show gratitude for each other at your school. Handing out a “Staff Star” award in the weekly staff meeting or praise in other ways. Encourage each winner to nominate the next person each week, and explain why For more ideas and resources check out the following websites:
- [Support for children and young people from Mind](#)
- [Greater Good – gratitude activities](#)
- [Education support – teacher wellbeing support](#)
- [Mental Health Guide for Teachers](#)
- [Wellbeing resources from Twinkl and Mind](#)