

Northumberland County Council



Tritlington

C of E

First School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Author	Jill O'Dell and Katherine Stephenson November 2025
Review	
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Chair of Governing Body	Alex Gale
Joint Head teachers	Jill O'Dell and Katherine Stephenson

Policy Statement

At Tritlington Church of England First School we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all pupils, families, members of staff and governors. It is our intention to sustain an open culture where all voices are heard, and effective policies and procedures support our commitment to a safe, supportive environment.

At Tritlington we define Mental Health and Resilience as:

Good Mental Health

Individuals are mentally healthy when they have the ability to:

- develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually
- initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships
- use and enjoy solitude
- be aware of others and recognise where empathy is needed
- experience happiness and engage fully in play and learning
- develop a sense of right and wrong
- recognise and resolve problems and setbacks and learn from them
- develop a sense of self and identity

Resilience is the capacity to recognise and respond constructively to academic/work, social, or personal challenges. It involves identifying, recognising and developing the skills, strategies, and supports necessary to recover from setbacks, adapt to change, and maintain emotional wellbeing.

Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for our community
- Remove the stigma of mental health issues
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in pupils and each other
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support; both for themselves and pupils; who may have mental health issues
- Provide the appropriate support to pupils with mental health issues
- Develop resilience amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience building techniques, creating a safe and nurturing environment for all
- Raise awareness amongst our community of mental health issues and encourage staff to disclose any mental health issues in a supportive environment
- Encourage a mental health friendly environment where everyone is aware of the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and can effectively sign post pupils and families

Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils and each other. However, key members of staff have specific roles to play:

Pupil and family wellbeing and support officer – Katherine Stephenson

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Katherine Stephenson

Designated Deputy Safeguarding lead – Jill O'Dell

SENCO - Jill O'Dell

Staff Mental Health Champion – Katherine Stephenson

PSHE Coordinator – Jill O'Dell

Section 1 – Health and Welfare of Pupils

Mental health problems in children

Some children experience a range of emotional and behavioural problems that are outside the normal range for their age or gender. 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 or socially impaired 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 the 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 pupil or parent, in the first instance, they should speak to the Pupil and Family Wellbeing and support officer. If there is a concern that the pupil is a high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the pupil presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Individual Care Plans

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it

is recommended that an Individual Care Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the parents, and relevant professionals.

Teaching and learning

For pupils with identified mental health needs, the school will make appropriate and reasonable adjustments to ensure they can fully access and participate in the curriculum.

These may include but are not limited to:

- Breaks from class when required;
- Provision of stress relief toys;
- Work broken into small chunks;
- Individual behaviour plans

Curriculum

The school is committed to delivering an inclusive curriculum that supports students in developing emotional regulation skills and prioritising both their mental and physical health. Students will be taught the significance of getting enough sleep, exercising, and eating healthily, as well as techniques for managing their emotions and seeking help when needed. We tailor Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationship, Sex, and Health Education (RSE) programmes to meet the specific concerns of each student cohort. In addition, our assembly programme will highlight the importance of good mental health and resilience. Our school websites offer resources to help parents and carers support their children's mental health and overall wellbeing. [For more information, visit our PHSE page on the school website.](#)

In addition, the school will ensure that:

- Pupils have opportunities to engage with challenges in the outdoor environment.
- Pupils are encouraged to act as positive role models within the school community.
- Pupils develop a commitment to a healthy lifestyle through participation in varied, relevant, realistic, and enjoyable activities.

Signposting

The school will ensure that staff, pupils, and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them and understand how to access these services. Relevant information about local and national support services and events will be shared and displayed within the school (e.g., noticeboards, electronic display boards) and through communication channels such as newsletters and the school website.

The aim is to ensure that staff, pupils, and parents/carers understand:

- What help is available
- Who the support is aimed at
- How to access the support
- Why they should access it

- What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs indicating that a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously. Any staff member observing such signs should promptly alert the **Pupil and Wellbeing Officer**.

If at any time a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk of harm to themselves or others, staff must follow the school's safeguarding procedures without delay.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- 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 absences

Targeted support

The school recognises that some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. This includes, for example, pupils who are in care, young carers, those who have previously accessed CAMHS, those living with parents or carers with a mental illness, and those living in households affected by domestic violence.

To support the emotional and mental health needs of our pupils, the school works closely with the school nurse and other relevant professionals. For example, the school nurse runs drop-in sessions for parents to provide guidance, advice, and support regarding pupils' wellbeing.

We work closely with other professionals such as:

- Educational Psychologist
- Child Psychologist
- Emotional Health Service
- Inclusion Support Service

- Young Carers Pupil and Wellbeing Officer
- Early Help service

In addition, we offer the following provision in house:

- Drawing and Talking Therapy
- Individual Mentoring
- Use of restorative approach
- Zones of Regulation
- School based Play Therapy

When thresholds are met referrals may be made to:

- Emotional Health Service
- SPA
- CAMHS
- Young Carers Family Support Team
- Children's Services
- School Nurse

Additional Support and Multi-Professional Collaboration

In some cases, a multi-professional meeting will be arranged to discuss a pupil's needs in more detail and ensure appropriate support is in place.

Some pupils may not meet thresholds for specialist services or be able to access individual therapies. In these instances, the school seeks to provide one-to-one pastoral support. This support may be delivered through an **Individual Behaviour Plan** or other tailored interventions to meet the pupil's specific emotional and mental health needs.

Managing disclosures

Any disclosure of a mental health or wellbeing concern must be recorded on an Expression of Concern form and submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). All safeguarding concerns will be treated confidentially, and the school will follow the procedures outlined in its Safeguarding Policy. [For more information about Safeguarding, including our policy, visit the Safeguarding page on our website.](#)

Section 2 - Health and Welfare of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are valued and welcomed members of the school community. The school communicates regularly and engages with parents and carers through newsletters, assemblies, parent meetings, and other appropriate channels.

We recognise that families play a key role in shaping children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. We work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional wellbeing by:

- Working closely with our local partners including the Children's Centre, Health Care professionals and partner schools
- Meeting all EYFS parents in person to assess their family circumstances

- Encouraging parents into school for special events
- Ensuring Senior Leadership Team (SLT) attendance at all PTA events
- Offering 1:1 SENDCO Parent meetings
- Offering parents the opportunity to meet Ed Psychologist, School Nurse or Speech and Language Therapist
- Ensuring all parents are aware of how to promote social and emotional wellbeing and prevent mental health problems
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.)
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting and academic skills, for example 'How to read with your child' morning.
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies
- Providing an open door policy with access to the Pupil and Wellbeing officer
- Working hard to develop a close relationship with parents and carers which allow us to offer support

Section 3 - Health and Welfare of Staff

The school recognises that a healthy, happy workforce is essential to providing the highest quality education for all pupils. Staff have a responsibility to support their own mental health by accessing appropriate support, maintaining their wellbeing, and developing resilience and effective coping strategies.

The school is committed to promoting a positive working environment by encouraging staff to achieve a healthy work-life balance and lead healthy, sustainable working lives.

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

The school is committed to promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all staff. To achieve this, the following measures are in place:

- A dedicated staff room for relaxation and healthy eating
- A dedicated staff study room
- Access to the Staff Wellbeing and Counselling Service through the Human Resources Service Level Agreement
- Organisation of social events throughout the year to encourage staff engagement and community
- An **open-door policy** by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure staff feel supported and heard
- Proactive support from SLT for staff experiencing mental health difficulties
- Consideration of staff wellbeing when deploying roles and responsibilities across the school

- Reasonable adjustments for staff with recognised mental health conditions
- Signposting staff to appropriate support mechanisms, which may include but is not limited to local clergy, charities, GPs, and Relate
- Weekly staff meetings providing opportunities for individuals to share concerns and receive support
- A supportive and generous non-sickness absence policy
- Celebration of staff special occasions
- Recognition of individual staff strengths through initiatives such as positive mentions in newsletters, individual and public thanks and praise, feedback from observations, and learning walks
- Staff Mental Health Champion: A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) acts as a dedicated point of contact for staff, maintaining an open-door policy to offer guidance and support
- Perspective and Resilience: Staff are encouraged and supported to put everyday challenges of working with pupils into perspective and develop resilience
- Professional Boundaries: Staff are guided in establishing professional boundaries, including not sharing personal telephone numbers, avoiding texting parents from personal devices, and not using phones during curriculum time
- Social Media Guidance: Staff are reminded not to share personal details online or interact with parents via social media. Staff with children at the school should take steps to protect their privacy, such as setting strict privacy settings on platforms like Facebook
- Flexible Working: Applications for flexible working are seriously considered, balancing staff wellbeing with the best interests of pupils
- Pastoral Support: Pastoral support is available from the incumbent to assist staff with personal or professional challenges
- Work-Life Balance: There is no expectation for staff to work beyond their contracted or directed hours

Staff Training and Professional Development

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff have the knowledge and skills necessary to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and colleagues.

- Annual Training: All staff receive annual training on safeguarding, which includes mental health awareness. Additional targeted training is provided as appropriate
- In-Depth Knowledge and CPD: Staff requiring more detailed knowledge or skills will have opportunities to access relevant training through the appraisal process. Additional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) will be offered throughout the year as needs arise
- Twilight Training: Where necessary, the school will host twilight training sessions to promote learning or understanding of specific mental health issues
- Training Requests: Suggestions for individual, group, or whole-school CPD should be discussed with the Joint Headteachers, Katherine Stephenson and Jill O'Dell, who can also provide guidance on relevant training opportunities and support for staff

These measures ensure that staff are equipped to respond effectively to mental health concerns, support pupils, and maintain their own wellbeing

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Managing Sickness and Absence Policy
- Non-Sickness Absence Policy
- Code of Conduct

If a member of staff has concerns about themselves or a colleague they should speak to Staff Mental Health Champion.