



Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School

Mental Health & Emotional Well-Being Policy

Date of Policy	January 2023
Review Date	January 2026

Mental Health & Emotional Well-Being Policy

1. Why Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being is Important

At Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We recognise how important mental health and emotional well-being is to our lives in just the same way as physical health

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

Staff are encouraged to use a Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) approach to understanding behaviour and supporting emotional wellbeing. Our school promotes the values of TPP – Compassion and Kindness, Hope, Connection and Belonging.

We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall well-being and can affect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice identifies Social, Emotional and Mental Health as one of the four areas of Special Educational Need.

All children go through ups and downs through their school career and some face significant life events. About 10% of children aged 5 to 16 have a diagnosable mental health need and these can have an enormous impact on their quality of life, relationships and academic achievement.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy".

Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting pupils' well-being and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that they can manage times of change and stress, be resilient, are supported to reach their potential and access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and be a school where

- all pupils are valued
- pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- pupils feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- positive mental health is promoted and valued
- bullying is not tolerated
- In addition to children's well-being, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and well-being.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out

- how we promote positive mental health
- how we prevent mental health problems
- how we identify and support pupils with mental health needs
- how we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent mental health problems getting worse
- key information about some common mental health problems
- where parents, staff and pupils can get advice and support

3. Definition of Mental Health and Well-Being

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing:

... 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.

Mental health and well-being is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to

- feel confident in themselves
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- cope with the stresses of everyday life
- manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
- learn and achieve

4. Links to other Policies

This policy links to our policies on Child Protection and Safeguarding, Harmful Sexual Behaviour Peer on Peer abuse, Behaviour and Relationships Policy, Relationships and Sex Education Policy, School Exclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy and Information Report.

Links with our Behaviour and Relationships Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

We consider *behaviour to be a message and a way of communicating*.

5. A Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to
3. Helping pupils to be resilient learners and have a Growth Mindset
4. Teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
5. Early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services
6. Effectively working with parents and carers
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues. We aim to be a 'talking school' with an 'Open Door Policy'.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems; such a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and

problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School's Mental Health Team includes: the Mental Health Lead/SENCO, the Designated Safeguarding team and our school Governor with a responsibility for Mental Health and Well-Being. As a team they:

- lead on and work with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health
- provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates
- keeps staff up-to-date with information about what support is available
- liaise with the PSHE Leader on teaching about mental health
- is the first point of contact and communicates with mental health services
- lead on and makes referrals to services

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to pupils with mental health needs and their families. Support includes:

- Mental Health Lead, Helen Aves
- Mental Health Team School Uttlesford
- Designated Safeguarding Team (Ben Davey, Nicky Brogan. Natalie Parnell)
- SENCO, Helen Aves who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including pupils whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision.
- [School Nursing Team](#)
- [Essex – Educational Psychologists and Inclusion Partners](#)
- [Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service \(SET CAMHS\)](#)
- [Kids Inspire](#)
- [The Children's Society](#)
- [Multi School Council](#)
- [Mind- Mid and North-East Essex](#)
- [YCT](#)

7. Supporting Pupils' Positive Mental Health

We believe we have a key role in promoting pupils' positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

Whole School Activities and Approach

- Assemblies to raise awareness of mental health, to promote and explain our school values and to discuss what it means to be a positive school, local, digital, and global citizen.

- Campaigns and fundraising activities such as Comic Relief and Children in Need.
- Whole school Mental Health Day.
- Use of the wildlife area/Forest School type activities.
- Teaching through PSHE and assemblies about celebrating and accepting differences and neurodiversity
- Play Leaders in Year 6
- Pupil and Staff audit of Wellbeing which informs Mental Health Action Plan.
- Young Carers training and signposting
- Using a Trauma Perceptive Practice approach – school to commence this training soon.
- Teaching pupils about neuroscience such as Dan Siegel; Hand Model of the Brain and ‘flipping your lid’
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school and outside the school

Transition Support

- Communication Passports for vulnerable children – outlining strengths and needs (see appendix).
- Transition meetings with parent/carers, pupils, and relevant staff for transition between classes.
- Transition photo books made for key pupils for moving to new settings or to new classes.
- Visits to Pre-school and Nursery settings for vulnerable children.
- Invitations for local secondary schools to visit in Year 6 and meet vulnerable children
- Key Adults might support secondary school visits with vulnerable pupils.
- Transition group in the summer term of Year 6 led by the Children’s Society.
- Through PSHE we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help pupils to be more resilient, understand mental health and help reduce the stigma of mental health problems.

Class Activities

- Zones of Regulation resources are displayed in each class to encourage children to name and talk about their feelings. Adults model talking about feelings and emotions,
- Self-Regulation tools are promoted and displayed to encourage children to manage their emotions such as talking, counting backwards from 10, Stop, Think, Choose, Time out.
- Worry boxes in each class.
- Teacher to use vocabulary with children about ‘trusted adult’ so they know there are staff they can talk to if needed.
- Pupils with ADHD or ASD have access to sensory circuits or short movement breaks.
- Mindfulness/breathing/meditation and relaxation activities in class.
- Classroom scripts such as the Magic Script (I feel.... when.....) to promote assertiveness and listening skills.

- Use of script (How to solve a Problem) to encourage good listening, solving problems and to repair and restore relationships.
- Use of Comic Strips to reflect on a problem after the event.

Resources used in school

- [Anna Freud resources](#)
- [PHSE association](#)

Activities on offer in school for small group work includes:

- Self-esteem work,
- Lego Therapy,
- Building self-awareness around neurodiversity,
- Listening skills,
- Understanding neuroscience,
- Friendship groups
- Work around Zones of Regulation and using self-regulation tools.
- Lunch Club support

Our approach is to:

- provide a safe environment to enable pupils to express themselves and be listened to
- ensure the welfare and safety of pupils as paramount
- identify appropriate support for pupils based on their needs
- involve parents and carers when their child needs support
- monitor, review and evaluate the support with pupils and keep parents and carers updated

8. Early Identification

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- Identify individuals that might need support – pupils might have a target for their mental health and Well-Being on the Class Provision Map or on a One Plan.
- working with the School Office staff who are often the first point of contact with families seeking support
- Use of My Concerns to record staff concerns.
- Use of STAR Analysis to analyse behaviors and look for triggers.
- exclusions, children feeling unwell and attendance
- pupil audit and survey

- staff report concerns about individual pupils to the SENCO
- worry boxes in each class for pupils to raise concerns which are checked by the class teacher
- weekly staff meeting for staff to raise concerns about individual children
- gathering information from a previous school at transfer or transition
- parental meetings
- enabling pupils to raise concerns to class teacher and support staff
- enabling parents and carers to raise concerns through the school class teacher or to any member of staff - we have an 'Open Door Policy'

All staff have had training on the protective and risk factors (see Appendix 1), types of mental health needs (see Appendix 2) and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the SENCO or Designated Safeguarding Team.

These signs might include:

- non-verbal behaviour
- isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits
- lowering academic achievement
- talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- expressing feelings of failure, uselessness, or loss of hope
- an increase in lateness or absenteeism
- not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE
- drug or alcohol misuse
- physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Staff are aware that mental health needs such as anxiety might appear as non-compliant, disruptive, or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the school's safe guarding procedures are followed.

Verbal Disclosures by Pupils

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgmental to pupils who verbally disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of pupils is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff are clear to pupils that the concern will be

shared with the Designated Safeguarding Team and recorded in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

We recognise that just like physical health, mental health and emotional well-being can vary at any given time and is fluid and changes, there are no absolute

9. Working with Specialist Services to get swift access to the right Specialist Support and Treatment

In some case a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, school refusal and other complex needs.

We make links with a range of specialist services.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the SENCO/Mental Health Lead following a consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Specialist Service	Referral process
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	Accessed through school, GP or self-referral
Educational Psychologist	Accessed through the SENCO
Early Help Referral	Accessed through the Inclusion Manager/SENCO, Designated Safeguarding Team

10. Involving Parents and Carers

Promoting Mental Health

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting their children with mental health needs.

To support parents and carers:

- We signpost to organisations promoting mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes through the weekly newsletter and on our the school Facebook group
- We have an Open Door Policy.
- Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs through sensitive and supportive regular meetings and signposting.

When a concern has been raised the school will:

- contact parents and carers.
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- be available for follow up calls
- make a record of the meeting
- agree an Action Plan if needed for one Plan or Class Provision Map
- discuss how the parents and carers can support their child
- keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Pupils are our primary concern, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

11. Supporting and Training Staff

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in pupils and know what to do and where to get help (see Appendix 3).

For staff we encourage them reflect on the NHS 5 steps to mental wellbeing

Research shows there are five simple things we can do as part of daily work or home life to build resilience, boost our wellbeing and lower the risk of developing mental health problems. The simple actions are known internationally as the Five Ways to Wellbeing (these were developed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) on behalf of the Foresight Commission in the UK). They have subsequently become the **NHS 5 steps** to mental wellbeing:



The Five Steps: summary

1. Connect: strong relationships with others are an essential part of building resilience and boosting wellbeing

Evidence shows that connecting with others including colleagues, friends, and the wider community promotes wellbeing, and helps build a support network for when times get tough.

Checklist examples:

- Talk to someone – and really listen
- Eat lunch with colleagues
- Find ways to collaborate
- Plan a social event at work
- Join in with the children and young people in your school

2. Keep Learning: being curious and seeking out new experiences positively stimulates the brain

Setting goals, being open to new ideas and continuing to learn throughout life helps boost wellbeing and build resilience. Learning improves our self-esteem, keeps us connected and involved and helps us adapt to change and find meaning in our lives.

Checklist examples:

- Participate in a course
- Set a goal and work towards achieving it
- Take on a new task or help someone

3. Be Active: being physically active every day is great for our bodies and minds.

As well as improving physical health and fitness, being active can also improve our mood and overall mental wellbeing, and decrease stress, depression and anxiety. These benefits are increased when we get outside.

Checklist examples:

- move or stand more at work – build habits to bring more active movement into workday
- Go for a gentle stroll at lunchtime
- Break up long periods of sitting □ Have walking meetings
- Use the stairs instead of the lift
- Try some stretches

4. Give: giving makes us feel good. Carrying out acts of kindness, whether small or large, can increase happiness, life satisfaction and general sense of wellbeing.

Giving is more than just sharing material things with others. It's about cultivating a spirit of generosity and actively supporting others. The acts of giving, receiving and being aware of acts of kindness, even indirectly, give us a sense of purpose and self-worth.

Checklist examples:

- Compliment someone
- Help a colleague with their work
- Share your ideas or feedback
- Express gratitude - thank someone
- Make someone a cup of tea
- Perform a random act of kindness for a colleague, friend or even a stranger
-

5. Take Notice: paying more attention to the present moment, to thoughts and feelings and to the world around us can boost our wellbeing.

Using attention to increase awareness, concentration, and focus on the current moment and the task at hand, has been shown to improve wellbeing and mood. These are skills that can give us greater creativity, accuracy, and productivity.

Checklist examples:

- Practise gratitude
- Try mindfulness meditation
- Sit quietly somewhere

- Listen to your favourite music
- Take a break from digital devices
- Single-task – do one thing at a time

Staff have access to Counselling and Advice Service.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy was made in collaboration with the whole school. This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if deemed necessary.

Appendix 1

Protective and Risk factors (adapted from Mental Health and Behaviour DfE March 2016)

Might add ACES instead

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In the Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Genetic influences• Specific development delay• Communication difficulties• Physical illness• Academic failure• Low self-esteem• SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being female (in younger children)• Secure attachment experience• Outgoing temperament as an infant• Good communication skills, sociability• Being a planner and having a belief in control• Humour• Problem solving skills and a positive attitude• Experiences of success and achievement• Faith or spirituality• Capacity to reflect
In the Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overt parental conflict including domestic violence• Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted)• Inconsistent or unclear discipline• Hostile and rejecting relationships• Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs• Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect• Parental psychiatric illness• Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult)• Affection• Clear, consistent discipline• Support for education• Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death and loss – including loss of friendship 	
In the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Negative peer influences • Peer pressure • Poor pupil to teacher relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences

Appendix 2

Specific mental health needs most commonly seen in school-aged children.

For information see Annex C Main Types of Mental Health Needs Mental Health and Behaviour in School DfE March 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Annex C includes definitions, signs and symptoms and suggested interventions for Anxiety (including panic attacks, phobias and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder OCD) Depression, Eating Disorders Substance Misuse, Self Harm

The DfE guide does not include specific information on suicidal thoughts.

Suicidal Thoughts

Young people may experience thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their lives. Some young people never act on these feelings but may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide without any apparent warning signs.

Appendix 3

Where to get information and support

For support on specific mental health needs

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk OCD UK www.ocduk.org

Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk

Self-Harm www.selfharm.co.uk www.nshn.co.uk

Suicidal thoughts [PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org](http://PAPYRUS.org)

For general information and support

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.mind.org.uk

www.minded.org.uk

www.time-to-change.org.uk

List of Services local to Essex

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/services/essex-child-family-wellbeing-carousel-family-hub>

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/>

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

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

<https://www.essexmap.co.uk/>

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

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

https://send.essex.gov.uk/?utm_source=e-shot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=November2022EYFSPractitionerNewsletter-Incaseyoumissedit

https://aclessex.com/?doing_wp_cron=1673719862.6003599166870117187500