



# Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy St Leonard's Primary School

Last Updated (Sept 2025)



## Policy Statement

*“Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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)*

At our school, we are committed to the protection and promotion of positive mental health for all students and staff. We will continuously endeavour to improve the mental health of the school community by utilising a [whole school approach](#) to mental health, and via the identification and implementation of positive processes and practices which promote good mental health and wellbeing.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

## Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

## Policy Objectives:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students
- Reduce discrimination and stigma by increasing awareness and understanding of mental health problems
- Increase awareness of early warning signs of mental health problems
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students experiencing mental health problems and their peers and parents or carers
- Provide opportunities for staff and students to look after their mental wellbeing.

## The Policy Aims to:

By developing and implementing practical, effective and positive policies and procedures relevant to our school and developed in conjunction with students and their parents and carers, we can promote a safe and supportive environment and ethos which is conducive to the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school community.

We will:

- Support students to understand their emotions
- Help children to manage change and adversity and develop resilience
- Provide an environment which is conducive to students sharing concerns about themselves or others

We will promote a mentally healthy school environment by:

- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Raising awareness in the whole school community of the signs and symptoms of mental health problems
- Supporting staff to manage their own mental health and wellbeing

## **Lead Members of Staff**

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

**C Phillips DSL/C Cooke/C Callaghan/A Jones** - Designated child protection / safeguarding officer/Deputy DSL

**C Callaghan** - Mental health lead, Inclusion Lead, Personal Development Lead – PHSE/RSHE/SMSC

**E Marston** – Mental Health First Aider

**E Marston** - Lead first aider

**L Howell** -Link Governor and Forest School Lead

**J Wheatley** – ELSA practitioner

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection officer, the head teacher, or the designated governor. If the student 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 mental health lead.

## **Individual Care Plans**

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents, 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

## **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE/RSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Curriculum, supplemented by the [Jigsaw Approach and PSHE Association](#) to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

## **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in Appendix D.

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

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

## **Warning Signs**

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 (Insert name), our mental health and emotional wellbeing lead.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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
- Expressing unusual ideas or beliefs
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

### **Managing disclosures**

A student 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 student 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 student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively see appendix E.

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMS, the 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 and DSL/DDSL, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

### **Confidentiality**

We should be honest about the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the mental health lead. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence, and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed if appropriate and not a safeguarding risk, the student may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the student should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection officer (see above) must be informed immediately.

### **Working with Parents**

We recognise the importance of working with and supporting parents and carers as part of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. In order to support parents and carers, we will:

- Ensure that this policy is available in accessible formats including multiple languages where required
- Make the policy, and other sources of information and support about common mental health issues, available in a prominent position on our school website
- Involve parents and carers in the ongoing review and development of this policy
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to contact and how, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Ensure that parents and carers are involved in our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Ensure that parents and carers are aware of the support available within the school and externally
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents and carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in RSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home
- Provide opportunities for parents to be involved in any training or other activities which may help them support their child's mental health

It may be necessary to inform parents or carers of any concerns relating to the mental health of their child. In this event, we will be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents or carers we should consider the following questions (to be adapted on a case by case basis):

- What are the aims of the meeting?
- Can the meeting be held face to face? This is preferable, subject to any restrictions.
- Where would be the best environment to conduct the meeting? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents and carers, the student, relevant members of staff.

It may be shocking and upsetting for parents or carers to learn that their child may be experiencing a mental health problem, and we should be prepared for a range of responses, which may include fear, anger or emotional distress during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent or carer time to reflect.

We will 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 we're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents and carers can also be helpful too, e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We will provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow-up meeting or phone call right away as parents and carers often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

### **Working with All Parents**

Parents 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 common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child

- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE/RSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

### **Supporting Peers**

When a student 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 with the student who is suffering and their parents 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 or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend may need 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

### **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 to enable them to keep students safe. We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. 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 students. 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 through Performance Management meetings.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in October 2028.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to our mental health lead via email [ccallaghan@st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:ccallaghan@st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk)

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

### **External links**

PSHE Association guidance, page 2:

- <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-teaching-about-mental-health-and>

MindEd learning portal, page 5:

- <https://www.minded.org.uk/>

Your Staffordshire Health App Finder [Staffordshire](#)

[Staffordshire Connects | Children's mental health support pathway](#)  
[Staffordshire Connects | School Mental Health Support Team - Stafford](#)