

Marsh Green Primary School

Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

2024 – 2026



Policy Implementation Date: September 2024

Approved by Governors Date: Autumn Term 2024

Next Review Date: September 2026

Signed:

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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 contribute to her or his community.
(World Health Organisation)

At Marsh Green Primary School we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupils. We pursue this aim using workplace practices, universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health.

By developing and implementing a practical, relevant and effective mental health policy and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for staff and pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

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

It should be read in conjunction with our:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (where the mental health of a pupil overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue)
- SEND Policy (where a pupil has an identified special educational need)
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Aim of the Policy

At Marsh Green Primary School, we aim to;

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where pupils feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly
- Celebrate all of the ways pupils achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Allow pupils to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice
- Give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Spread awareness of the varieties of ways mental health issues can manifest
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues
- Provide support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

Legal Basis

This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Dissemination

Marsh Green Primary School will share the policy with staff, governors, pupils and parents/carers via the following methods:

- Introduce the policy as part of a staff meeting, with time for questions and review
- A direct link to the policy will be emailed to all staff
- New staff will receive a copy of this policy during the induction process
- Salient points from the policy will be shared with pupils via PSHE or class circle time
- School website
- Via newsletter to parents/carers

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) mental health lead.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- **Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)/Assistant Head**

Mr Fitzpatrick

- **Mental Health Lead/SENDCo**

Mrs Langley

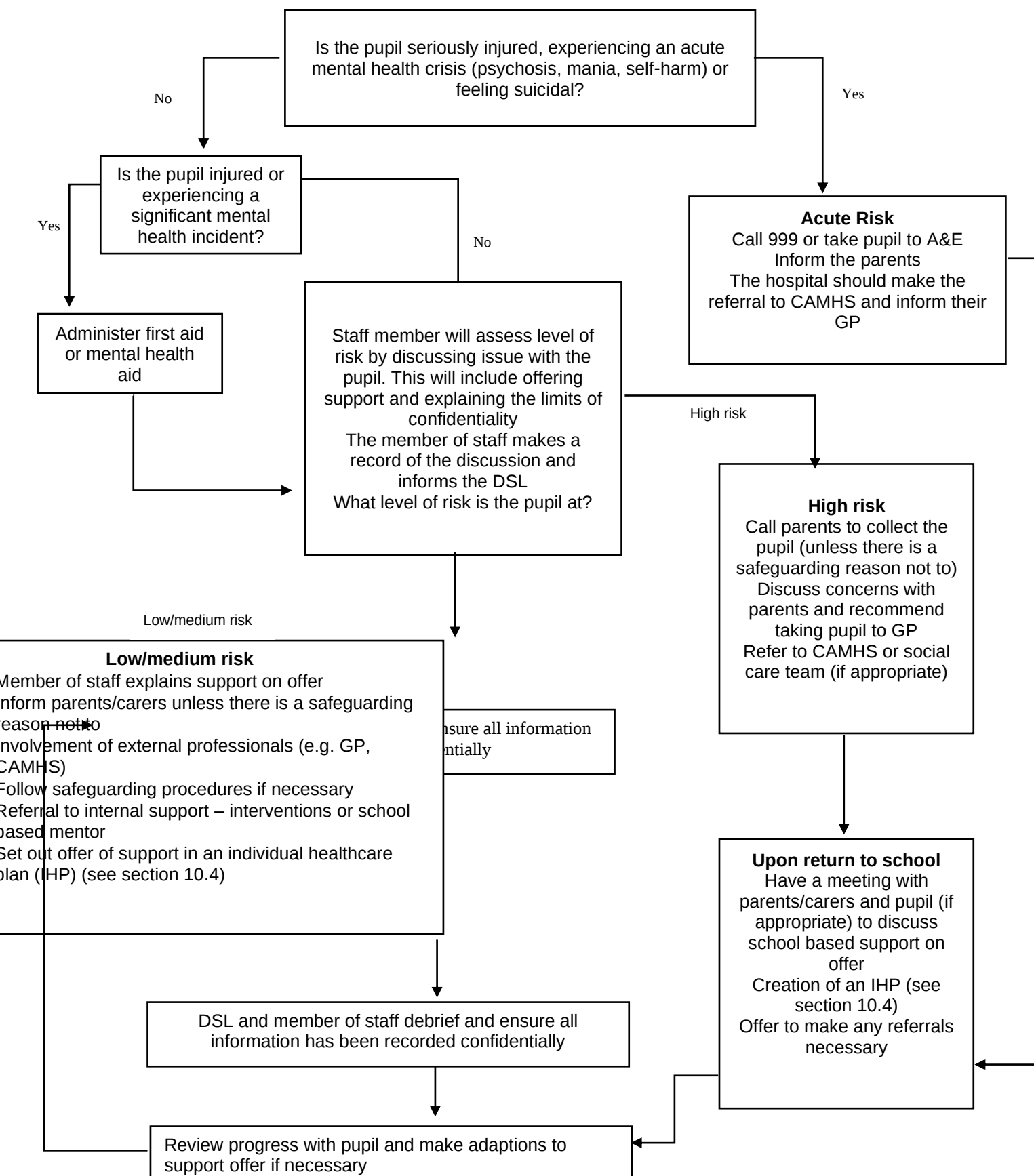
Lead First Aider/Attendance officer

Mrs Kelly

- **Headteacher**

Mrs Sanchez

Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



Managing Pupil Disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the designated safeguarding lead / mental health lead. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

- The full name of the member of staff who is making the record
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

Warning Signs

School staff may 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 communicated to Mr Fitzpatrick DSL or Mrs Langley DDSL/SENDCo

Possible warning signs to look out for in pupils or their immediate family.

- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide, this is a risk and will need a separate risk assessment and action plan to manage the risk accordingly.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope. This is a risk and will need a separate risk assessment and action plan to manage the risk safely
- 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 or mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Abusing drugs or alcohol in the family
- Changes in clothing e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour

- Skipping PE/Games or getting changed secretly
- Lateness or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Increase in lateness or absenteeism

Confidentiality

Staff should not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school
- Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures with at least one appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL or mental health lead. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the safeguarding policy will be followed.

Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with DSL or mental health lead.
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who you will share the information with and explain why you need to do this
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the chosen elected member of staff
6. The DSL or mental health lead will inform the parent/carers (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

Supporting pupils

Baseline support for all pupils

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, the school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, class time, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on the school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the school that is negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring of all pupils' mental health through assessments e.g. a strengths and difficulties questionnaire
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support
- All children are able to self-refer to weekly 'place2talk' sessions with a Place2be mental health practitioner.
- Referral for 1:1 sessions with our school 'Place2be' mental health practitioner.
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
 - Solution Focus Brief Therapy scale
 - Circle time
 - Worry boxes
 - Metacognition strategies

Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the mental health lead will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support, further to the provision of the baseline support as detailed above. The school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

Nurture groups

Reduced timetable

1:1 mentoring with TA or DSL

Place2be

Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)

If necessary a pupil will be offered an individual healthcare plan (IHP).

IHPs are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carer, and any other relevant professionals.

The pupil's IHP will contain the following details:

- The mental health issue (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)
- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer the school provides, the school will make, or encourage parents to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- GP or paediatrician
- CAMHS
- Mental health charities (e.g. Samaritans, Mind, Young Minds, Kooth)
- Local counselling services

Supporting and collaborating with parents and carers

We will work with parents and carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child

- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face to face.

These meetings can be difficult, so the school will ensure that parents are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

If appropriate, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be created in collaboration with parents/carers.

Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

Mental health is taught in PSHE, at Marsh Green Primary School we follow the Collins MyLife scheme of work. For more information, see our PSHE curriculum.

<https://www.marshgreenprimary.com/pshe-6/>

Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging pupils to disclose when they think their mental health is deteriorating

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Training

All staff will receive regular training or guidance about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of the regular child protection training.

Allocated school staff have attended the Mental Health First Aid Training. In order to work closely with the young people to identify and signpost appropriate support and intervention.

The Designated Mental Health Lead in the school is undertaking training provided via the DfE - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/senior-mental-health-lead-training>

For those staff members who require more in-depth knowledge additional CPD will be suggested and provided. Where the need to provide some becomes apparent, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning and understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group, or whole school CPD should be discussed with Rebecca Langley, Mental Health lead

Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Offer staff supervision sessions
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment

School staff may receive additional support to develop effective knowledge, skills and understanding in order to support the child or young person that may require a higher level of support for their emotional and mental health needs. Additional support may be received from the SENCO or the allocated staff member for mental health within the school.

It is widely accepted that adversity and trauma does not only affect the child or young person but the people that are supporting them (Young Minds, n.d a). It is important we recognise the negative impact that of hearing of people's experiences of adversity and trauma can have on our own mental, physical and emotional health. Feeling stressed, overwhelmed or tired from work once in a while is understandable. If you notice this happening regularly it is important to communicate this with the senior leadership team. Protecting our own mental health ensures the children and young people that, we work with have the very best care and support from us.

We will carry out a regular survey with our staff to find out whether they feel supported around their wellbeing and to help identify the gaps in our provision. This will help to ensure ongoing improvements in this area.

Support for our staff can be accessed via the following

- **Education Support Partnership** - <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk>
- **Anna Freud** - <https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/self-care-toolkit/>
- **NHS** - <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/mental-wellbeing-audio-guides/>
- **Every Mind Matters** - <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/resources/every-mind-matters-self-care-tool>

- **World Wildlife Fund** - <https://www.wwf.org.uk/5-ways-connect-nature-help-our-wellbeing>
- **Mental Health First Aid England** - <https://mhfaengland.org/mhfa-centre/resources/address-your-stress/stress-container-resource-download.pdf>

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parent/carers are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community.

Sources of support will be displayed around the school and linked to on the school website, so pupils and parents are aware of how they can get help.

The DSL and mental health lead will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupils seeking help 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

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Rebecca Langley, Mental Health lead every two years or sooner, if required. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.