



# **Mental Health and Well-being Policy**

Newdigate C of E Infant School  
St Michael's C of E Infant School  
(Mole Valley Gateway Federation)

Created: Autumn 2025  
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## **Policy Statement**

At MVGF schools, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all pupils, families, members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows all voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for all affected.

***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.***

***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”.***

**At MVGF 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
- are aware of others and empathise with them
- experience happiness and can play and learn
- develop a sense of right and wrong
- resolve (face) problems and setbacks and learn from them.
- develop a sense of self and identity

**Resilience** is the ability to bounce back from the disappointments and difficulties we all experience. It is the ability to build protective factors in our lives which promote and protect our emotional wellbeing when faced with every knockbacks and unexpected changes.

### **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:

- SMHL (trained senior mental health lead) – Nicola Cleather
- MHFA (trained mental health first aider) – Julia Woods
- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Nicola Cleather
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – [Vickie Leney](#)/[Rachel Moon](#)
- SENCO - Anna Fox
- PSHE lead – Gayle Priestley
- [ELSA – Vickie Leney](#)
- [Well-being Lead – Daniella Constable](#)

## **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 anti- social 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 all pupils with mental health needs reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure full access to the curriculum. These may include:

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

## **Curriculum**

The Story Project provides a narrative-based framework through which we deliver PSHE and RSE, enabling pupils to explore key themes around mental health, relationships, and personal development in a safe, engaging, and age-appropriate way.

In addition we will ensure that we offer/provide:

### *Transition Support*

- Support for all children in Year 2 plus additional support for identified children
- Transition meetings with parent/carers, pupils and relevant staff
- Key Adults might support junior school visits with vulnerable pupils

### *Class Activities*

- Worry boxes
- Places of Peace
- Mindfulness and breathing/meditation and other
- Emotion visual resources
- Individual 'calm' spaces

### *Whole School*

- ELSA table and Places of Peace / Prayer spaces the school
- Rainbow Bridge and memory garden (Newdigate)
- Worship themes including school values
- Using the Power of Reading to explore themes and learn about emotions, difference, loss, bullying, change, resilience, etc. - we also use 'The Story Project' resources as part of our RSE programme to do this
- Our PAT dog visits
- Worry muncher / post-box
- Displays around the school about positive mental health
- NSPCC 'Stay Safe' materials

### *Small Group Activities*

- Small friendship, social skills groups
- Lunch Club support
- The Haven/Rainbow Room/Badger's/Bear's Den for those children who are finding the classroom overwhelming
- Brunch sessions
- ELSA/well-being groups (i.e. Connect-children experiencing divorce or separation)

### *Teaching about Mental Health and Emotional Well-being*

- Through PSHE / RSE we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help pupils to be more resilient, understand about mental health and help reduce the stigma of mental health problems.

## **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.



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

When thresholds are met referrals may be made to:

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

In some cases a multi professional meeting will be arranged to discuss the case further.

Some children will neither meet thresholds nor be able to access individual therapies. As a school we attempt to offer one to one pastoral support for these pupils. This may be delivered by an individual behaviour plan.

### **Managing disclosures**

Any disclosure must be recorded on an expression of concern form and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All safeguarding concerns will be treated in confidence and we will follow the safeguarding policy. For more information about Safeguarding, visit the safeguarding pages and links to policies below.

<https://www.stmichaels-dorking.surrey.sch.uk/policies/>

<https://www.stmichaels-dorking.surrey.sch.uk/about/safeguarding/>

<https://www.newdigateschool.org.uk/safeguarding/>

<https://www.newdigateschool.org.uk/reports-and-policies/#>

## **Section 2 - Health and Welfare of Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers are valued and welcomed into school. We communicate regularly, consult and engage with parents/carers through newsletters, assemblies, parent meetings etc.

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. We work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and 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 discuss their family circumstances

- Encouraging parents into school for events such as Parent Days, Bring a Man to School Day, □ Ensuring Senior Leadership Team (SLT) attendance at all PTFA events
- Offering 1:1 SENDCO Parent meetings
- Offering parents the opportunity to meet Ed Psychologist, School Nurse or Speech and Language Therapist
- Offering Psychologist sessions for families
- Ensuring all parents are aware of how to promote social and emotional wellbeing and prevent mental health problems e.g. PATHS workshops
- 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 drop in sessions with the school nurse
- 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**

We recognise that a healthy happy workforce are required to deliver the best education for all our pupils. Our expectation is that staff have a responsibility to support their own mental health by accessing appropriate support, looking after their own mental health and to develop resilience and coping strategies. As a school we are committed to encouraging staff to develop a good work life balance and lead healthy working lives.

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

- A dedicated staff room for relaxation and healthy eating.
- A dedicated staff study room.
- Access to the Employee Assist Programme
- We organise a number of social events throughout the year for staff to participate in.
- We provide breakfast on all INSET dates to promote good relationships and give time for staff to socialise
- SLT have an open door policy for all staff.
- SLT proactively support staff who are experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Regular wellbeing Insets
- Take staff mental wellbeing into consideration when deploying staff to various roles around school.

- Reasonable adjustments for staff with recognised mental health issues.
- Sign post staff to appropriate support mechanisms such as local clergy, charities, GP, and Relate.
- Staff meetings are held weekly where individuals can air their views and feel supported.
- Celebrate staff special occasions.
- Staff mental health champion – this is a member of the SLT with an open door policy who is a point of contact for all staff.
- Encourage and support staff to put into perspective the everyday challenges of working with pupils.
- Help staff to set professional boundaries for themselves such as not sharing their telephone numbers; not texting parents with personal phones and not having their phones out during Curriculum time.
- Remind staff not to share personal details such as phone numbers and not to interact with parents on social media. Staff with children in school should be aware and take measures to protect themselves. For example set high privacy settings on Facebook.
- Flexible working applications are always seriously considered within the confines of what is best for the pupils.
- Pastoral support from the incumbent.
- No expectation to be at work outside of contracted/directed hours.

### **Training**

Annual training takes place for all staff as part of the safeguarding training. Other specific training will be utilised as appropriate.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our appraisal process and additional CPD will be offered throughout the year where it becomes appropriate.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for 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 Headteacher or Head of School who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

**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.**