Leigh Primary School

The Green, Leigh, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 8QP
Telephone/Fax: 01732 832660

'Caring, Sharing and Learning Together'

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

File name: Mental Health Policy	Associated Docs: Various Subject Policies Safeguarding Policy Health and Safety Suite	Statutory No	Review Period : Biannual and when appropriate in line with KCSIE
Policy Owner: Resources	Last Revised : 15/07/26	Next Revision Due: 01/09/2028	Page 1 of 8

"It's easier to build strong children than to repair broken adults."

Frederick Douglass (1818-1895)

At Leigh Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement.

Leaders, governors, staff, pupils and families create a culture of belonging, high expectations, prevention, early help and timely support. The Senior Mental Health Lead health and Inclusion Manager works alongside the DSL team, attendance lead and staff with pastoral responsibilities to ensure effective identification of pupils in need of provision and align support swiftly.

What is mental health?

Mental health is part of our overall health. It is about:

- How we feel, think and behave;
- How we cope with the ups and downs of everyday life;
- How we feel about ourselves and our life;
- How we see ourselves and our future;
- How stress affects us
- How we deal with negative events;
- Our self-esteem and confidence.

Mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety and eating disorders, are common and often start at a young age.

We recognise the importance of needs-led early invention and the difference it can make to our pupils. Most young people who experience mental health issues recover fully, or are able to live with and manage them, especially if they get help early on.

Implementation

How we make provision to keep pupils mentally healthy:

The best foundation for mental health is strong universal provision. We provide this through our planned RSHE/PSHE curriculum, behaviour and attendance strategy, anti-bullying work, SEND adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments.

Provision is accessible for all pupils through mainstream core standards and we provide targeted and specialist support on a needs-led basis such as:

State how provision is accessible for pupils with SEND, speech/language needs, neurodivergence, disability, disadvantage, EAL, children with social care involvement and pupils experiencing attendance barriers.

- Pastoral check ins;
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support);
- Play therapy;
- Spurgeons Counselling;
- Drawing and Talking therapy
- Pupil voice;
- PSHE curriculum (including RSE);
- Online Safety Curriculum;
- Zones of Regulation;
- Playground buddies;
- Positive feedback and awards;
- Extra-curricular enrichment;
- Outdoor Learning;
- Specific targeted academic support;
- Attendance intervention;
- Soft Starts;
- Intimate care support where required;
- Assembly and collective workshop that promotes inclusion;
- Guiding principles of Respect, Responsibility and Resilience.

Pease note this list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

Wellbeing

Pupil wellbeing is monitored on a daily basis and any concerns reported on CPOMs software for review. The school agrees appropriate actions which are reviewed, this may be through our reporting software or more formally in an pupil passport on a termly basis using the Boxall Pofile. Where appropriate referrals may be made to external agencies for support. Pupils showing signs of low wellbeing are identified and supported by all staff. Children that are a concern are discussed during children causing concern in a staff meeting weekly. Other incidents that are of a concern are recorded on CPOMS and discussed in regular safeguarding lead meetings.

As a school we recognize that school-led pastoral support is not a substitute for specialist clinical assessment or treatment and that this is required in some cases.

Counselling

As a school we work with Spurgeons, they provide counselling services for children and families. A counsellor from Spurgeons is based at school in blocks of 18 weeks to provide support. These are time-limited courses of counselling.

In addition, we have a private play therapist that provides support to children. This can be fully funded by parents, subsidised or fully funded by the school in some circumstances.

Interventions

A range of interventions are used to support children displaying low levels of wellbeing, self-esteem and/or confidence. They include:

- One-to-one sessions – therapy, counselling, ELSA, pastoral checkings, drawing and talking therapy.
- Group sessions – social groups, well-being club
- Pastoral support for parents – meetings with staff, SEND coffee mornings

Mental Health First Aid

Three members of staff are Senior Mental Health First Aid Trained (SMHL). This course teaches:

- Creating and embedding a positive whole setting culture in relation to mental health
- The link between mental health and behaviour
- Mental health problems in children
- Prevalence of mental health problems in children
- Risk and protective / resilience factors
- Identifying children with possible mental health problems
- Identification and measurement tools
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Children in Need, looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Mental health and special educational needs
- Providing support and collaborative working
- Additional support
- Classroom support
- Therapeutic support
- External support
- Working with parents and carers
- Overview of common mental health conditions / disorders

Working with parents / carers

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 children who do have mental health needs. Where appropriate adjustments are made to support parents such as: communication adjustments, interpreters, accessible formats, seeking feedback about impact of support. This encourages meaningful participation rather than consultation alone.

On first entry to the School, our parent's meeting includes a discussion on the importance of positive mental health for learning.

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available.

When a concern has been raised, the School will:

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them (In almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information;
- Be available for follow up calls;
- Keep a record of the meeting;
- 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 provided.
- Record concern using our CPOMs platform

Parents and carers will normally be involved as early as appropriate – if their child is at risk of danger - unless doing so may place the child at increased risk or conflict with safeguarding advice. Information may be shared without consent where necessary to safeguard a child or another person, in line with law and the safeguarding policy. Where appropriate we give children the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health needs for themselves or of accompanying and supporting them to do so.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

Working with other agencies

In some case a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders. Kent pathways include: Kent Resilience Hub, Kent Local Offer, school nursing, Early Help, NHS children and young people's mental-health services and crisis/emergency support.

Where appropriate the school would maintain regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Lead or Inclusion Manager in consultation with the 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.

Teaching

Staff teach through the statutory RSHE curriculum and use age-appropriate, evidence-informed resources. Classroom confidentiality must be explained as limited: pupils cannot be promised secrecy where safety concerns arise. Provide planned support/opt-out alternatives only where appropriate; statutory RSHE content is not optional except for the limited parental right to withdraw from sex education.

Ground rules are fundamental to creating and maintaining a safe teaching and learning environment. Establishing a safe learning environment for both pupils and teacher is important for PSHE education lessons, especially those focusing on mental health and emotional wellbeing, as it:

- protects pupils from possible distress;
- enables them to feel comfortable exploring values and attitudes;
- enables them to express their own opinions and consider the views and opinions of others, without the fear of negative feedback;

Before any lessons about mental health issues and emotional wellbeing are taught, clear 'ground rules' should be established or reinforced, and the concepts of confidentiality and anonymity covered at the start of the lesson. As ground rules are most effective when they have been negotiated and agreed with pupils, (rather than imposed) we ensure that they are:

- written in pupils' own words;
- displayed in the classroom;
- in some cases, physically signed by pupils (like an informal contract);
- monitored by pupils themselves (if the pupils are able);
- followed consistently by the teacher as well as the pupils.

Although participation in the lesson is important, every pupil has the right to choose not to answer a question. They also have the right to choose not to participate in an activity or discussion, especially if it touches on personal issues that they should not disclose in the classroom, or if the topic makes them uncomfortable.

We recognise that it is good practice to share the nature of the topic beforehand and invite pupils to let you know, anonymously or directly, if they have concerns themselves or for a friend. This will ensure our teaching is as inclusive as possible and is matched to pupils' needs. In addition, we write to parents at the beginning of the year to inform them of what is in their child's Health and Well-being, Family and Relationships and Safety and the changing body curriculum so they are able to support at home.

Any concerns over a pupil's safety will be reported following the school safeguarding policy. Staff will refer to the child protection, online safety, anti-bullying, behaviour, attendance, SEND, intimate care and medical policy.

Visitors

Where visitors are used to support and extend classroom teaching, they should be used to compliment the school scheme of work. A teacher should always remain present and retain overall responsibility in the classroom.

Impact

With a focus on mental health and wellbeing, our leaders and governors review trends in attendance, behaviour, suspensions, safeguarding concerns, pupil/parent voice, access to support and outcomes for vulnerable groups; they use this to improve provision without creating unnecessary workload.

Our pupils:

- Are confident, resilient and independent;
- Receive high-quality pastoral support;
- Know how to eat healthily, maintain an active lifestyle and keep physically and mentally healthy;
- Know that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health;
- Know that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations;
- Know how to recognise and talk about their emotions, using a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings;
- Know how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate;
- Know the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness;
- Know simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests;

- Know isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support;
- Know that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- Know where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online);
- Know it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

As mentally healthy young people, our pupils are able to:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually;
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships;
- Use and enjoy solitude;
- Become aware of others and empathise with them;
- Play and learn;
- Develop a sense of right and wrong;
- Resolve and learn from problems and setbacks;
- Reach their potential with regard to belonging, participation and learning

Links with Other Policies

We recognise the clear link between mental health and wellbeing and the following policies and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies in conjunction with this policy:

Child Protection
Online Safety
Behaviour Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
SEND information report and Policy
Personal Development Policy
Accessibility Plan

	Signed	Date
Approved by Governing Body	Governing Body	July 2026
Chairman of Governors	David Dorrell	July 2026
Headteacher	Jenna Halfhide	July 2026