



Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

This policy was last reviewed:	Autumn 2025
This policy will be reviewed again:	Autumn 2028
This policy will be reviewed by:	School Community Committee
Statutory policy:	No
Source:	Governing Body

Policy Statement

At St Richard's CE Primary School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all members of our school community, including pupils, families, staff, and governors. Rooted in our Christian vision and values, we seek to create a caring and compassionate community where everyone is known, valued, and listened to. Through an open and supportive culture, underpinned by effective policies and procedures, we aim to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which all can flourish.

At St Richard's CE Primary School, we define **mental health and resilience** as follows:

Good Mental Health

We believe individuals experience good mental health when they are able to:

- develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually
- initiate, build, and sustain positive and mutually respectful relationships
- enjoy both companionship and appropriate time for reflection or solitude
- show awareness of others and demonstrate empathy
- experience happiness and engage positively in play and learning
- develop a clear sense of right and wrong
- face challenges, manage setbacks, and learn from experience
- develop a secure sense of self and personal identity

Resilience

Resilience is the ability to adapt, cope, and recover from the difficulties and disappointments that everyone experiences in life. It involves developing protective factors—such as supportive relationships, self-belief, and problem-solving skills—that help to promote and protect emotional wellbeing when faced with setbacks, challenges, and unexpected change.

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:

- Pupil and family wellbeing and support office – Alex Rice
- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Siân Murphy
- Designated Deputy Safeguarding leads – Alex Rice, Louise Grant and Julie Singleton
- DSL Supervisor – Siân Murphy
- SENCO - Julie Singleton
- Staff Mental Health Champion – Julie Singleton
- PSHE Coordinator – Siân Murphy & Julie Singleton

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

We have developed our own, bespoke curriculum for Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education that includes the statutory Relationships and Mental Wellbeing. At the core is the delivery of Paths (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies – and evidence-based wellbeing and resilience programme). For more information, [visit our PHSEE page on our website.](#)

In addition, we will ensure that

- Opportunities to experience challenges in the outdoor environment are taken
- Pupils are encouraged to act as role models within the school environment
- A commitment to follow a healthy lifestyle is developed through participation in varied, relevant, realistic and enjoyable activities.

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.

Within the school (noticeboards, electronic display boards etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, website), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure staff, parents and pupils understand:

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

Since September 2025, St Richard's CE Primary School has worked in partnership with a local charity, the Richmond Foundation, to provide access to a Family Support Worker for one day per week. With informed consent from families, the school is able to make referrals to the Family Support Worker, who offers practical guidance and emotional support across a range of areas. This may include support with housing and financial concerns, children's behaviour at home, parental mental health and wellbeing, and signposting families to relevant external services and agencies.

Warning Signs

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 staff observing any of these warning signs should alert Pupil and Wellbeing Officer.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / 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
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absences

Targeted support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with the school nurse in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of our pupils. For example, the school nurse runs a drop-in session for parents.

We work closely with other professionals such as:

- Educational Psychologist
- Child Psychologist
- Emotional Health Service
- Inclusion Support Service
- The Mental Health Schools Team
- The Riverbank Trust
- Young Carers
- Pupil and Wellbeing Officer
- Early Help service

In addition, we offer the following provision in house:

- Drawing and Talking Therapy
- Individual Mentoring
- Use of restorative approach
- Zones of Regulation
- Resilience Group
- Nurture Groups
- Circle of Friends
- School based Play Therapy

When thresholds are met referrals may be made to:

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

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 our Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMs) which the Designated Safeguarding Lead and three deputy leads monitor daily. All safeguarding concerns will be treated in confidence and we will follow the safeguarding policy. For more information about Safeguarding, including our policy, [visit the Safeguarding page on our website.](#)

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
- Working closely with our Family Support Worker in school
- Meeting all EYFS parents in person to discuss their family circumstances
- Encouraging parents into school for events such as various Parent Days
- Ensuring Senior Leadership Team (SLT) attendance at all PTFA events
- Offering 1:1 SENDCO Parent meetings
- Offering parents the opportunity to meet our Educational Psychologist, School Nurse or Speech and Language Therapist
- Offering Psychologist sessions for families

- Riverbank worker providing support in the community to single parents
- 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
- Signposting parents to other sources of support (SENDIASS, parenting courses, Man & Boy)
- Using the AfC Resilience Networks to seek out additional sources of support for families

Section 3 - Health and Welfare of Staff

We recognise that a healthy, happy workforce is essential to delivering the highest quality education for all our pupils. We expect staff to take an active role in supporting their own mental health by accessing appropriate resources, practising self-care, and developing resilience and effective coping strategies. As a school, we are committed to promoting a positive work-life balance and fostering healthy, sustainable working lives for all members of our team.

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.
- We are part of the Human Resources Service Level Agreement giving staff access to the Staff Wellbeing and Counselling Service.
- We organise a number of social events throughout the year for staff to participate in.
- We provide lunch 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.
- A supportive and generous non-sickness absence policy.
- Celebrate staff special occasions.
- Recognise individual staff strengths through initiatives such as PATHS staff star of the week; First Friday Awards; positive mentions in newsletters; individual and public thanks and praise; feedback from observations; learning walks
- 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.
- Weekly Pastoral support from the incumbent.
- No expectation to be at work outside of contracted/directed hours.

Training

All staff receive annual training as part of our safeguarding programme, and PATHS training has been delivered to all teaching staff. Additional, role-specific training will be provided as required to ensure staff have the skills and knowledge necessary for their responsibilities.

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, Siân Murphy 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 or a member of SLT.