



White Ash Primary School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Policy Statement

'Mental health is defined as a state of wellbeing in which every individual recognises his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community'.

World Health Organisation, August 2014, quoted in **Counselling in Schools**, paragraph, 2.4.

At White Ash Primary School we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for every pupil and every member of staff. We are committed to building resilience in our pupils and offer a curriculum tailored to individual pupil needs including those relating to emotional, social and mental health.

Scope

This document describes our 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 other policies and documentation such as; Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, PSHE Policy, Individual Learning Plans, Care Plans and Positive Behaviour Plans.

Aims:

- To promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- To increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- To alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- To provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- To provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers
- To encourage all members of staff to care about their well-being and the well-being of others and to want to make their work place the best it can be.

The seven principles of promoting Mental Health and Well Being at White Ash School

- Leadership and management: Our leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting the emotional health and well-being. They champion these efforts and ensure that relevant policies are aligned.
- Ethos and environment: We aim to cultivate a safe, inclusive, and supportive school environment to promote positive mental health. This includes having clear behavioural expectations, celebrating achievements, and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Staff development: We ensure that our policies include a commitment to staff well-being and provide continuous professional development (CPD) related to mental health. This ensures staff can support their own mental health and respond effectively to the needs of students.
- Curriculum, teaching, and learning: Our curriculum incorporates evidence-based teaching on mental and emotional well-being, helping students develop resilience and coping skills.
- Pupil voice: We aim to involve our pupils in the development of mental health approaches to enable a sense of ownership. We ensure that the policy is relevant to their needs.
- Targeted support and referral: We aim to have a clear tiered system for providing targeted support to students who need it and specify referral pathways for specialist services when necessary.
- Working with parents and carers: We engage our families to ensure a successful mental health strategy. This includes raising awareness, providing resources, and working together to support the children.



Lead Members of Staff:

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

- Sarah Holt – Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Angela Hill – Deputy Headteacher, DDSL
- Hannah Heyes –Senior Mental Health Lead & well-being team Co-ordinator
- Catherine Swindlehurst – Home School Liaison and DDSL
- Kirsty Bryan- DDSL & EYFS/KS1 Lead
- Darren Houghton- Behaviour & KS2 Lead
- Keara Rothwell- DDSL

All members of SLT have a lead role in the pastoral care of the pupils at White Ash.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Senior Person or the Headteacher. If the pupil 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. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is available in the 'Mental Health and Wellbeing' file.

Teaching about Mental Health:

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE, Behaviour for Learning and Life Skills Curriculum. In cases where pupils are identified as having mental health difficulties, there may be discreet 1:1 sessions that are carefully planned and use more specialist resources.

Risk and Protective Factors:

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In the Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic influences • Low IQ and learning disabilities • Specific development delay or neuro-diversity • Communication difficulties • Difficult temperament • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure attachment experience • Being female (in younger children) • Outgoing temperament as an infant • Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour • Problem solving skills and a positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect
In the Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships • Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs • Physical, sexual, neglect or emotional abuse • Parental psychiatric illness • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord
In the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Deviant peer influences • Peer pressure • Poor pupil to teacher relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences

<p>In the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Other significant life events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good housing • Wider supportive network • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities
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Mental health and behaviour in schools, Departmental advice for school staff, Department of Education, March 2016

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 staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with Hannah Heyes our Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead or any of our DSL/DDSL.

Possible warning signs 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 absenteeism

Managing disclosures:

A pupil 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 pupil 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 first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

In cases of disclosure relating to mental health and wellbeing safeguarding procedures should be followed in line with the school's policy and as in cases of other types of disclosures.

Confidentiality:

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we feel it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil, then we should discuss with the pupil (where appropriate due to the individual's special educational needs):

- 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 pupil without first telling them (where appropriate due to the individual's special educational needs). 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. Parents must always be informed, if there is a safeguarding concern.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed if it would put the pupil at risk of harm, but the Designated Safeguarding Leads must be informed immediately.

Working with Parents:

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we will be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we will consider the best methods on a case by case basis and will endeavour to meet face to face where possible.

We will always highlight further sources of information and give leaflets and points of contact to for parents to take away. We will offer ongoing support for parents and pupils for as long as is necessary and we will provide clear means of contacting us with further questions.

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:

- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get 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 parent workshops
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

Training:

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health and emotional wellbeing issues as part of their regular safeguarding child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our appraisal process.

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.

As a school we are now becoming a 'Thrive' school. Thrive offers a trauma-informed, whole school approach that helps to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. This is through providing the training, resources and an award-winning online tool, so that our staff have a better understanding of the needs of the pupils and provide targeted, effective support where it's needed.

Supporting Staff

It is recognised at White Ash School that promoting staff health and emotional well-being should be an integral part of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Therefore, training and signposting to materials about mental health and emotional wellbeing will be made available for all staff. An open-door policy to senior leadership is always made available if staff are in need of speaking to someone about any issues of concern and a fully committed supportive governing body.

Staff Wellbeing Support and Interventions

Headteacher	Well-being Lead	Well-being Facilitators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forming the Well-being Team• Supporting team by allocating necessary resources and authority• Encouraging staff to complete the survey• Enabling the feedback process• Responding positively to ideas emerging from change process• Embedding staff well-being into policies and procedures• Encouraging an open and empowering school environment• Supporting the Well-being Team to keep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attending trainings and playing an active part in team meetings• Support the Well-being Team in managing the survey and conducting feedbacks• Playing an active part in writing the well-being action plan• Keeping SLT and sponsor informed of progress• Helping the Well-being Team understand the perspective of the SLT• Supporting the team to present proposals to the SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attending Well-being meetings• Printing off the survey codes and distributing to staff• Managing the survey and promoting confidentiality• Running the staff feedback and action planning sessions• Writing and implementing the action plan• Keeping staff informed of progress• Establishing a Well-being notice board• Encouraging staff to take personal

<p>staff informed of progress and plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting well-being support services eg Teacher Support Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping the profile of the programme high Recognising and building links with related work in school Promoting well-being support services 	<p>responsibility for well-being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting well-being support services Acting as a conduit for ideas between the staff and SLT
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Promoting well-being during Menopause

Menopause is a normal part of every woman's life. This policy recognises that the menopause is an equality and occupational health and safety issue and that women may need appropriate flexibility, support and adjustments during the time of change before, during and after the menopause.

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 requires employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all workers. Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers are required to undertake general risk assessments which should include specific risks to menopausal women, see section 5.3.

Any risk assessments undertaken will consider the specific needs of menopausal women. Risk assessments will include consideration of temperature and ventilation issues and will also address welfare issues; such as access to toilet facilities and cold water, during and outside break and lunch times

Please see Menopause Policy for more information.

Promote well-being at White Ash School.

Well-being notice board:

- Provides advice and relevant information.
- Updates staff with new ideas and plans.
- Enables staff to voice their concerns through the use of a suggestion box.

Conduct regular Well-being team meetings:

- Supervision Meeting for individuals and Groups (see Supervision Policy)
- Well-being staff to meet each half term to discuss and address any issues.
- To plan upcoming Well-being events as chosen by staff.

Well-being events lead by staff:

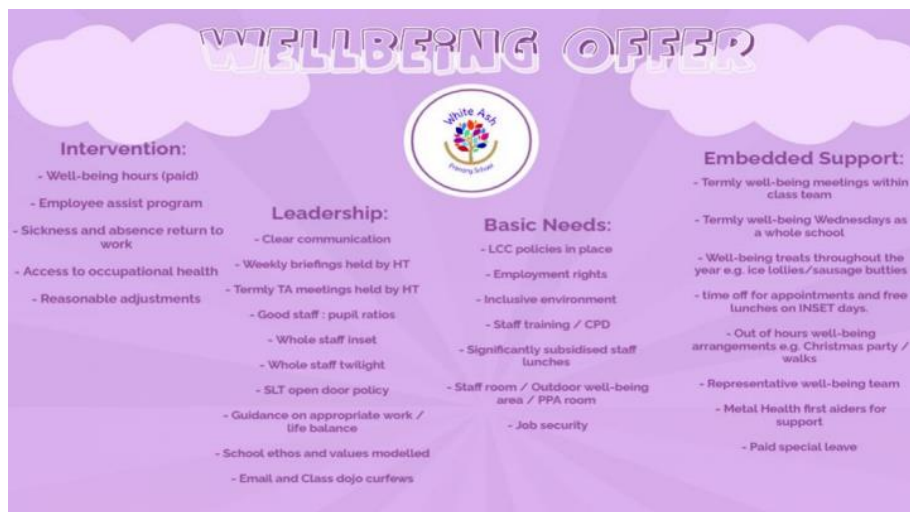
- Questionnaire to assess what staff require to promote well-being.
- Team building exercises.
- Whole school gatherings/coffee mornings for staff on inset days.
- Local well-being activities outside of school hours e.g. walks, shopping etc
- Time management strategies

Organising events:

- Provides staff with the opportunity to talk and bond.
- Allows new staff to meet unfamiliar staff members.
- To enjoy spending time together and being part of a team.

Writing and implementing an Action Plan:

- Allocates money to fund activities and Well-being events.
- Encourages all staff to participate in a holistic Well-being approach.



Date written: September 2025

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum.

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 Hannah Heyes the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

External Agencies

[Anna Freud Organisation - National Centre for Children and Families](#)

[MIND Charity](#)

[TOG MIND \(Tameside, Oldham and Glossop\) Charity](#)

[Young Minds Charity](#)