



**Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing
Policy
2024 - 2027**



Holywell Primary School, Upchurch Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

*Holywell School is a safe school and follows
Government PREVENT protocols to ensure it stays that way.*

INTRODUCTION

Mental health and wellbeing is an important part of the pastoral care of our whole community – this includes both the children/young people in our care as well as our own staff and the families within our community.

This policy sets out our approach to Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing for all parties. Those experiencing Mental Health difficulties should not face discrimination and our school are committed to helping to identify these difficulties and supporting people to overcome them.

The purpose of this outline is to offer some guidance as to the structure and content of a Whole School Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy, devised in line with current best practice. It is based on the most recent guidance for schools and includes local guidance and information relating specifically to Kent.

The purpose of this whole-school Emotional Wellbeing policy is to ensure that:

- The stigma associated with poor emotional wellbeing (including mental health) is challenged
- Children, staff, parents and carers have a good understanding of emotional wellbeing (including mental health) and how to promote it
- The school has a whole school approach to nurture emotional health, resilience and wellbeing and a supportive environment is created within the school community
- Children, young people and adults within the school community develop the skills and values to be able to look after their own and other's emotional wellbeing
- Children, young people and adults recognise how to access timely help when needed
- Staff and Parents are provided with information about School based, local and national (support) services
- Staff within the school are clear about procedures for identification and referral of students with specific mental health needs.

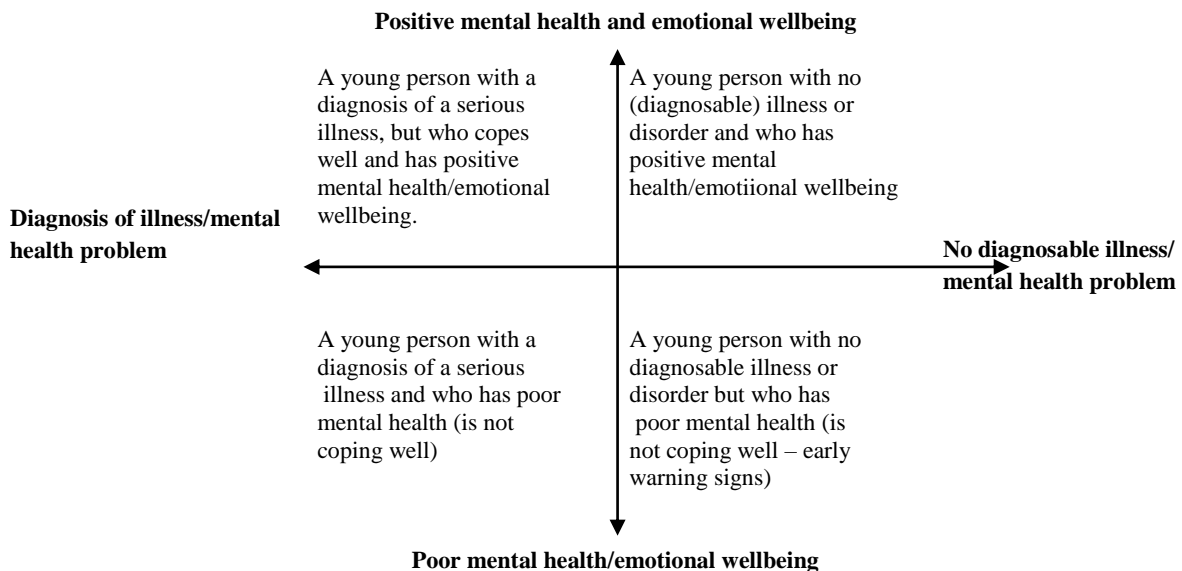
This policy will support Holywell to develop and secure the emotional wellbeing of children and young people in line with The Way Ahead Kent Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy recommendations and outcomes. This is a working document which provides guidance and information to provide a secure framework within which staff can work.

The terms 'emotional health' and 'mental health' are both used within this document to ensure that all those within the school are treated fairly regardless of whether or not they



have a diagnosed mental health condition, and in order to enable early intervention where concerns may have been raised/noted.

The Mental Health Continuum below provides a working framework within which to base a whole school approach to understanding emotional health and wellbeing (including mental health)



CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

As a school that respects the rights of the children and adults in our school family, community and beyond, we aim for each school policy to adhere to articles from **UNICEF's Convention on the Rights of the Child**.

In this policy, we are working towards the following articles:

- **Article 3 and 28** - We have the right to an education
- **Article 15** - We treat each other with respect
- **Articles 12, 17 and 36** - We have the right to be heard, kept safe and given reliable information
- **Articles 13, 14 and 30** - We have the right to express ourselves, think and believe what we want
- **Articles 15 and 31** - We have the right to meet with friends, play and join a variety of groups
- **Articles 17, 23, 27, 33 and 34** - We have the right to reliable information, play an active part in the community and a good standard of living
- **Article 19** - We have the right to be safe

AIMS

Emotional Wellbeing is a vital factor in each of our lives, shaping the way in which we understand ourselves and one another, and influencing a range of long-term outcomes. In the journey from childhood to adolescence and early adulthood, it becomes even more vital.



Enjoying positive emotional wellbeing (which includes mental health) opens the door to improved physical and cognitive development, better relationships with family members and peers, and a smoother transition to independence.

Addressing the issues of emotional wellbeing and raising awareness of mental health early can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed if children are to reach their full potential and establish/maintain healthy relationships. It also enables them to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

An effective PSHE curriculum addressing mental health and emotional wellbeing will explore, and respond to, the needs of young people at key stages in their development. PSHE will promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children at the school and of society, and prepare children at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. It aims to help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Addressing mental health and emotional wellbeing will enable children to:

- Explore their own and other people's attitudes and values
- Develop and practice personal and coping skills
- Increase their knowledge, skills and resilience

This Emotional Wellbeing Policy is underpinned by the ethos and values of our school and we uphold it as an entitlement for all our children. We recognise the need to work as a whole school community to ensure a shared understanding of emotional wellbeing (including mental health), and the under-pinning values, and to deliver an effective programme of learning that meets the needs of our children.

Holywell School explores emotional wellbeing and mental health within the following moral and values framework based on the following principles:

- Self-respect
- Resilience Conversations
- Respect and tolerance towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, feelings, views and sexuality
- An awareness of the way others feel
- Mutual support and co-operation
- Honesty and openness
- The acceptance of the responsibility for and the consequences of personal actions
- The right of people to hold their views within the boundaries of respect for the rights of others
- The right not to be abused by or taken advantage of by other people
- The right to accurate information
- The value of being able to access support when/where needed without being judged.



This Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy sits alongside Kent's Emotional Wellbeing Strategy for children, young people and young adults 'The Way Ahead'. It promotes and supports the 4 overarching outcomes identified as the foundations for multi-agency delivery:

1. Early Help – Children, young people and adults have improved emotional resilience and where necessary receive early support to prevent problems getting worse.
2. Access - Children, young people and adults who need additional help receive timely, accessible and effective support.
3. Whole-family approach - Children, young people and adults receive support that recognises their wider family relationships
4. Recovery and transition – Children, young people and adults are prepared for and experience positive transitions between services (including transition to adult services) and at the end of interventions.

GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

Guidance documents on which the policy has drawn - Key reference documents:

- Transforming Children and Young Peoples mental health Provision: A Green Paper (Department for Health and Department for Education Dec 2017)
- The Way Ahead: Kent's Emotional Wellbeing Strategy for Children, Young People, Young Adults (May 2015)
- Promoting emotional wellbeing and positive mental health of children and young people: Health Visiting and School Nurse Programme
- National Institute for Clinical Excellence Guidance PH20: Social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education (Sept 2009)
- DfE Mental Health and behaviour in schools: Departmental advice for school staff (Department for Education June 2014)
- National Institute for Clinical Excellence Guidance PH12: Social and emotional wellbeing in primary education (2008)
- The Good Childhood Report 2013, The Children's Society, London

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence their teaching of mental health and emotional wellbeing lessons.

ETHOS

We recognise that everyone will experience mental health difficulties at some point in their lives and have an ethos, which encourages support and respect for both staff and children. At our school we have an inclusive ethos, which encourages support and respect for both staff and children.

We aim to recognise those in need and will endeavour to support them as best we can, possibly signposting them to others who can help. We do not judge or blame, we act to provide a support network for those experiencing difficulties.

At the same time, we also recognise the importance of taking care of our own mental wellbeing, taking actions and encouraging others to include positive mental activities as part



of a healthy lifestyle. Whether this is providing opportunities to talk to others, or take part in activities promoting mental health.

ROLE OF THE MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING LEADER

Holywell School has a designated Lead for Mental Health. Miss Tracy Taylor will act as a champion for mental health and emotional wellbeing, reporting to the Leadership Team.

Her role is not to necessarily provide interventions, but to have a whole school overview and to coordinate the school's approach to positive mental health and wellbeing.

As endorsed by the Department for Education, she will:

- Oversee the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, including how it is reflected in the design of behaviour policies, curriculum and pastoral support, how staff are supported with their own mental wellbeing and how children and parents are engaged;
- Support the identification of at risk children and children exhibiting signs of mental ill health;
- Share knowledge of the local mental health services and working with clear links into children and young people's mental health services to refer children and young people into NHS services where it is appropriate to do so;
- Co-ordinate of the mental health needs of young people within the school and oversee the delivery of interventions where these are being delivered in the educational setting;
- Support staff in contact with children with mental health needs to help raise awareness, and give all staff the confidence to work with young people;
- Oversee and monitor the outcomes of interventions, on children and young people's education and wellbeing.

LEADERSHIP

The Mental Health Lead reports directly to the Headteacher and meets regularly with him to discuss the provision for staff and children mental health and wellbeing. The agenda for these meetings may consist of:

- Staff wellbeing provision and activities
- Children wellbeing provision and activities
- Parental engagement provision and activities
- Monitoring of identification and outcomes of children interventions
- Monitoring individual support needs
- Policy review
- Review of Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan (if not covered in the points above)



General issues and provision discussions are minuted to provide a formal record; however notes on discussions related to the support of individuals are kept confidential and are not attached to the minutes.

The Mental Health Lead presents a written report for the Wellbeing Committee within the Governing Body on Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing across the school.

They may also be involved in meetings to support staff or children with mental health needs. The Mental Health Lead may also need to review provision as a result of individual mental health needs, even if they are not directly involved in organising the support.

STAFF

Supervision

All roles are risk-assessed to determine the level of supervision required. Staff who require supervision, or feel they need it due to their current workload or situation are allocated a supervisor to support the emotional impact of their work.

The frequency and duration of supervision is adjusted according to the complexity and caseload of the staff, in addition to other factors, which could affect their mental health.

Supervision sessions are confidential and whilst the supervisor may keep notes to aide their work, these are not reported to SLT unless there is a statutory or safeguarding requirement to do so.

Staff, who are not allocated supervision but who feel they would benefit from the support, should contact the Mental Health Lead.

Support

As employees, staff who feel they need support are able to access the following services:

- The Education Support Partnership – a free service for all those working in education in the UK, 08000 562 561, <https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/>

Raising Concerns

If a staff member has concerns about the mental health of a colleague, they should try and speak to them. If they remain concerned, they are able to talk in confidence to either the Mental Health Lead, FLO or the Headteacher.



Wellbeing

We follow a 5 point plan to promote staff wellbeing:

1. Hold all staff to account

We make all staff accountable, but we ensure support is retained through constructive feedback and flexibility. We keep expectations high, yet stay flexible by removing unnecessary checklists and letting staff teach in a style that suits their children

2. Reduce unnecessary workload

We do not have endless meetings for meetings sake, tick-box forms and use of the phrase: 'Ofsted will be coming this year'. We trust staff to do their job and if they can't meet expectations, we can adapt and refine to support what is expected; we are flexible.

3. We invest more money in staff professional development

We are a school which grows leaders. All professional development activities are chosen by the staff member, not an appraiser. We invest in our staff by providing tailored, differentiated in-house or external CPD for every member of staff.

4. Share more

We like to challenge the preconceptions cast by the media and promote positivity, increase the amount of good news stories within the profession shared by staff, bloggers and school leaders. We share information with the school community via the school website and Twitter and frequently work with the local press to share our successes.

5. Praise and recognise every member of staff

We promote staff wellbeing as a school priority as it is the key to school success. We do this on a staff shout out board, in staff meetings and with our Secret Friend scheme. We work hard to eradicate bullies and support staff members who require additional resources and training to manage others appropriately.

Monitoring Arrangements

In addition to regular meetings between the Mental Health Lead, FLO, Headteacher and Hearts and Minds Governor, staff wellbeing is monitored through an annual anonymous staff survey.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Identification

Children with mental health needs are often identified by those closest to them: their parents or the classroom staff. These concerns are discussed with either the SENCo or the Mental Health Lead depending on their nature.

Staff will receive ongoing training on helping them recognise the symptoms that a mental health difficulty is affecting their daily lives.



Support

Holywell School tailors its support for our children and young people according to their needs. As a school we have access to the following services, provided by ourselves or externally:

- Regular check-ins with staff within each classroom or with Pastoral Staff
- Talking Time with a member of the Pastoral Team, either as a 6 week block to work on a specific issue or on an ad hoc basis
- Referral to Early Help for ongoing support with the whole family
- Referral to counselling services such as with the School Nurse via the Emotional Wellbeing Service or via another service such as Eden or Child's Vision.

Raising Concerns

If someone has a concern about the mental health of a children, they should initially speak to their class teacher, the Mental Health Lead or the FLO, who will triage and signpost or support as needed for both the child and adults working with the child.

Wellbeing

We follow a 5 point plan to promote the emotional wellbeing of children and young people:

1. **Connect**

- 'Morning Greeters' at the gate, welcoming children into school to start each day with a smile
- Being a Rights Respecting School with UNICEF and being aware of their rights and the rights of all children around the world
- Have Playground Pals promoting games at playtime and lunchtime, particularly for those who are lonely or alone
- Have activities on the playground and indoor lunchtime club each day
- A 'Worry Box' system in each classroom which is checked on a weekly basis
- Have a 'feelings' board where all children and adults can indicate how they are feeling
- Metacognitive approach to learning where children and adults talk about how they are feeling about their learning at the start of each task and discuss ways to 'jump into the learning pit' and overcome their difficulties

2. **Keep Learning**

- Connect people through learning different foreign languages
- Encourage students to learn a new skill in their own time and to send in photos of them doing so to be celebrated in assembly
- Learn new words that relate to wellbeing
- Earning Dojo points for going 'Over and Above' with learning attitude
- Achievement and Effort Awards to recognise positive attitude and habits of mind



3. **Be Active:**

- Everyone within the school to take part in the Daily Mile
- Sports Leaders leading active play during lunchtime such as: basketball, football, hula-hooping, skipping and den building
- Termly 'Holywell Loves Sport' activities to promote activity in many different sports
- Walking and Talking with a friend, mentor or adult
- Active clubs such as gardening, football, forest schools, athletics and cross country club
- Have yoga sessions during school time
- Dog walking with staff dogs Beau, Pepper, Tilly and Ted

4. **Take Notice:**

- We have a range of prompt questions up around school to encourage children and adults to take notice of others' emotions such as: can you find someone who needs a helping hand today?
- We run a weekly 'Mindfulness Club' where students can come along and spend some quiet time colouring, listening to music and making posters to display around school
- Mindful meditation or yoga daily in each class
- A 'Time-in' room to go to where you can calm down and work through tough emotions / distress with support if needed
- Play relaxing music at lunchtime

5. **Give:**

- We promote a local recycling project which the school is supporting to collect crisp packets and coffee pods to fund Kent Air Ambulance. We also collect plastic wrapping to make EcoBottles
- We work closely with many charities throughout the year which are chosen by the children and hold many events
- 'Catch me cards' are given to children who are 'caught' being positive, kind or having good learning behaviour. Children often nominate other children or even staff who have been working towards a personal goal.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Mental Health Lead, Headteacher and FLO meet regularly to monitor the provision of mental health and wellbeing for children.

SHARING THIS POLICY

We will share this policy in the following ways:

- School Council discussion on age-appropriate version of the policy
- Forum for parents to discuss policy once read
- Review of curriculum content with staff
- Consultation with school governors



WORKING WITH PARENTS, CARERS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Parents and carers have an especially important role to play in supporting emotional wellbeing.

Holywell School feel confident that this policy compliments and supports their role. To enable this, all information regarding the Personal, Social, Health and Emotional Curriculum is shared online at the following address:

We include a section on Wellbeing and Involvement to the school reports and the overall comment for children from teachers will comment on wellbeing in school. There is also a section on each Learning Plan for those children with SEN which notes the Wellbeing of the child.

CPD FOR STAFF

Holywell School ensures Continuous Professional Development is in place for all staff by:

- INSET Training courses e.g. Time to Change Train the Trainer, MindEd e-learning
- Mindfulness training, Mental Health First Aid and Youth Mental Health First Aid trained staff on site
- Shadowing or co-teaching with other members of staff
- Visiting other schools
- Team teaching
- Study time
- CPD/INSET for staff has taken place in the last two years for staff involved in teaching the subject

STATEMENT OF HOLYWELL SCHOOL'S COMMITMENT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INCLUSION

This policy is cross-referenced to other relevant school policies.

Holywell School considers the needs of different groups within the school (Boys and Girls, varying home backgrounds, Sexuality, SEN, LAC, Faith, Ethnicity and Culture etc). The programme is differentiated so that it is appropriate to children's' age, ability, gender and maturity.

Holywell School's PSHE programme responds to the needs of individual children and takes the cultures, faiths and family backgrounds of all children into consideration. Children with Special Educational Needs are given extra support by SEN staff and children with English as their second language receive help from the bi-lingual assistant.

Holywell School is committed to the provision of good quality PSHE to all of our children. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Equal time and provision will be allocated to all groups but there may be



occasions when children with Special Educational Needs are given extra support from SEN staff.

We will strive to ensure that all children are treated fairly and that there is no discrimination or bullying on the grounds of gender, race, religion, colour, language, culture, social circumstances, appearance, sexuality, ability or disability etc.

RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES

This policy links to:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Confidentiality and Code of Conduct policy
- Equality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Holywell Standard for Learning
- Online Safety policy
- PSHE Curriculum
- Relationships and Sex Education Curriculum
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEN Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy
- Visitor Procedures

POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

Holywell School will review this policy and content:

- **When:** every 3 years
- **By whom:** Hearts and Minds Team, Wellbeing Committee

KEY DEVELOPMENT TARGETS

This policy will be reviewed based on the following developmental targets:

1. *Children report that their wellbeing is not impacted by pressure to achieve and 'be perfect'.*
2. *There is always someone for me to talk to.*
3. *Children report that people around them understand mental health and emotional wellbeing and how to support and report it.*