



Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

St Leonard's Primary School

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'Providing good soil from which our FRUITS can grow' – based on Matthew, 13:8

Curious Minds. Kind Hearts. Big Dreams.

Policy Statement

At St Leonard's Church of England Primary School, we firmly believe in nurturing the mental well-being of our pupils, staff, and parents. Drawing inspiration from the biblical verse Isaiah 41:10, "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you," we aim to create a supportive and uplifting environment for the entire school community.

Recognizing the significance of mental health in achieving overall well-being and success, we actively promote awareness and understanding of mental health matters at our school. For our pupils, we integrate discussions about emotions, resilience, and self-care into our curriculum, providing them with the tools they need to navigate life's challenges. Through open communication and regular check-ins, we ensure that our pupils feel supported and valued.

Our commitment to mental health extends to our dedicated staff. We provide ongoing training and resources to equip them with the knowledge and skills to identify and respond effectively to mental health concerns. Additionally, we encourage an open and compassionate culture, where staff members feel comfortable seeking support and practicing self-care.

Faith

Faith can provide a sense of meaning, purpose, and belonging, which is crucial for mental well-being. St Leonard's fosters a supportive environment where students, staff and families, can explore and strengthen their faith, finding comfort and guidance in times of difficulty.

Relationships

Building positive relationships within the school community is essential for mental health. St. Leonard's emphasizes the importance of supportive friendships among students, as well as nurturing relationships between students and teachers. A sense of connection and belonging contributes to emotional stability and resilience.

Uniqueness

Recognizing and celebrating each individual's unique qualities and strengths can boost self-esteem and self-confidence. St. Leonard's promotes an inclusive environment where differences are valued and students are encouraged to embrace their own identity without fear of judgment.

Intellect

Intellectual stimulation and academic engagement are also crucial for mental well-being. St. Leonard's provides a challenging yet supportive educational environment that encourages critical

thinking, curiosity, and creativity. Intellectual growth can enhance self-esteem and provide a sense of accomplishment.

Treat

St. Leonard's promotes a culture of compassion and understanding, where students and all adults are encouraged to consider the feelings and perspectives of their peers. Acts of kindness and mutual respect foster positive relationships and contribute to a supportive school community.

Salvation

The sense of purpose, hope, and community that often accompanies salvation can provide individuals with a strong support system, helping them to combat feelings of loneliness and despair. By cultivating feelings of peace, acceptance, and spiritual connection, salvation can contribute to a sense of inner calm and resilience, leading to improved mental health outcomes.

Recognizing the vital role parents play in their child's well-being, we actively involve them in our mental health initiatives. We provide workshops and information sessions on topics such as stress management, building resilience, and promoting positive mental health within the family. By fostering strong partnerships with parents, we collectively create a nurturing environment that supports the overall well-being of our pupils.

At St Leonard's Church of England Primary School, we understand that a healthy mind is the foundation for a successful education. By prioritizing mental health, we empower our pupils, staff, and families to thrive academically, emotionally and spiritually.

At St Leonard's Church of England Primary School, the mental health and well-being of students are nurtured by integrating Christian values into the understanding and management of emotions. By providing a supportive environment that aligns with Christian teachings on love, compassion, and respect, the school ensures that each child not only thrives emotionally but also grows spiritually, fostering a holistic approach to their overall well-being.

Joy

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds. Because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance" James 1: 2-3

Sadness

"The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Psalm 34:18

Anxiety

"When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy" Psalm 94: 19

Envy

"A heart of peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones" Proverbs 14: 30

Fear

"I sought the lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears" Psalm 34:4

Disgust

"Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behaviour. Instead, be kind to each other, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you" Ephesians 4:31-32

Anger

"In your anger do not sin: do not let the sun go down while you are still angry"

Ephesians 4: 26-27

Lazy

"Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the lord enthusiastically" Romans 12: 11

Embarrassment

"For the spirit god does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline" 2 Timothy 1:7

At St Leonard's we define Mental Health and Wellbeing 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

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:

- Senior Mental Health/Wellbeing Lead – Matthew Gaukroger
- Pupil and family wellbeing and support office – Daniel O’Connor
- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Matthew Gaukroger
- Designated Deputy Safeguarding leads –Jennifer Entwistle, Chris Taylor, Daniel O’Connor
- Safeguarding Governor – Simon Butterworth
- SENCO – Rachel Bradley
- PSHE Coordinator – Rumana Aktar

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.

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

St. Leonard's uses the *MyHappyMind* program as a structured approach to support the mental health and well-being of its students, which in turn reinforces the National Curriculum and the school's overall ethos.

1. Mental Health and Well-being:

- The *MyHappyMind* program is designed to build positive mental health habits in children, which aligns with the National Curriculum's focus on developing students' social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH).
- Through activities and lessons, students learn about mindfulness, resilience, and emotional regulation, which are essential skills in both personal development and academic success.

2. Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education:

- The program directly supports the PSHE curriculum by providing structured lessons on self-awareness, managing emotions, and building positive relationships.
- It helps students to better understand themselves and others, promoting a positive school environment that enhances learning across all subjects.

3. **Character Education:**

- By focusing on character strengths, *MyHappyMind* helps students develop traits such as perseverance, teamwork, and empathy.
- These traits are not only part of the PSHE framework but also contribute to a holistic education, supporting academic performance and personal growth.

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

At St. Leonard's, all staff members have access to supervision every fortnight through Andrea at FreeFlow Counselling. This regular supervision provides a crucial support system for staff, ensuring they have a dedicated space to discuss their well-being, manage the emotional demands of their roles, and receive guidance on how to best support students' mental health.

By offering this service, St. Leonard's emphasizes the importance of staff well-being, recognizing that a supported and mentally healthy staff is better equipped to create a positive and nurturing learning environment for students. This supervision not only benefits the individual staff members but also enhances the overall well-being of the school community.

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 SLT.

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
- Young Carers
- Pupil and Wellbeing Officer
- Early Help service

In addition, we offer the following provision in house:

- Drawing and Talking Therapy
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)
- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)
- Dove Self-Esteem Project
- National Autistic Society's SPELL framework
- Individual Mentoring
- MyHappyMind
- Starving the Gremlin Programme
- Dr Sharie Coombes (Mindful Kids) Activities
- Use of restorative approach
- Zones of Regulation
- Resilience Group
- Forest Schools Nurture Group
- Circle of Friends
- School based Play Therapy (Freeflow Counselling – Jeanette)

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 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, including our policy, visit the Policies 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
- 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
- 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.
- We are part of the Human Resources Service level Agreement giving staff access to the Staff Wellbeing and Counselling Service.
- We organise several social events throughout the year for staff to participate in.
- We provide lunch on INSET dates to promote good relationships and give time for staff to socialize
- Wellbeing Wednesday contributes to a positive school culture by prioritizing mental health and well-being
- 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 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.
- 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 and mental health and wellbeing training for all teachers has been delivered. 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.

Headteacher, Chris Taylor, 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



"CONSIDER IT PURE **JOY**,
MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS,
WHENEVER YOU FACE TRIALS
OF MANY KINDS. BECAUSE
YOU KNOW THAT THE TESTING
OF YOUR FAITH PRODUCES
PERSEVERANCE"

JAMES 1:2-3 (NIV)

SADNESS



"THE LORD IS CLOSE TO
THE **BROKENHEARTED**
AND SAVES THOSE WHO
ARE CRUSHED IN SPIRIT"

PSALM 34:18 (NIV)



"IN YOUR **ANGER** DO
NOT SIN": DO NOT LET
THE SUN GO DOWN
WHILE YOU ARE STILL **ANGRY**"

EPHESIANS 4:26-27 (NIV)

EMBARRASSMENT



"FOR THE SPIRIT
GOD DOES NOT MAKE
US TIMID, BUT
GIVES US POWER, LOVE
AND SELF DISCIPLINE"

2 TIMOTHY 1:7

ANXIETY



"WHEN ANXIETY WAS
GREAT WITHIN ME, YOUR
CONSOLATION BROUGHT
ME JOY"

PSALM 94:19 (NIV)



FEAR

"I SOUGHT THE LORD,
AND HE ANSWERED ME;
HE DELIVERED ME FROM
ALL MY FEARS"

PSALM 34:4 (NIV)



"A HEART OF PEACE
GIVES LIFE TO THE
BODY, BUT ENVY ROTS
THE BONES"

PROVERBS 14:30 (NIV)

ENVY



"NEVER BE LAZY,
BUT WORK HARD AND
SERVE THE LORD
ENTHUSIASTICALLY" ///

ROMANS 12:11 (NLT)

DISGUST



"GET RID OF ALL BITTERNESS,
RAGE, ANGER, HARSH WORDS, AND
SLANDER, AS WELL AS ALL TYPES OF
EVIL BEHAVIOR. INSTEAD, BE KIND
TO EACH OTHER, TENDERHEARTED,
FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER, JUST
AS GOD THROUGH CHRIST HAS
FORGIVEN YOU"

EPHESIANS 4:31-32 (NLT)