Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Date Approved	Committee responsible for review of policy	Next Review Date	Policy on Website	Statutory Policy
January 2026	FGB	January 2027	No	No

Headteacher: Mrs Emma Humphrey

1. Why Mental Health and Wellbeing is Important

The Department for Education (DfE) issued the guidance Mental health and behaviour in schools in June 2014. It is regularly updated. The guidance recognises that all pupils will benefit from learning and developing in a well ordered school environment that fosters and rewards good behaviour and sanctions poor and disruptive behaviour.

Mental health and wellbeing is extremely important to us at Anstey. We aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our school community including staff and pupils. We pursue this aim through both whole-school approaches within the curriculum and school environment, and specific, targeted interventions aimed at vulnerable pupils. This policy aims to aid consistency in the approach and equality of provision for our pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we strive to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, five out of thirty children are likely to be suffering with a mental health issue. It is evident that mental health conditions have become more common among children and young people; there has been a 60% rise in probable mental health conditions in children aged 6-16 since 2017. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures, we can provide and safe and secure environment for our pupils to be open about their mental health and wellbeing and therefore seek help if necessary.

Targeting mental health and wellbeing in the primary school years is key – 50% of all mental health issues start by the age of 14. Therefore, it is our duty as education providers to ensure our mental health provision is thorough for our pupils at Anstey to identify and prevent these issues at an early stage.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and is intended as guidance for all staff and governors.

This policy sets out:

- What mental health and wellbeing is and why it is important
- How we promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- Who is responsible for mental health and wellbeing at Anstey and what their roles specifically entail
- How we aim to prevent mental health issues
- How we identify and support pupils with mental health needs
- How we train and support staff to understand mental health needs and spot early warning signs
- What provision we have in place to support pupils and staff with their wellbeing
- Key information about common mental health issues
- Where parents, staff and pupils can access advice and support

3. Definition of Mental Health and Wellbeing

The World Health Organisation define mental health and wellbeing as 'a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.'

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health issues. We want all children and young people to:

- Feel confident in themselves
- Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
- Be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- Learn and achieve
- Be the best they can be

4. Links to other Policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Child Protection, Relationships & Behaviour, Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, Accessibility, SEN, Relationships and Sex Education, Nurture Group, Physical Intervention, Drugs Education, Bereavement, and Equalities.

The links to the Behaviour policy are important in particular because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressive or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need. We consider behaviour to be a message and seek to explore the reason for this behaviour.

5. A Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise.

We aim to:

- Create an ethos, policies and behaviours that promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- Support pupils, staff, parents and carers to understand these
- Help pupils to develop social relationships and support each other
- Ensure that pupils know how to access support and have relationships with key adults who can help them do this
- Promote resilience and growth mind-set within our learners
- Teach pupils social and emotional skills
- Teach about mental health issues within our curriculum and beyond to reduce stigma
- Ensure early identification takes place within our rigorous reporting systems
- Effectively work with parents and carers
- Support and train staff to develop their skills and resilience
- Promote staff wellbeing to create a harmonious environment
- Staff can refer pupils to the Pupil wellbeing team using appendix 1

In addition, we have an 'open door policy' for both staff and children. We aim to ensure children, staff, parents and carers feel that they can communicate with any member of the staff in the school about any concern.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Although we believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, we have specific members of staff who are specifically concerned with mental health and wellbeing as part of their roles. These include:

Emma Humphrey	Headteacher, DSL
Holly Colbert	Deputy Headteacher, SENCo, Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, DSL
Megan Morgan	Senior Mental Health Lead, PSHE Leader, Pupil Wellbeing Team
Jo Dorans	Family Support Worker, Pupil Wellbeing Team
Suzanne Franklin	Thrive Practitioner, Nurture Group Leader, Pupil Wellbeing Team
Ellie Grundy	ELSA, Pupil Wellbeing Team
Heather Eastman	Thrive Practitioner, Pupil Wellbeing Team

The role of the Senior Mental Health Lead is to:

- Champion the commitment of the school to deliver excellent outcomes for staff and pupil wellbeing
- Lead on and work with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health
- Advise and support staff, organising training and updates
- Keep staff up-to-date with information about what support is available
- Ensure the PSHE curriculum appropriately caters for teaching about mental health and wellbeing through cross-curricular approaches and themed events

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience concerns with their mental health and wellbeing, such as physical long term illnesses, death and loss, family breakdown and bullying. They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy. Through their teaching of the PSHE curriculum, they deliver and discuss a range of age-appropriate topics that contribute to positive mental health and wellbeing for pupils.

We use specialist trained staff for certain interventions such as Nurture group, Thrive & ELSA.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional concerns can be supported within the school environment, but some may need advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of professionals and organisations that provide support for these pupils. Support includes:

- SENCo
- Designated Safeguarding Leads/Child Protection Team
- Play Therapy Service
- CAMHS
- Nurture Group

- Thrive
- ELSA
- Educational Psychologist
- Primary Behaviour Service (PBS)
- Family Support Worker (internal)
- Intensive Family Support Workers (external)
- Children's Services – Social Workers

The Designated Safeguarding Leads can make referrals based on pupils' needs if they require these additional support services. Parents and carers can discuss any issues related to mental health and wellbeing with any of the Anstey staff and this will be passed on to the relevant staff member if necessary. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

7. Supporting Pupils' Positive Mental Health

We believe we have a key role in promoting pupils' positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health issues. Our school implements a range of strategies and approaches including:

Transition Support

- Support for vulnerable children, for example social stories to prepare them for change
- Transition meetings with parents/carers, previous teachers, pupils and previous schools
- Pupil Passports for children with SEND
- Key adults may support transition for particular pupils
- Visits leading up to transition to include various parts of the school day
- SENDCo to SENDCo and DSL to DSL transitions to pass on necessary information
- Parental visits to specialist provision schools supported a member of staff
- Staff to attend mediation meetings for specialist school places
- Parent information meetings
- Meet the teacher evenings in September

Class Activities

- Circle time to discuss various situations
- Recognition boards
- Mindfulness activities in class e.g. meditation/breathing exercises
- Show and tell

School Environment

- Displays and information about positive mental health
- Safe spaces such as the sensory room or Calm Club
- Restorative behaviour management, 'team around the child' approach

Assemblies

- Half termly SEAL themes including:
  New Beginnings
  Getting on and Falling Out

Relationships
Changes
Going for Goals
It's Good to be Me

- Celebration Assemblies to celebrate achievements and promote positive self-esteem

Themed Weeks/Initiatives

- Mental Health Week with themed activities and assemblies
- Initiatives such as WOW Walk to school tracker and 'Eat Them to Defeat Them'

Curriculum Provision

- PSHE Curriculum with developed learning journeys for all staff including on the following themes:
  Relationships (Autumn term)
  Health and Wellbeing (Spring term)
  Living in the Wider World (Summer term)
  Relationships and Sex Education (RSE, Summer term)
- We follow the Christopher Winter Project resources for our RSE curriculum. More details can be found within our RSE policy on the website.
- Through these learning journeys, we teach the knowledge and skills that will support pupils to understand about mental health and therefore reduce stigma, develop resilience and provide strategies to cope with negative emotions and change
- Developing community links within curriculum activities such as visits to local care homes

Small Group Activities

- Small social/friendship groups within interventions and ELSA sessions
- Calm Club at lunchtimes
- Brain breaks in small groups or individually with an adult for children who may feel overwhelmed or as part of a behaviour plan
- Nurture support
- Thrive

8. Early Identification

We follow statutory safeguarding legislation and guidance, such as the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) document. All staff who work at Anstey are trained annually on safeguarding and as a result, are clear on signs of abuse and mental health issues. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with children.

The KCSiE states that:

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of

developing one. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Some of the signs of negative mental health and wellbeing that staff are trained to look out for and report are:

- Non-verbal behaviour
- Isolation from friends and family
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity, mood, sleeping or eating habits
- Declining academic achievement
- Discussing self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or hopelessness
- A decline in attendance
- An increase in lateness
- Not wanting to take part in or get changed for PE
- Drug or alcohol use
- Physical signs of harm that appear non-accidental
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Repeated physical pain or illness with no evident cause

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the school's child protection procedures are followed.

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent any further negative impact on the child or the people close to them. These processes include:

- Identifying individuals who might need support through regular conversation among staff members
- Diligent recording of concerns on our safeguarding reporting system CPOMs and discussion with DSLs
- Working closely with the school office team who are often the first point of contact for families
- Transition conversations with previous teachers or previous schools
- 'Safe Tell' cards for pupils to identify that they need to speak to an adult at a convenient time
- An open environment whereby pupils and families feel confident to raise concerns with school staff if necessary
- 'Worry Monster' in the library for children to express worries or feelings that they would like to write down or to deposit safe tell cards for a future discussion with a teacher

9. Working with Specialist Services

In some cases, a pupil's mental health needs may require support from a specialist service. These might include a diagnosed mental health need such as anxiety or depression. We have regular contact with services to review support and consider next steps as part of the monitoring of pupils' provision.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by a Designated Safeguarding Lead following an assessment of their needs and in consultation with the pupil and their parents or carers.

10. Involving Parents and Carers

Where it is deemed appropriate to involve a parent or carer in a mental health or wellbeing concern, we will be sensitive in our approach. We will consider the aims of the meeting and ideally meet face to face unless this is not suitable. Parents and carers will be given time to reflect as we understand that this can be a shocking and upsetting time if your child develops a mental health concern. We will always finish a meeting with an agreed next step and keep a brief record on the child's confidential CPOMs record.

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support on our website (some can be found within our policy)
- Ensure that all parents and carers are aware of who to talk to
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents and carers
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health through communication in newsletters, open evenings and during themed weeks such as Mental Health Week
- Keep parents and carers informed about topics children are learning about in the curriculum that relate to mental health and wellbeing
- Discuss specific plans such as Pupil Passports or behaviour plans with parents and carers
- Provide information on external courses and, on occasion, invite parents in to complete free training on mental health
- Provide parents with information on the skills required to talk to their children about mental health

11. Involving Pupils

Pupil voice is extremely important to us at Anstey. Feedback from pupils supports us to review and improve our provision, especially when it directly affects their mental health and wellbeing. Our pupil voice strategies include:

- School Council
- Pupil conferencing conducted by the Senior Mental Health Lead/PSHE Leader
- Pupil Passports for pupils with SEN developed in conversation with the class teacher
- Pupil views for Personal Education Plan reviews
- Pupil involvement in the development of behaviour plans
- Committee meetings e.g. Eco Committee
- Anonymous question/feedback boxes during PSHE topics such as Relationships and Sex Education

12. Supporting Staff

Within the whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, this also includes the staff at Anstey. Staff wellbeing is extremely important and contributes to a positive, harmonious environment. We are committed to ensuring our staff feel comfortable to share concerns within school and are aware of how to access support if needed.

We aim to provide our teachers with a healthy work-life balance, ensuring we also engage as a team in social activities to promote positive wellbeing and opportunities to relax with others.

Staff can access mental health and wellbeing support through the following links that are shared in the Staff Handbook:

www.educationsupport.org.uk
https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/

Hampshire employee support helpline: **0800 028 0199**

Anstey is committed to ensure staff wellbeing is a high priority and a staff wellbeing action plan will be created and reviewed. Staff feedback is critical to understanding general wellbeing so regular surveys will also be undertaken.

Role of all staff

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff
- Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

Role of line managers

Line managers are expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help

- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Promote information about and access to external support services
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that lead to their resignation

Role of senior staff

The SLT member who is responsible for staff wellbeing will liaise with the Head teacher and the Governor body.

Senior staff are expected to:

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through anonymous wellbeing data that is collected annually
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up-to-date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes
- Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- Promote information about and access to external support services
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections

Role of the governing board

SLT will feed into FGB their findings and recommendations.

The governing board is expected to:

- Make sure the school is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the headteacher
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff and pupil wellbeing
- Make decisions and review policies with staff and pupil wellbeing in mind, particularly in regards to staff workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them
- Review wellbeing data, i.e. staff exit interviews, staff surveys, absence.

13. Sources of Support

Hampshire Suicide Prevention and Postvention Protocol for Schools and Colleges - This document provides practice help and support for schools and colleges to consider following the death by suspected suicide of a student or a member of staff. The document is there to help education settings navigate through such a challenging time, providing vital information about the steps to take and signposting to support available for the whole school/college community.

Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing – Public Heath England guidance for headteachers and college principals on the 8 principles for promoting emotional health and wellbeing in schools and colleges.

Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges – Department of Education support for helping to develop a whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Research and analysis - Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools - A project to understand how policies that schools publish support their mental health provision. Includes information on statutory duties and pupil wellbeing, October 2018.

Links to information and support about mental health and wellbeing:

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk
OCD UK www.ocduk.org
Depression Alliance www.depressionalliance.org
Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com
National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk
Self-Harm www.selfharm.co.uk
Bereavement www.simonsays.org.uk

www.youngminds.org.uk
www.mind.org.uk
www.minded.org.uk
www.time-to-change.org.uk

www.rethink.org
www.annafreud.org
https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy was created in collaboration with the Senior Leadership team, teaching team and Pupil Wellbeing team and approved by the governing board. Its effectiveness will be monitored by SLT and the Pupil Wellbeing team and reported to the governing board. It will be reviewed annually and updated if any changes are made to the information during the year.

Appendix 1

Wellbeing Team Referral Form

Name of Pupil: **Class:** **DoB:**

Strengths / Interests of the Child

What specifically is causing you concern? *Evidence*	**When?** *Analysis*	**How is this impacting on the child?** *Analysis*	**Why / What is the child's behaviour communicating?** *Analysis*

What support / strategies have been put in place / tried?	**Impact of Actions to Date**

Child's View	**Parent's Views**	**Teacher's View**

Initial Meeting Notes:

Onward Support Pathway agreed by SLT:

☐ Family Support ☐ ELSA ☐ Nurture ☐ Year group intervention

Actions Agreed:	**Signed by:**
	……..….. *(Deputy Head / SENDCo)*

	…….. *(Class Teacher)* …… *(Parent)*

Timescale agreed to review:	

Review Meeting Notes: **Date:** _____
What has the impact of this intervention been? How are things different from before the intervention?

Onward support Pathway agreed by SLT (Assess Plan Do Review Cycle 2) :

☐ Family Support ☐ ELSA ☐ Nurture ☐ Year group intervention

Actions Agreed:	**Signed by:**
	…….. *(Deputy Head / SENDCo)* …….. *(Class Teacher)* …… *(Parent)*

Timescale agreed to review:	