



The Orchard Vision: *Inspiring Success*
Values: *Determination, Courage, Respect*

The Orchard Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

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Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

1. School Aims

We want our school to be a **centre of excellence** for learning- for children and adults and our wider community. We want to create a school where:

- Children are safe, happy and healthy
- Children make outstanding progress and are confident, independent, enthusiastic and determined learners
- Staff are inspirational practitioners, able and enthusiastic to learn from and develop others
- Everyone shows respect and consideration for other people

We want to grow through supporting and developing other schools and continuing to learn ourselves.

2. Policy Aims and Values

This policy sets out:

- • How we promote positive mental health.
- • How we prevent mental health problems.
- • How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
- • How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems
- • Key information about some common mental health problems.
- • Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support.

[Links with other policies](#)

This policy is a guide for all teaching and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach and commitment to promoting and supporting positive mental health and wellbeing in the whole school community. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Orchard Policies

- Behaviour
- Anti -Bullying
- PSHE
- Peer on Peer Abuse, Sexual Violence and Harassment
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- KCSIE (2021)

3. Definition of mental health and wellbeing

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing

“ a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”.

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

- • feel confident in themselves.
- • be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- • be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- • cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- • manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.
- • learn and achieve.

4. A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health

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

This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
3. Helping children to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

5. Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

Head, Designated Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead:

Mrs Carol Rusby

Deputy Designated Child Protection/Safeguarding and School Wellbeing Lead:

Ms Chloe Turi

SENCO:

Mrs Anna Barkway-Smith

RSHE Co-ordinator:

Miss Bethany Jackson

Emotional Literacy Support Assistant:

Mrs Jane Denton

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a pupil or other staff member, in the first instance they should speak to our Designated Mental Health Lead – Ms Chloe Turi.

All staff should also 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. 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.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

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

If a child or staff member presents a medical emergency then relevant procedures must be followed, including involving the emergency services.

6. Supporting children's positive mental health

We believe the School has a key role in promoting children positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

Whole school:

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health including World Mental Health Day and Anti-Bullying

- Transition Programme between year groups and to junior school to secondary schools which to reduce stress and support a smooth transition
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support
- ELSA interventions for identified children

Class activities:

- Worry boxes - where children can anonymously share worries or concerns in class
- Circle times
- Classroom Resilience Remedies
- Zones of Regulation displays
- Teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing

RSHCE provision:

Through our whole school RSHE scheme of work we teach social and emotional skills to develop children's confidence and resilience including managing feelings and what to do if they are feeling worried or upset.

6. Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs

Our approach is to encourage and support children to express themselves and be listened to in a safe environment.

All staff have a responsibility to facilitate and support positive mental health. We aim to spot the early warning signs of mental health issues and to identify appropriate support for the children based on their needs. We involve parents and carers wherever possible and also the children themselves in the care and support they need in School.

We take a whole-community approach towards the mental health of our pupils. Our aim is to support the whole family if possible, but we recognise that we are teachers not mental health professionals. This means regular communication with parents explaining our concerns if appropriate and giving parents guidance about who they can talk to about their children's mental health problems. We involve parents and carers, advise parents to engage the services of mental health professionals if required, and work with professional partners and agencies where necessary.

Wellbeing measures include:

- staff observations
- Any changes in a child's behaviour, attention, or presentation
- Any communication from the pupils regarding their emotions, feelings, or wellbeing.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, should speak to the Ms Chloe Turi (mental health lead) in the first instance. If there is a concern that the child is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the safeguarding lead staff or the head teacher. If the child presents with 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.

In some case a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders.

We have access to a range of specialist services and during the support will have regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the children's Individual Care Plan.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Lead or the SENCO following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Main Specialist Service	Referral process
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	Accessed through school, GP or self-referral
Educational Psychologist	Accessed through the Mental Health Lead or SENDCO

7. Working with All Parents and Carers

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:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues and behaviours on our school website.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who they can talk to, and how to get the support they need 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 and emotional wellbeing in their children through our regular review meetings.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in RSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

8. Disclosures by children of mental health concerns

Our School recognises the importance of staff remaining calm, supportive and non-judgemental with children who disclose a concern. Staff should make it clear to the children that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead to help them and get the support they need. Staff understand they need to listen, not advise.

9. Interventions and support

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Lead and recorded. The Mental Health Lead assesses the level of need to ensure the child gets the appropriate support from within School or from an external health professional. We aim to put early interventions in place wherever possible and to prevent problems escalating.

Following an assessment by the Mental Health Lead;

- a plan will be put in place setting out how the pupil will be supported;
- action needed to provide that support; and
- regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of the provision and changes made where necessary.

We have access to a range of specialist services, including CAMHS. We involve the children themselves and their parents or carers, and if appropriate put in place support for their friends/peers in School. We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate.

10. Staff Identification

The school is committed to achieving a healthy workforce by placing value on both physical and mental health. Mental health problems can be triggered by stress arising from the workplace or outside work and mental wellbeing at work is determined by the interaction between the working environment, the nature of the work and the individual. We would like to create a working environment that promotes and supports the wellbeing of all employees and encourages employee to take responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing. The school recognises that mental health issues can be triggered by excessive levels of work-related stress and that they have a duty of care to take measures, as reasonably practicable, to preserve the mental health and wellbeing of its employees whilst at work.

The school aims to:

- Build and maintain a workplace environment and culture that supports mental health and wellbeing and prevents discrimination;
- Increase employee knowledge and awareness of mental health, including stress, and wellbeing issues and behaviours;
- Promote a positive working environment that does not adversely impact on the mental health and wellbeing of employees;
- Support the effectiveness of its employees to enable them to fulfil the demands of their role;
- Ensure that employees who have, or who have had, symptoms of mental ill health are treated responsibly and in an understanding manner.

The school recognises that most people who experience mental health difficulties recover and learn to manage their symptoms, especially if they are supported in the early stages.

It is recognised at The Orchard, 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 sharing materials in regard to mental health and emotional wellbeing will be made available for **all** staff. Should staff need to discuss any concerns, we have always operated an 'open door policy' to senior leadership and we have a fully committed, supportive governing body.

Latest review: March 2022
Next review: March 2023