

**Nanpean Community Primary School**  
*Nurturing Children's Passion to Succeed*



**Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**  
*Headteacher: Mr Nicholls*  
*Chair of Governors: Mr Tucker*

**Approved by Governors (Date): July 2024**  
**Next Review (Date): September 2027**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The 'Young Minds' website states that 1 in 10 children and young people aged 5 – 16 years old (school age) have a diagnosable Mental Health disorder. This statistic alone is alarming and would equate to approximately 3 children in each class. There has also been a huge increase of people in this age range being admitted to hospital in the last 10 years for self harming (an increase of 68% in this 10 year period). Reports also continue to state that many adults with Mental Health problems were diagnosed when they were children. However, less than 50% of these people were treated correctly at the time, which is likely to have led to further Mental Health issues. Alarming for Primary Schools, latest research has shown that over 8,000 children under 10 years old have severe depression, and many more have anxiety related issues. These statistics clearly show the sharp rise in Mental Health, and therefore Wellbeing, issues amongst children over the last ten years. Many people will speculate as to why this is, with most pointing in some way towards the media, but at Nanpean School, we firmly believe that it is a time to act to reverse this upward trend in children.

## **Defining Mental Health**

Mental health is 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. (World Health Organization)

As teachers, we define mental wellbeing as children and young people's happiness, life satisfaction and positive functioning- "Children and young people feeling good, feeling that their life is going well, and feeling able to get on with their daily lives."

At Nanpean School, we aim to influence pupil mental wellbeing through providing a supportive culture, ethos and environment that can serve as a buffer to difficult circumstances, teaching and learning that helps pupils to build important life skills, through PSHE strategies such as learning to learn, habits of mind and the growth mindset; supporting the development of skills and character traits such as self-management, compassion and team work (e.g. as part of PSHE and character education); and through positive partnerships with families including parents/carers and the wider community.

We also aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff as well as all pupils. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. As stated previously, in an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health. **Mental health affects all aspects of life and behaviour.**

## **Who is covered by this policy?**

This policy applies to all pupils who attend, and all staff who work at Nanpean CP School, irrespective of their role. This policy encourages the mental health and wellbeing of all staff and children.

## **Context and Rationale**

Mental Health and Wellbeing promotes school success and improvements by:

- Promoting positive mental and emotional wellbeing by providing information and support.
- Creating a shared understanding of all aspects of mental health.
- Enabling those with mental health related issues to self-disclose and seek support in a safe confidential manner.
- Offering guidance and strategies to support pupils and staff to be mentally healthy.
- Creating a culture to support and maintain positive mental health and wellbeing.

## **Safeguarding**

Nanpean CP School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school and beyond. We are fully committed to safeguarding our pupils through prevention, protection and support. We are also committed to actively promoting the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The pupils are encouraged to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in, and contribute positively to, life in modern Britain. It is our duty to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent terrorism. Any concerns should be referred to the DSL or a DDSL, who have local contact details for PREVENT and Channel referrals.

## **AIMS**

The purpose of this policy is to have:

### ***General***

- Resilient, happier and more motivated pupils and staff who get more out of life.

### ***Teaching and Learning***

- Pupils who are more engaged in the learning process.
- Pupils who can concentrate and learn better.
- Improved standards and attainment in all subjects.
- More effective teaching.
- Parents and carers who are more involved in school life and their children's learning.

### ***Behaviour and Attendance***

- Good concentration, behaviour and attendance.
- Positive peer relationships.
- Pupils with high self-esteem and confidence.
- Pupils who have a say in what happens at school.
- More engaged learners.

## ***Staff Confidence and Development***

- High morale.
- Staff with positive wellbeing (which in turn should lead to lower staff absence).
- A stable, content and consistent workforce.
- Positive and effective relationships with pupils.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Nanpean School is committed to promoting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils and staff. We are at a stage where every single member of staff needs to take responsibility for being aware of pupils' mental health as well as a physical health. To promote mental health and emotional wellbeing, our school will:

### **Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing (Prevention)**

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 PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance, through implemented planning created by the Cornwall Healthy Schools team, to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. We will:

- Encourage and support the whole school community to be positive in its approach to mental health wellbeing.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of both internal and external support services.
- Provide guidance and support to all those connected with the organisation to help them develop confidence in their ability to manage mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Provide appropriate training and information to staff on mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Have named staff who are part of a Wellbeing team (each academic year), who are the contact point at Nanpean School and who are responsible for coordination and delivery of the school's mental health and emotional wellbeing strategy.
- Seek to integrate mental health and emotional support across the curriculum.

## Addressing Needs (mechanisms to support children and staff)

- Promote a culture which supports and encourages self-disclosure through an open and supportive team.
- Recognise that staff have the responsibility to alert others to potential and actual indicators of mental health needs and to take this action whenever necessary.
- Co-operate with other organisations involved in the delivery of mental health and emotional support services – ‘CAMHS’, ‘Younger Minds’, GPs, School Nurse, School Nurses, Family Support Workers, etc...
- Observe the principles of confidentiality and data protection in respect of mental health and emotional wellbeing.

## 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 Mr Nicholls, our mental health and emotional wellbeing lead. 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.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Unwillingness to take part in PE activities or getting changed secretly.
- Lateness to or absence from school.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.
- An increase in lateness or absence.

## The Wellbeing Test

This very simple test has been developed to aid staff in determining if a pupil may be in need of a wellbeing-style structured conversation. It is scored as follows:

Score Indicator	0	1	2
<i>Smiling</i>	Looks glum	Occasionally smiles	Smiles readily
<i>Appearance</i>	Scruffy	Generally well-kempt	Cares about appearance
<i>Attendance and Effort</i>	A persistent absentee, frequently late. Gives	Attendance rate of 90-95%, sometimes	Attendance rate above 95%, rarely

	little or no effort to activities.	late. Variable effort given in lessons / activities.	late. Good effort in lessons / activities.
<i>Talking with Peers</i>	Often sits alone and rarely speaks.	Will speak but often only when prompted.	Talks readily with peers.
<i>Talking with Adults</i>	Rarely engages with adults.	Will talk with an adult when prompted.	Talks readily with adults.

A pupil who scores a 7 or higher is considered to have good emotional wellbeing, while a score of 3 or lower may indicate the need for a structured conversation with our Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead, Mr Nicholls.

## **SUPPORTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN STAFF (RESPONSIBILITIES)**

The Governing Body's 'duty of care' towards employees, legislation and case law, require them to manage and safeguard the physical and psychological well-being of the school's employees.

It is vital that all staff are aware of relevant policies and of the role all employees undertake to ensure we all work in a healthy workplace.

The Governing Body will continue to promote and work towards performance improvement and efficiency, getting the very best from our staff, retaining and attracting the people who are best skilled and well-motivated.

Wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improved wellbeing at work. Addressing workplace wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce the risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health.

To fulfil this commitment the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team will:

- Make health and wellbeing a core priority. Value the strategic importance and benefits of a healthy workplace. We will encourage a consistent, positive approach to all staff health and wellbeing.
- Continually consider employees' health and wellbeing alongside the need for improved performance.
- Ensure all Leaders, including Senior Leaders and Governors, are committed to the health and wellbeing of staff and act as good role models.
- Make communication clear to ensure that staff have realistic expectations of what's possible, practical and affordable.
- Be aware that a return to work from sickness does not necessarily indicate that an employee's health and wellbeing has improved. Return to work interview takes into account that aggressive return to work procedures can encourage presenteeism to the detriment of our school.
- Recruit staff who have the positive traits associated with improved staff health and wellbeing. These traits include being open and approachable and encouraging new ideas.

- Ensure health and wellbeing policies are included in any induction, training and development programmes for new staff.
- Have a proactive and visible commitment to health and safety and its role in improving the health and wellbeing of staff, that is, view health and safety as part of the culture of a caring and supportive employer – not only a statutory requirement.
- Create a supportive environment that enables employees to be proactive when and if possible to protect and enhance their own health and wellbeing.
- Increase awareness and understanding of how to promote wellbeing at work and the avoidance of absence.
- Ensure advice and guidance is available.
- Ensure that there is a culture where there is no expectation that staff communicate about work outside of normal working hours (except in an emergency, eg child protection issues).
- Ensure that all staff take part in a supportive performance management process.
- Conduct occasional staff surveys in order to collate information from all staff groups, which will inform future strategies to support the health and wellbeing of staff.
- Where possible, staff are supported with their work/life balance and wellbeing outside of school. Examples of this could include providing staff with paid leave for both special events and celebrations, and time off to deal with family issues, if appropriate.
- All staff are encouraged to take a responsible approach to health and wellbeing issues, including adopting a robust self-management to their own health.