Mental Health and Well Being Policy

Reviewed by: A M Owens/J Leonard – September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Reviewed by	Section Number / Appendix Name	Date of Amendment
AMO	Overview – role/name changes	03.09.26

Our Vision Statement

"A world class centre of outstanding learning"

To achieve this we:

- are embracing the principles of lifelong learning, best use of new technology and "visible learning"
- are developing an international understanding of our place in the world
- are developing leaders and critical thinkers of tomorrow
- are meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014

School Mission Statement

"Together we're better"

Our guiding principles are:

- we work closely with our community
- we broaden our pupils' perspectives
- we teach understanding and respect for others
- we value everyone's abilities and support each other

Our core values:
Acceptance
Fairness
Trust
Equality
Respect

Principles

- At The Valley Community Primary School we recognise that we have a central role to play in enabling our pupils to be resilient, and to support good mental health and wellbeing.
- Education about relationships, sex and health are important vehicles through which we can teach pupils about mental health and wellbeing.
- A consistent whole school approach is essential to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.
- School staff cannot act as mental health experts and must not try and diagnose conditions. However, there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems.
- As set out in chapter 6 of the statutory SEND 0-25 years Code of Practice 2015, school needs to be alert to how mental health problems can underpin behaviour issues in order to support pupils effectively. Staff also need to be aware of the duties under the Equality Act 2010, recognising that some mental health issues will meet the definition of disability.
- When staff suspect a pupil may have a mental health problem, they must use the graduated response process (assess-plan-do-review) to put appropriate support in place. There are a tools in school to support with this.
- It is important that staff at The Valley Community Primary School have an understanding of the local services available, including the School Nurse, as well as national organisations. The school's Designated Lead for Mental Health will work closely with the SENCO in order to ensure that the list of local services available remains up to date.

The senior leadership team (SLT), governing body and school staff will work towards an ethos where everyone is valued, where respect, empathy and honesty are the cornerstones of all school relationships and where health and wellbeing are held central to school practice. We expect all staff and pupils to show respect and empathy for each other, and to treat confidential information sensitively and according to school policy.

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Fulfilling its duty of care as an employer.
- Monitoring the workload of the headteacher.
- Receiving any concerns from members of staff.
- Ensuring that the resources are in place to keep staff workload at healthy levels.
- Reviewing this policy in conjunction with the headteacher.
- Considering how its own members are treated and valued.
- Ensuring that demands are not placed on individual members of staff that interfere unfairly with their work-life balance.
- Operating a sensitive Appraisal Policy.
- Ensuring that other school policies and procedures take account of staff and pupil wellbeing.
- Overseeing that change management is operated in a fair and reasonable way.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Providing personal and professional development such as team building, management of change, stress management, assertiveness and communication.
- Providing a non-judgemental and confidential support system such as coaching, mentoring and pastoral support for staff and pupils.
- Monitoring the workload of members of staff and being alert to signs of stress.
- Listening to the views of members of staff and pupils and providing a range of strategies involving staff and pupils in school decision making processes.
- Ensuring that the efforts and successes of staff and pupils are acknowledged and celebrated
- Acting as gatekeeper and prioritising reforms and innovations.
- Ensuring that staff are equipped with the right training to do the job confidently.
- Ensuring that staff and pupils feel valued and that time is set aside for them.
- Providing meeting guidelines that are agreed upon and followed.
- Planning the year's timetable considerately bearing in mind staff commitments.
- Providing a set budget for staff facilities, environment and welfare.
- Including in professional development meetings opportunity for staff to discuss their aspirations and career intentions.
- Making special arrangements, where possible, to enable staff to combine the demands of family life and work life.
- Recognising that staff and pupils may have experiences in their personal lives that may make them vulnerable to pressures at work/school, and which may have a temporary influence on their work performance e.g. Health issues, bereavement or loss, or personal circumstances.
- Ensuring accessibility and the accessibility of SLT to members of staff and pupils.
- Ensuring that there are effective methods of communication.
- Ensuring support services are made available or signposted on behalf of members of staff where additional specialist support is needed.
- Maintaining contact with staff and pupils during long absences.
- Ensuring that a mentor system operates within the school and especially for each new members of staff and children new to school and that induction process is put into place.
- Conducting risk assessments for work-related stress.
- Relevant time protected for staff such as PPA, staff meeting time for reports etc.

The headteacher implements these responsibilities with the support of appropriate staff such as the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and pastoral staff and who all strive to be positive role models through their own practice.

At The Valley Community School we know that early intervention is crucial in supporting pupils. The school role in summary is:

Prevention	• We have a safe and calm environment for all pupils, staff and visitors. •Pupils are taught about mental health and wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this through school teaching and ethos.
Identification	•Recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
Early Support	•Helping pupils to assess evidence based early support and Interventions
Access to specialist support	•Working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.
Safeguarding	If staff have a mental health concern that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action must be taken, in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Creating a whole school culture at The Valley Community School

The health and wellbeing of pupils and staff is promoted through the day to day running of the school, including through leadership practice, the school's policies, values and attitudes, together with the social and physical environment.

In addition to this, the health and wellbeing of pupils and staff is further promoted through:

Teaching	• using the curriculum to develop pupil's knowledge about health and wellbeing.
Partnerships	• with families and the community • proactive engagement with families, outside agencies and the wider community o promote consistent support.

We see ourselves as an "oasis of calm" in the "desert of a hectic word"

At The Valley Community School we emphasis the importance of promoting positive mental wellbeing through:

- Teaching through PSHE, including Relationships and Sex Education
- Access to a school counsellor or trained mental health first aider
- Linking with specialist projects
- Positive classroom management in line with the school's behaviour policy, using reasonable adjustments for identified children, where relevant.
- Social skills interventions
- Working with parents and carers to promote positive wellbeing at home

At The Valley Community Primary School there is a mentally healthy environment where children:

- have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging
- have opportunities to participate in decision making (e.g. Class Council and School Council)
- have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements (e.g. Rewards based assembly)
- have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed (e.g. Extra-curricular clubs)
- have opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others. (e.g. residential school trips)
- have opportunities to reflect (e.g. Circle Time and Collective Worship)
- have access to appropriate support that meets their needs (e.g. TA support in class or support from Key Worker)
- are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours and interactions at all times.
- have a right to an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for.
- have a right to a broad and balanced curriculum that helps pupils feel like successful

At The Valley Community Primary School there is a mentally healthy environment where staff:

- have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- have a range of systems in place to support mental well-being e.g. performance management, briefings, training
- have recognition of their work-life balance
- feel valued and have opportunities in the decision making processes
- success is recognised and celebrated
- are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- can access support and guidance at times of emotional need in both the short and long term, provided by the school counsellor and Occupational Health.

At The Valley Community Primary School there is a mentally healthy environment where parents and carers:

- are recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health
- are welcomed, included and work in partnership with the school and agencies
- are provided with opportunities to ask for help when needed and signposted to appropriate agencies for support
- are clear about their role, expectations and responsibilities in working in partnership with the school (e.g. home school agreement shared annually, Parents Meetings)
- Opinions are sought, valued and responded to (e.g. Questionnaires.)
- strengths and difficulties are recognised, acknowledged and challenged appropriately

MEMBERS OF STAFF AND PUPILS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

• Treating one another with empathy, respect and kindness.
• Taking care of their own health and safety at work and communicating with key staff where they need support.
• Being committed to the ethos of staff wellbeing and keeping in mind the workload and wellbeing of colleagues.
• Valuing all members of staff and pupils in the school and acknowledging the important role that everyone takes.
• Contributing to the ethos and social aspects of school life where possible to build morale and effective team spirit.
• Developing and respecting shared areas where possible.

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. Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Designated Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead	Mrs A M Owens
Mental Health First Aiders	Mrs A M Owens (Adult/child) Mrs F Mohammed (Child) Mrs S Bax (Child)
SENCO	Mrs A M Owens
First Aid Lead	Mrs D Lauder
DSL/Pastoral Lead	Mrs J Leonard
CPD Lead	Mrs J Leonard
Named and linked governor: Health and Safety	Mrs A Cullen

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child or young person should log the information on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the child or young person is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures will be followed within school. If the pupil presents 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.

At The Valley Community Primary School will do all that it can to promote the Health and Wellbeing, including mental health, of all who learn and work here. Promoting healthy lifestyle for all will be a priority. We have put into place a number of policies which will be used to promote the health and well-being of pupils and staff.

These include:

• SEND • Behaviour • Attendance • PSHE/INCLUDING RSE	• Anti-bullying • Safeguarding and Child Protection • PE • SMSC

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH TEACHING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

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 developmental PSHE curriculum. We use the Jigsaw approach to teaching PSHE which follows the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional well-being issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

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

PUPIL-LED ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health.
- ✓ Peer mediation and Peer mentoring through the Wellbeing Ambassador Programme. (new)
- ✓ Playground Pals – a lunchtime group supporting children at lunchtime.

TRANSITION PROGRAMMES

- ✓ Transition Programme to secondary schools which includes all Year 6 children having time in their new school before their start date. Additional visits and support is obtained for pupils with EHCP's in place.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

- ✓ Character and Values based assemblies.
- ✓ Jigsaw PSHE Programme.
- ✓ Circle time.
- ✓ Breakfast Club.
- ✓ Wellbeing week/World Mental Health Day.
- ✓ Displays and information around the School about positive mental health and where to go for help and support.
- ✓ Nurture groups.
- ✓ Intervention Groups.
- ✓ Referral System to Wellbeing Lead/SENCO for therapies e.g. Lego Therapy/Drawing and Talking Therapy
- ✓ Behaviour Support Services
- ✓ CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System).
- ✓ Early/Family Help Forms (EHF).
- ✓ Sensory Room.
- ✓ Through PSHE we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems.
- ✓ Key Workers for Individual children.
- ✓ School Nurse.
- ✓ Young carers
- ✓ Mindfullness after school clubs
- ✓ Half-termly drop-ins for Anti-Bullying led by School Council

All staff at The Valley Community Primary School want to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do

and where to get help. The Wellbeing Lead will signpost information for staff wishing to learn more about mental health.

Training opportunities for staff requiring more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of the school's performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate. Where the need to do so becomes evident, the school will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

IDENTIFYING, REFERRING AND SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS WARNING SIGNS

There are often warning signs which indicate a child or young person is experiencing mental health or emotional well-being issues. These warning signs are taken seriously and staff observing any of them should communicate their concerns on CPOMS. While not exhaustive, the list below details possible warning signs as follows:

- ✓ Unusual play (in playground).
- ✓ Unusual drawings (in class).
- ✓ Tendency to isolate themselves.
- ✓ Compulsive lying.
- ✓ Attention seeking.
- ✓ Pulling hair out (self-harm).
- ✓ Hurting other children.
- ✓ No empathy.
- ✓ Anxiety.
- ✓ Hiding inside clothes (making self-invisible).
- ✓ Loud and disruptive.
- ✓ Hiding lunch.
- ✓ Over/under eating.
- ✓ Soiling.

INDIVIDUAL CARE PLANS

On occasions, it might be helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or pupils who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This might include:

- ✓ Details of a pupil's condition.
- ✓ Special requirements and precautions.
- ✓ Medication and any side effects.
- ✓ What to do and who to contact in an emergency.

MANAGING DISCLOSURES

A child or young person may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend/sibling to any member of staff so all staff have been briefed/trained on how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend/sibling to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgmental. Staff should listen rather than advise and the focus should be on the child or young person's emotional and physical safety rather than on exploring 'why?'

All disclosures will be recorded on CPOMs (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) and held on the child or young person's confidential file. This record will include:

- ✓ Main points from the conversation.
- ✓ Agreed next steps.

This information will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and Wellbeing Lead who will offer support and advice about next steps - actions.

RESPONDING TO A CHILD MAKING A DISCLOSURE

It is recognised that a child may seek out an individual teacher/adult to share information specifically about abuse or neglect, or a child may talk spontaneously, individually or in a group when School staff or volunteers are present.

In these situations staffs are required to:

- Listen to the child, and allow the child to freely recall significant events, keeping questions to the absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Reassure the child but tell them that a record of the information given will be made and do this. Include timing, setting and others present. Record the child's demeanour as well as what is said.
- Explain that they cannot promise to keep confidential anything the child says if the matter is related to child protection or abuse.
- Explain that help may be required to keep them safe, but do not ask the child to repeat their account of events to anyone else.
- The individual who receives the information will be expected to pass it on as a matter of urgency to the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Information about a child or young person should not be shared without telling them first, however this is not always possible. Ideally their consent should be received, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and/or a parent. Parents and Carers will be informed if their child is at risk of danger. If it is safe to do so, we will give children the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health needs for themselves, accompanying and supporting them to do so if they would prefer that. If this is the case, the child or young person will be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We will always give a child or young person the option of us informing a parent for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents will not be informed, but the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed immediately and the normal school procedures for safeguarding will be followed.

SUPPORTING PEERS/SIBLINGS

When a child or young person is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends/siblings. Friends/siblings often want to support but do not know how best to do it. The school will seek to support friends/siblings and will consider what is most appropriate on a case-by-case basis. Support will be provided on a one-to-one basis or in a group setting and will be informed by the views of the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom the school will discuss:

- ✓ What is helpful for friends/siblings to know and what they should not be told.
- ✓ How friends/siblings can best support.
- ✓ Things friends/siblings should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset.
- ✓ Warning signs that their friend/sibling may need help (e.g. signs of relapse).

Additionally the school will highlight with peers/siblings:

- ✓ Where and how to access support for themselves.
- ✓ Safe sources of further information about their friend's/sibling's condition.
- ✓ Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

Parents and carers often welcome support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents and carers the school will:

- ✓ Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website.
- ✓ Ensure that all parents/carers are aware of who to talk to and how to arrange this if they

have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child.

- ✓ Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents via our school website
- ✓ Share ideas about how parents/carers can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings.
- ✓ Keep parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

SIGNPOSTING

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as common rooms and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupils seeking help by ensuring pupils understand:

- ✓ What help is available?
- ✓ Who it is aimed at?
- ✓ How to access it?
- ✓ Why to access it?
- ✓ What is likely to happen next?

SUPPORT FOR STAFF IN SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES

The school will provide support and discuss options as appropriate to specific circumstances. In some cases, it may be necessary to seek external services but the school will continue to support even when external services are involved. Staff are encouraged to arrange medical appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, support will be given on an individual basis. Where possible, staff are supported with their work-life balance and wellbeing outside the school. This could be through providing staff with paid leave for special events and celebrations, or time off to deal with specific family circumstances or crisis.

STORING AND MANAGING INFORMATION

Please refer to the whole-school Data Protection Policy for more information. This can be found on our school website.