

# NORTON CP SCHOOL

## Positive Mental Health Policy

2024 - 2025



### Vision Statement

**N**othing is beyond our reach!

**C**are and challenge engage and motivate us!

**P**raise reassures and supports us!

**S**uccesses are celebrated and built on!

# Contents

Vision Statement .....	1
Policy Statement.....	3
Scope.....	3
Lead Members of Staff.....	3
Individual Care Plans .....	4
Teaching about Mental Health.....	4
Signposting.....	4
Warning Signs .....	5
Managing disclosures .....	5
Confidentiality.....	6
Working with Parents .....	6
Working with All Parents .....	7
Supporting Peers.....	7
Training .....	7
Monitoring and Evaluation .....	8

## Policy Statement

*“Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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)*

At Norton CP School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. 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.

## Scope

This document describes the school’s approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student’s mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

### The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers

## Lead Members of Staff

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

<b>Designated child protection/safeguarding office</b>	Mrs Parker Mrs Bates (MHFA) Mrs Ellis (MHFA)
<b>Mental Health Lead</b>	Mrs Parker
<b>First Aid Lead</b>	Mr Myers (MHFA) Mrs Ellis (MHFA)
<b>PSHE Lead</b>	As indicated and: Mrs Gooch Mrs Jones
<b>Mental Health First Aid Team</b>	Mr Mooring Mrs Flanagan

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with immediate referral to the designated child protection office, the head teacher, or the designated governor. If the student 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.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the headteacher.

## **Individual Care Plans**

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

This can 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
- The role the school can play

## **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and other 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 to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

## **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, students, 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 students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of the student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

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

## **Warning Signs**

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs will **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Head Teacher, Pastoral Support or the Mental Health Lead.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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.

## **Managing disclosures**

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMs. This record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

## **Confidentiality**

We should be honest about the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a student without telling them first. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations where information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or parent.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence, and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed. The students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the student should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection officer must be informed immediately.

## **Working with Parents**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions (on a case-by-case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversations. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible, as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you are sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too, e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should also provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow-up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with the agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

## **Working with All Parents**

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 on our school website.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, 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 in their children through our regular information evening
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

## **Supporting Peers**

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other, In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations with the student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs the friend may need help

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

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

## **Training**

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep students safe. Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more students.

Suggestions for individual, group, or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Head Teacher and the Mental Health Lead can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

For general information and support

<a href="http://www.youngminds.org.uk">www.youngminds.org.uk</a>	young people's mental health and wellbeing
<a href="http://www.mind.org.uk">www.mind.org.uk</a>	advice and help on mental health problems
<a href="http://www.minded.org.uk">www.minded.org.uk</a>	(e-learning)
<a href="http://www.time-to-change.org.uk">www.time-to-change.org.uk</a>	tackles the stigma of mental health
<a href="http://www.rethink.org">www.rethink.org</a>	challenges attitudes towards mental health

For specific mental health needs

Anxiety UK	<a href="http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk">www.anxietyuk.org.uk</a>
OCD UK	<a href="http://www.ocduk.org">www.ocduk.org</a>
Depression Alliance	<a href="http://www.depressionalliance.org">www.depressionalliance.org</a>
Eating Disorders	<a href="http://www.b-eat.co.uk">www.b-eat.co.uk</a> and <a href="http://www.inourhands.com">www.inourhands.com</a>
National Self Harm Network	<a href="http://www.nshn.co.uk">www.nshn.co.uk</a> and <a href="http://www.selfharm.co.uk">www.selfharm.co.uk</a>
Prevention of young suicide	<a href="http://www.papyrus-uk.org">www.papyrus-uk.org</a>

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy has been reviewed by the headteacher and the school governors and will be reviewed every two years.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Mental Health Lead on a regular basis.

This policy has been circulated to all members of staff at Norton CP School.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is on the school website and hard copies can be made available to parents and carers via the school office.