

Norton Community Primary School

Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

September 2024 – September 2026



Vision Statement

Nothing is beyond our reach!

Care and challenge engage and motivate us!

Praise reassures and supports us!

Successes are celebrated and built on!

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:

Designated child protection/safeguarding officer	Mrs Parker (Headteacher) Mrs Bates (Deputy Head Teacher, SENCO and MHFA) Mrs Ellis (MHFA)
Wellbeing Lead	Mrs Parker
First Aid Lead	Mr Myers (MHFA)
PSHE Lead	Mrs Ellis (MHFA)
Mental Health First Aid Team (MHFA)	As indicated and: Mrs Gooch Mr Mooring Mrs Jones 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 full curriculum is available on the school's website.

Where a need is identified, the specific content of lessons will be adjusted to meet 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. 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.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Wellbeing Lead. 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

Support for Pupils

- All pupils will be able to access a range of support within the school. As well as their class teacher, a child is able to speak to the Teaching Assistant in their class, the Wellbeing Lead, the Deputy Head Teacher or the Headteacher.
- All staff in school receive training on how to respond to a child who asks for support and children are advised to speak to a trusted adult if they have any worries or concerns about their wellbeing.
- Specific adults in school have been trained in Mental Health First Aid for children. A child can request a meeting with a member of this team by completing a request form or by speaking to their class teacher.
- PSHE lessons support the teaching of wellbeing and mental health, and assemblies are used to reinforce positive messages.
- A wellbeing survey is given to all children in Years 3 – 6 to identify children who may need support with their mental health and wellbeing. This provides an indication of which children would benefit from talking to a member of the Mental Health First Aid team and which children may need support from their class teacher.
- As a school, we work closely with outside agencies who provide support to children with their wellbeing and also provide training and support to staff on how to support children with their wellbeing.
- There is a team of Wellbeing Ambassadors on both of our sites whose role it is to promote wellbeing in school.
- On the school website is a 'worry button' that children can use outside of school hours. This sends a message directly to the Headteacher who is able to respond appropriately.
- Parents/Carers are made aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about a child.

Examples of Good Practice

- Organising whole-school or year group assemblies to discuss specific mental health and wellbeing issues
- Arranging for external speakers to visit and discuss topical issues such as the use of social media or the impact of body image
- Using key dates such as Mental Health Awareness Week and World Mental Health Day as opportunities to raise the profile of mental health
- Holding designated health and wellbeing days and organising activities across the curriculum
- Using displays and bulletins to signpost pupils to sources of support

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

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.mind.org.uk

www.minded.org.uk

www.time-to-change.org.uk

www.rethink.org

young people's mental health and wellbeing advice and help on mental health problems (e-learning)

tackles the stigma of mental health

challenges attitudes towards mental health

For specific mental health needs

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 and www.selfharm.co.uk

Prevention of young suicide

www.papyrus-uk.org

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with policies for:

- Anti-bullying
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Online Safety
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education

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 Wellbeing 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.