



# **Mental Wellbeing Policy**

**Last reviewed: November 2023  
To be reviewed: November 2025**

***“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 Organisation***

***In 2017, about 1 in 10 children aged 5 to 16 have a diagnosable mental health need and these can have an enormous impact on quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. In many cases it is life-limiting.***

***“In order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy”. The Department for Education (DfE)***

## **Policy Statement**

At Markeaton Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We pursue this aim using 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.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to explore their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health difficulties and to be a school where:

- All children are valued.
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying is not tolerated.

**In addition to children’s wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.**



## ***Policy Purpose***

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health.
- How we aim to prevent the impact of mental health difficulties.
- 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.

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.

### ➤ **How the policy was developed and who was consulted**

The development of this policy was led by our Inclusion Lead for Social, Emotional & Mental Health Needs, Designated Senior Leader for Mental Health (DSL MH) and Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SEND CO), including questionnaire responses from the children, staff, parents and carers.

### ➤ **Links to other policies**

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Medical Needs, Anti-Bullying, SEND, RSE and Equality which can be accessed through the school's website <http://www.markeaton.derby.sch.uk/Policies>. Links with the School's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

### ➤ **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.

### ➤ **Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility**

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.

**Our** Inclusion Leader together with our DSLMH:

- Lead and work with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Lead on PSHE teaching about mental health.
- Provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates.
- Is the first point of contact with mental health services, and makes individual referrals to them.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

**Sources of relevant support include:**

- Our own Senior Leadership Team  
(*Ian Johnson, Emma Edge, Emma Balfour, Victoria Gamble, Laura Clayton, Kim Herriman and Jo Sidebottom*)
- Our Designated Senior Leader for Mental Health  
(*Jessica Hawley*)
- Our Learning Mentor  
(*Marie Ball*)
- Our Safeguarding/Child Protection Lead(s)  
(*Ian Johnson, Emma Edge and Emma Balfour*)
- Our Phase Leaders  
(*Jo Sidebottom, Victoria Gamble, Laura Clayton and Kim Herriman*)
- Our SENDCO who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including children whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision. (*Emma Balfour*)
- School support staff employed to manage mental health needs of particular children
- Our School Nurse
- Our partnership with 'Bridge the Gap'
- Childline 0800 1111 <https://www.childline.org.uk/>
- Mind 0300 123 3393 <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/>

➤ **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***

- Termly campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health.
- Council that meet termly to discuss what is going well and any issues arising.
- House Captains that lead organised games at break times 'Captain's Craze'.

***Transition programmes***

- Transition Programme to secondary schools which includes all Year 6 children having a staff mentor to support a smooth transition to secondary school
- Transition sessions for all children in the Summer term to support with the coming year's changes.
- Additional transition support in place for children with SEND or those identified as vulnerable.

***Class activities***

- Worry and suggestion boxes - a similar mechanism where children can anonymously share worries or concerns in class
- PSHE/RSE sessions weekly
- Lessons about mental health (as part of the PSHE curriculum)
- PE sessions designed to support mental wellbeing e.g. children's yoga
- Daily Mile/Go Noodle used as wellbeing breaks
- Golden time activities organised weekly

***Whole school***

- Wellbeing Days – whole school focus on doing things which make us feel good
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support if needed.
- Displays on inclusion including LGBTQ+, race and religion.
- Growth Mindset Days and displays which encourage our Markeaton MINDS philosophy.
- Extended lunch 30mins x6 yearly

***Small group activities***

- Nurture groups
- Forest Schools
- Lego therapy
- Creative expressive arts
- Drama therapy
- Pet therapy
- Social games
- Learning mentor led groups for targeted children

***Staff Support***

- Educations Support Helpline [0800 562 561](tel:0800562561)
- 2x half wellbeing days (covered internally)
- Extended lunch 30mins x6 yearly
- Curriculum families (Arts, Wellbeing, STEM and Humanities)
- Regular CPD
- Staff yoga weekly
- TA staff meetings (networking)
- Church Chaplain (weekly)
- Staff briefings and meet ups
- Lesson looks 6 x15mins to reduce stress

## ➤ The Curriculum

### **EYFS & Key Stage 1 children learn:**

- To recognise, name and describe feelings including good and not so good feelings.
- Simple strategies for managing feelings.
- How their behaviour affects other people.
- About empathy and understanding other people's feelings.
- To cooperate and problem solve.
- To motivate themselves and persevere.
- How to calm down.
- About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
- Who to go to if they are worried.
- About different types of teasing and bullying, that these are wrong and unacceptable.
- How to resist teasing or bullying, if they experience or witness it, whom to go to and how to get help.

### **Key Stage 2 children learn:**

- What positively and negatively affects their mental and emotional health (including the media).
- Positive and healthy coping strategies.
- About good and not so good feelings.
- To describe the range and intensity of their feelings to others.
- To recognise and respond appropriately to a wide range of feelings in others.
- To recognise that they may experience conflicting emotions and when they might need to listen to their emotions or overcome them.
- About resilience.
- How to motivate themselves and bounce back if they fail at something.
- How to empathise and be supportive of others.
- About change, including transitions (between Key Stages and schools), loss, separation, divorce and bereavement.
- About the consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online bullying, prejudice-based language), as well as how to respond and ask for help if they are victims of this themselves.
- About the importance of talking to someone and how to get help.

In FS2, we follow the Jigsaw scheme of work on a weekly basis and children have the chance to secure their knowledge of this through discrete teaching and learning within termly topics.

In KS1 and KS2, we follow the PSHE Matters scheme of work on a weekly basis and children have the chance to secure their knowledge of this through discrete teaching and learning within termly topics.

Our Online safety is facilitated by the Computing Leader and follows the Google Internet Legends scheme of work. Children have the chance to secure their knowledge of this through discrete teaching and learning within termly topics.

## ➤ Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs

### Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children is paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
- Involve children in the care and support they have.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.

### Early Identification

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- Analysing behaviour, exclusions, visits to the medical room/school nurse, attendance and sanctions via CPOMs (our online referral tool for safeguarding and behaviour).
- Using different scales to identify children who need support (e.g. Boxall Profile)
- Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons, including use of CPOMs.
- Pupil Progress Review meetings termly.
- Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns.
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer.
- Parental meetings.
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff.
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff.

**Staff have been made aware of what signs to look out for when a child is struggling with their mental health. These signs may also be cross referenced with certain sections of the safeguarding policy as the identified behaviours may be sign of something else:**

These signs might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
- Falling academic achievement.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE.
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- Drugs or alcohol misuse.
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.



- Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.
- If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the School's child protection procedures are followed.
- If there is a medical emergency, then the School's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

