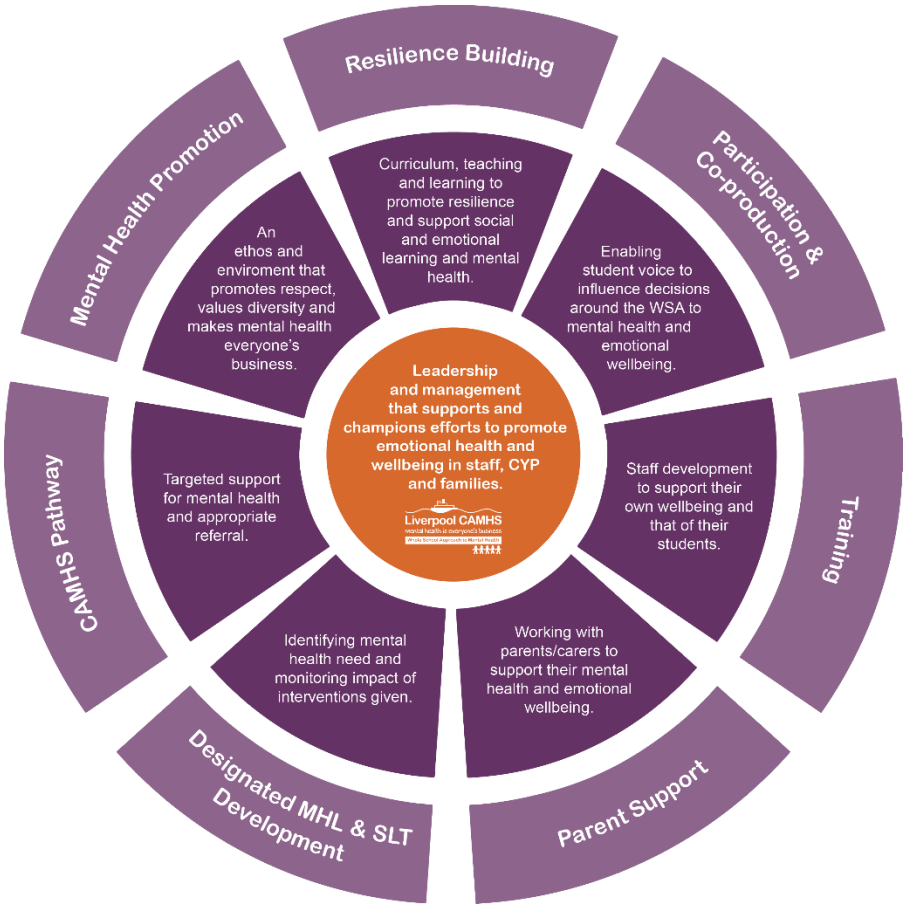
# Whole School Approach Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

## Sir John Heron Primary School




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| **Version & Date of Last review:** 2, 05/2026 | **Approved by:** N Ishaq |
| **Review Date:** 05/2027 | **Approved by Governors (date): 19/05/2026** |

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## 1.0 Policy statement

At *Sir John Heron Primary School*, we are committed to promoting a whole school approach to positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all pupils, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows pupils' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Sir John Heron Primary School's whole school approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

## 3.0 Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and pupils.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in pupils.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.

- Provide the right support to pupils with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and pupil welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

## 4.0 Key staff members

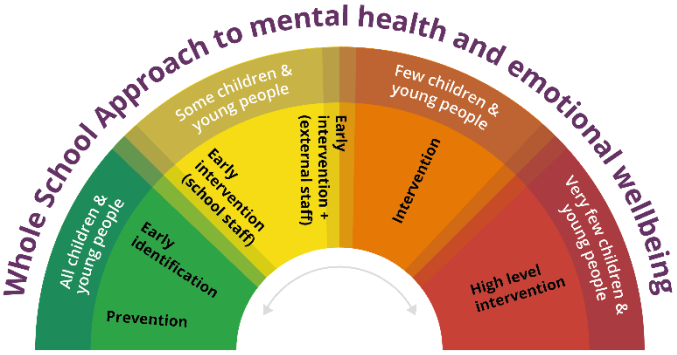
This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Whole School Approach Strategic Mental Health Lead- HeadTeacher
- Senior Mental Health Lead (Operational)
- SENCO and Designated Safeguarding Leads
- School Link Governor for Behaviour and Wellbeing
- School Commissioned Mental Health Staff
- Leader of Learning for PSHCE

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil, in the first instance they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If there is a concern that the pupil is at high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

## 5.0 Levels of Need




Levels of need are used to help education providers and services to determine the type of support that might be needed for children/young people. There are 4 levels:

**Green = Prevention and early identification.** This level is for all children and young people and represents the basic level of mental health awareness and support strategies that all children and young people need for positive emotional wellbeing.

**Yellow = Early Intervention.** At this level of need children/young people will be showing early signs of distress that may be the start of an emerging mental health issue. Short-term interventions that build coping strategies are given to prevent these issues from developing – small changes to prevent bigger challenges.

**Orange = Intervention**. At this level children and young people will need more specific support as their mental health problem will be more developed and significantly impacting their day-to-day life. There may also be other complexities such as trauma or neurodevelopmental conditions. Interventions are chosen to suit the needs of each child/young person and will vary in modality, and intensity.

**Red = High Level Intervention**. At this level children and young people will need high-level support for mental health conditions that require support from CAMHS. Children may be at crisis point, require medication, or several different types of specialist support.

## 5.1 Individual Care Plans

When a pupil has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation (orange/red level), it is recommended that an Individual Care Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- For pupils who self-harm or have had suicidal ideation it is helpful to draw up a safety plan with them.

## 6.0 Mental Health Promotion

Mental Health is everyone's business in our school, and we promote an environment that fosters inclusion, diversity and respect.

The skills, knowledge and understanding our pupils need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHCE curriculum and our Anti-Bullying Ambassador programme.

We will follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and emotional wellbeing Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote pupils' wellbeing through the development of healthy

coping strategies and an understanding of pupils' own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing pupils who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting pupils to support any of their friends who are facing challenges. **See Section 14 for Supporting Peers**

# 7.0 Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, reception area etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure pupils understand:

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

# 8.0 Our School Extra-Curricular Mental Health Support

The school's extra-curricular mental health support maps the support available to children across all levels of need.

**School Based Support**

Pastoral team wellbeing check- ins

Learning Mentor 1:1 Sessions

Learning Mentor Group sessions

WINS practitioner group sessions

WINS practitioner 1:1 (PARENTAL SUPPORT)

Social Groups

Personalised Behaviour Plans

Mentoring Groups (school based, external provider led)

**Local Support**

In Newham, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the **CAMHS partnership with Newham Mental Health Support Team and the Early Help Team. https://www.newhamscp.org.uk/early-help/**

These teams deliver accessible support to children, young people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention, training and participation.

**Newham Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)**

York House
411 Barking Road
Plaistow
London
E13 8AL

Tel: 020 8430 9000

Opening times: 9.00am - 5.00pm

## 9.0 Recognising signs and symptoms of mental distress

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 alert Miss Werrin, Senior Mental Health Lead.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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
- 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 secretively
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

## 10.0 Targeted support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to

CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We ensure timely and effective identification of pupils who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Termly wellbeing questionnaires for KS2 students using the Stirling Scale. The Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale (commonly referred to as the Stirling Scale) measures emotional and psychological wellbeing in children and young people aged 8 to 15 years. The areas of wellbeing covered by the scale include optimism, cheerfulness and relaxation; satisfying interpersonal relationships; positive functioning including clear thinking and competence It includes 12 self-report items answered on a 5-point scale and aims to assess wellbeing with a positive focus, rather than focusing on mental illness, in the areas of positive emotional state and positive outlook.
- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely with Newham CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral.
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers.

**Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs;**

- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including Newham CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide children with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;
- Provide children with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

# 11.0 Managing disclosures

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on the school's safeguarding software, including:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Senior Mental Health Lead.

# 12.0 Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a pupil to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the pupil. We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we're going to tell them

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with an appropriate colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the pupil. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues the child protection procedures should be followed.

# 13.0 Parents/carers

## 13.1 Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate?
- Who should be present – pupils, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent or carer, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.
Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.
Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agreed are added to the pupil's record and an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate.

### 13.2 Supporting parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.)
- Acces to support through the WINs practitioner based in school
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

## 14.0 Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

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

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

## 15.0 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 pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal also provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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 developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

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

## 16.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is **01/05/2026** In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of Miss Werrin, Senior Mental Health Lead. Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.