Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

St Laurence in Thanet Church of England Junior Academy

Our school offers a supportive, inclusive, nurturing and inspiring learning environment where each member is known by God, loved and empowered to reach their full potential. Children are encouraged through an aspirational and engaging curriculum to develop their knowledge, skills and character so that they can truly flourish, both now and into the future.

This set of values is reflected in all our policies.

Joy   Hope   Forgiveness   Love   Resilience

Approved by:	S.Graham	**Date:**	08/02/24
Last reviewed on:	February 2024		
Next review due by:	February 2026		

Contents

---

1. Aims

At St Laurence, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and wellbeing. It aims to:

➢ Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school

➢ Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about and reflect on their experiences of mental health

➢ Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues

➢ Inform pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources

This policy should be read alongside:

➢ SEN Inclusion policy

➢ Behaviour policy

➢ Anti-bullying policy

➢ Child protection and safeguarding policy

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy was written with regard to:

- **The Equality Act 2010**
- **The Data Protection Act 2018**
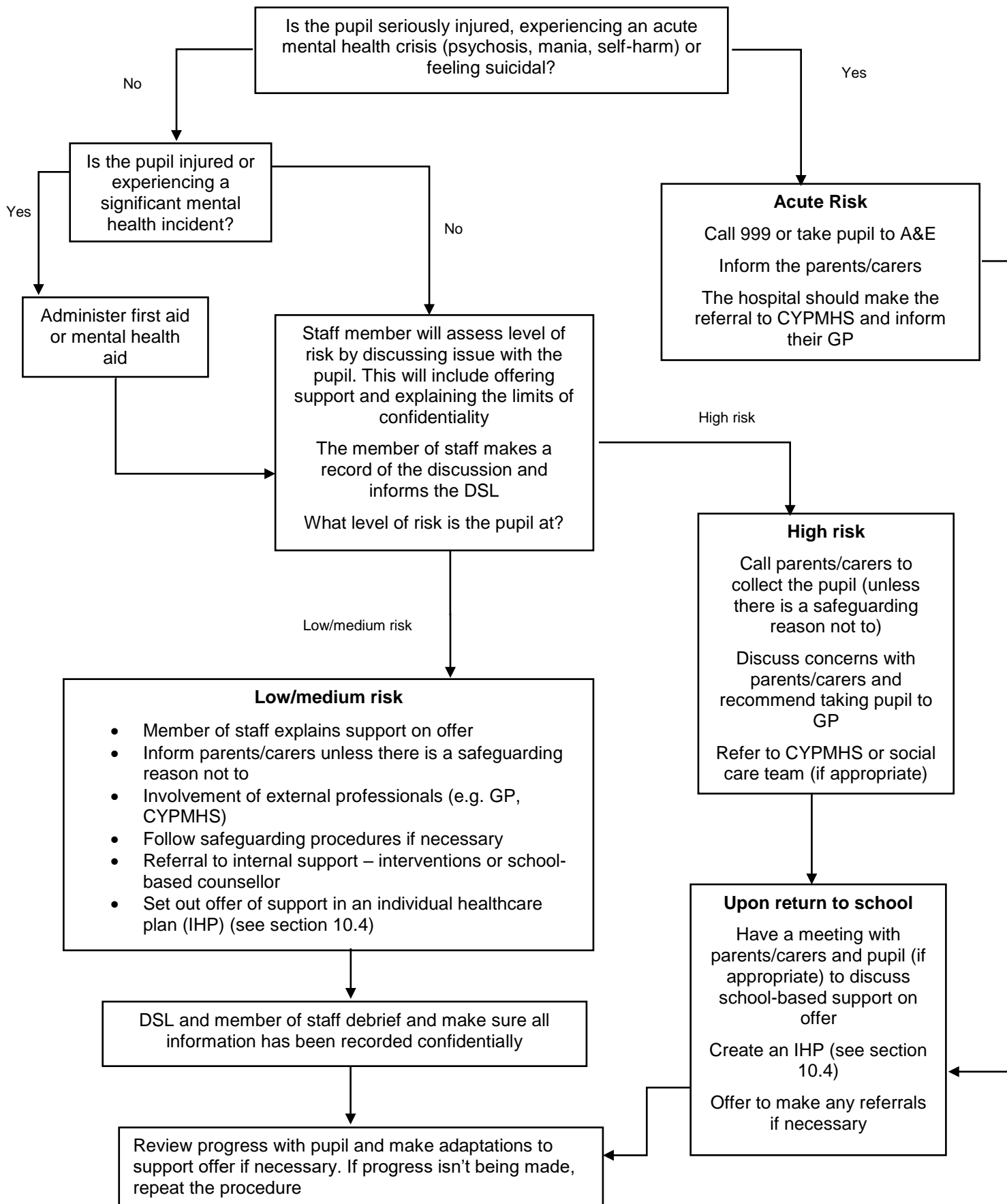- **Articles 3 and 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**

3. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform a designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Headteacher (Sarah Graham)
- Lead DSL (Sarah Mountjoy)
- DSLs (Sarah Graham, Louise Buckland & Tracey Duffy)
- SENCO (Sarah Mountjoy)
- Mental Health Lead (Louise Buckland)
- Attendance Lead (Sarah Mountjoy)
- Pastoral Team (Tracey Duffy & Allison Shepherd)
- Family Liaison Officer (Allison Shepherd)
- ELSAs (Tracey Duffy & Hayley Hawkes)

4. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis

Is the pupil seriously injured, experiencing an acute mental health crisis (psychosis, mania, self-harm) or feeling suicidal?

No

Yes

Is the pupil injured or experiencing a significant mental health incident?

Yes

No

Acute Risk

Call 999 or take pupil to A&E

Inform the parents/carers

The hospital should make the referral to CYPMHS and inform their GP

Administer first aid or mental health aid

Staff member will assess level of risk by discussing issue with the pupil. This will include offering support and explaining the limits of confidentiality

The member of staff makes a record of the discussion and informs the DSL

What level of risk is the pupil at?

High risk

High risk

Call parents/carers to collect the pupil (unless there is a safeguarding reason not to)

Discuss concerns with parents/carers and recommend taking pupil to GP

Refer to CYPMHS or social care team (if appropriate)

Low/medium risk

Low/medium risk

- Member of staff explains support on offer
- Inform parents/carers unless there is a safeguarding reason not to
- Involvement of external professionals (e.g. GP, CYPMHS)
- Follow safeguarding procedures if necessary
- Referral to internal support – interventions or school-based counsellor
- Set out offer of support in an individual healthcare plan (IHP) (see section 10.4)

Upon return to school

Have a meeting with parents/carers and pupil (if appropriate) to discuss school-based support on offer

Create an IHP (see section 10.4)

Offer to make any referrals if necessary

DSL and member of staff debrief and make sure all information has been recorded confidentially

Review progress with pupil and make adaptations to support offer if necessary. If progress isn't being made, repeat the procedure

5. Warning signs

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

Changes in:

➢ Mood or energy level

➢ Eating or sleeping patterns

➢ Attitude in lessons or academic attainment

➢ Level of personal hygiene

➢ Social isolation

➢ Poor attendance or punctuality

➢ Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure

➢ Abuse of drugs or alcohol

➢ Rapid weight loss or gain

➢ Secretive behaviour

➢ Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously

➢ Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes

➢ Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause

➢ Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted

➢ Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

6. Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow our school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to a DSL. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

➢ The full name of the member of staff who is making the record

➢ The full name of the pupil(s) involved

➢ The date, time and location of the disclosure

➢ The context in which the disclosure was made

➢ Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

7. Confidentiality

Staff will not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret – instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school
- Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures with at least 1 appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL/Mental Health Lead. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the child protection/ safeguarding policy will be followed.

7.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with DSL
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who the information will be shared with and why
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the chosen elected member of staff
6. The DSL will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

8. Supporting pupils

8.1 Baseline support for all pupils

As part of our school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, our school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health through our PSHE curriculum, during assemblies and mental health awareness days/weeks
- Signposting parents and pupils to sources of support where required
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of our school that is negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring all pupils' mental health through assessments, e.g. a strengths and difficulties questionnaire

- ➢ Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- ➢ Offering pastoral support
- ➢ Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:

1. Worry boxes
2. Zones of Regulation
3. Break breaks
4. Mindfulness

8.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the school will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above in section 8.1.

Our school will offer support in cycles of:

- ➢ Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- ➢ Creating a plan to provide support
- ➢ Taking the actions set out in the plan
- ➢ Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

8.3 Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

- ➢ Nurture groups
- ➢ Reduced timetable
- ➢ Time-out cards
- ➢ Counselling
- ➢ Drawing and Talking Therapy
- ➢ ELSA support
- ➢ Emotional wellbeing groups
- ➢ Thrive assessments/groups

8.4 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer our school provides, our school will make, or encourage parents/carers to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- ➢ Their GP or a paediatrician
- ➢ CYPMHS

- ➢ Mental health charities (e.g. Samaritans, Mind, Young Minds, Kooth)
- ➢ Local counselling services

9. Supporting and collaborating with parents/carers

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- ➢ Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- ➢ Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- ➢ Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- ➢ Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- ➢ Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- ➢ Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent/carer forums)
- ➢ Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents/carers about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face-to-face.

These meetings can be difficult, so our school will ensure that parents/carers are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to Bromcom.

If appropriate, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be created in collaboration with parents/carers (see section 10.4).

10. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be very challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- ➢ Strategies they can use to support their friends
- ➢ Things they should avoid doing/saying
- ➢ Warning signs to look out for
- ➢ Signposting to sources of external support

11. Signposting

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

Sources of support are displayed around our school and linked to on our school website, so pupils and parents/carers are aware of how they can get help.

The FLO (Mrs Shepherd) will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

12. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

12.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE

We follow the PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Pupils are taught to:

➢ To develop healthy coping strategies

➢ To challenge misconceptions around mental health

➢ To understand their own emotional state

➢ The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're 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.

For more information, see our PSHE curriculum on our school website.

12.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

➢ Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma

➢ Encouraging pupils to disclose when their mental health is deteriorating

13. Training

All staff will be offered training so they:

➢ Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are

➢ Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health

➢ Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

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 pupils.

14. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this we will:

- ➤ Treat mental health concerns seriously
- ➤ Offer staff supervision sessions
- ➤ Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- ➤ Create a pleasant and supportive work environment
- ➤ Offer an employee assistance programme