



Ashurst CE Aided Primary School

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Defining Mental Health

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 Organization)

At Ashurst CE Aided Primary School, we define mental wellbeing as life stability, positive functioning, contentment, and being able to thrive in most circumstances in our day to day lives. We are seeking to achieve good mental health and emotional wellbeing for every child, every family, every staff member and every governor, connected directly or indirectly to Ashurst CE Aided Primary School - the Ashurst CE Aided Primary School Community.

Safeguarding Statement

This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, volunteering at, or invited to deliver services at Ashurst CE Aided Primary School. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm.

We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access APS and promote the welfare of all our pupils by safeguarding our pupils through prevention, protection and support.

We are also committed to actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils are encouraged to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

It is our duty to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent terrorism. Any concerns should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their deputies, who have access to local contact details for PREVENT and Channel referrals.

Policy Intent Statement

At Ashurst CE Aided Primary School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all children, 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.

Assessment

At Ashurst CE Aided Primary School, there is a philosophy of measuring the outcomes of the Wellbeing Policy, and ensuring that every stakeholder, for example teachers, children, receives the targeted support which is tailored to their circumstances.

All the stakeholders should be given the opportunity to be assessed for their well-being regularly, at least once every year, as well as after any Adverse Experience, such as a death in the family or moving home, to understand the wellbeing of the individual. The goal is to understand where every individual is through their journey of life when they are part of the Ashurst CE Aided Primary School Community. More importantly with that knowledge the assessment process will ensure every individual receives the support they need.

At Ashurst CE Aided Primary School, we understand how poor well-being can have a ripple effect on the school community, and affect others in a significant way, especially in relation to their personal and educational attainment.

Scope

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

Policy Aims

At Ashurst CE Aided Primary School, we aim to influence mental wellbeing through:

- Regular assessment of well-being, with a universal system (Arc Pathway) available to all the members of the Ashurst CE Aided Primary School Community
- providing a supportive culture, ethos and environment that can serve as a cushion to difficult circumstances,
- teaching and learning that help pupils to build important life skills, through PSHE strategies such as learning to learn, habits of mind and the growth mindset
- supporting the development of skills and character traits such as self-management, compassion and team work (e.g. as part of PSHE and character education); partnerships with parents/carers and the wider community).
- promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and children
- increasing understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- enabling staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in children/adults.
- enabling staff to understand how and when to access support when working with people with mental health issues.
- providing the right support to children/adults with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers/families for specific support.

- instilling a culture of staff and children's welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school

To achieve these aims we will:

- Provide all members of the Ashurst CE Aided Primary School Community with the tools and opportunity to self-assess.
- Develop and timetable five Well Being Days throughout the school year allowing staff and children opportunities to take part in a range of activities which support their own well being
- Promote the skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe as part of our PSHE (Jigsaw) curriculum. (The specific content of lessons will vary, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.)
- Additionally, we will use such lessons to provide children who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting children to support any of their friends who are facing challenges. Collective Worship, Picture News Worship, assemblies and reflection times will also be used to support discussions where relevant.
- Follow the Jigsaw guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.
- Encourage and support the whole school community to be positive in its approach to mental health wellbeing.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of both internal and external support services.
- Provide guidance and support to all those connected with the organisation to help them develop confidence in their ability to manage mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Provide appropriate training and information to staff on mental health and emotional wellbeing as part of CPD.
- Have named Mental Health Leads on the staff and Governors who are the contact point and are responsible for signposting, coordinating and delivery of Ashurst CE Aided Primary School mental health and emotional wellbeing strategy
- Seek to integrate mental health and emotional support across the curriculum.
- Recognise that staff have the responsibility to alert others to potential and actual indicators of mental health needs and to take this action whenever necessary
- Co-operate with other organisations involved in the delivery of mental health and emotional support services - 'CAMHS', 'Younger Minds', GPs, School Nurse, Early Help, Your Space, 'Education Support Partnership' emotional support telephone line available 24/7 (08000 562 561), Employee Assistance Programme or NHS 'Mind Plan' which generates a personalised plan based on the information provided.

- Observe the principles of confidentiality and data protection in respect of mental health and emotional wellbeing

Context and Rationale

Mental Health and Wellbeing promotes school success and improvements by:

- promoting positive mental and emotional wellbeing by providing information and support.
- creating a shared understanding of all aspects of mental health
- enabling those with mental health related issues to self-disclose and seek support in a safe confidential manner.
- offering guidance and strategies to support pupils and staff to be mentally healthy
- creating a culture to support and maintain positive mental health and wellbeing.

Key Members

This policy aims to ensure all staff and Governors take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff, Governors and their families, however key members of Ashurst CE Aided Primary School have specific roles to play:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Smith)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding leads (Mrs Welstead and Mrs Sansbury)

Mental Health Lead (MHFA and YMHFA) (Mrs Smith)

SENCO (Mrs Sansbury)

PSHE lead (Mrs Smith)

Lead Safeguarding Governor (current Chair of Governors)

Mental Health and Wellbeing Governors (Mr Mark Garnett and Ms Nicola Gobat Krish)

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, in the first instance they should speak to the class teacher.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of another adult, in the first instance they should speak to the Mental Health Lead.

If there is a concern that the child or adult is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed. If the child or adult presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Individual Support Plans

At Ashurst CE Aided Primary School we recognise that any child may experience adverse mental health and well-being in their time at school, for reasons outside their control. However modest this adversity may appear, children will need support to ensure there is no relapse. By using Arc Pathway, we aim to identify the issues and provide immediate support. The expectation is that early intervention will prevent the adversity becoming long-lasting. When a child has been identified as

having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is recommended that an Individual Support Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

This plan should include:

- Details of the child's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services. Within the school (e.g. during adult classes) and through our communication channels (newsletters, website), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

Support at School

Support is available for children identified as being vulnerable to mental health issues. Children who are going through difficulties such as family illness, separation, bereavement, transition difficulties or other stressful situations may be supported with individual or small group work (e.g. gardening, Theraplay games) with staff. Specialist support, such as Early Help may also be used.

Supporting Parents

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

- Ensuring parents have access to Arc Pathway to self-assess their wellbeing.
- Ensuring all parents, carers and families are aware of, and have access to materials and information which promotes social and emotional wellbeing and the prevention of mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our website, newsletters and noticeboards.
- Offering support to help parents, carers and families develop their parenting skills
- 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. (E.g. *50 things to do before you are 5 initiative*)
- Support to participate in any sessions with external agencies such as Early Help.

Supporting Peers/ colleagues

When a child/adult is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends/colleagues 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/ colleagues may need additional support.

Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the child/adult who is suffering and their parents/themselves with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends/ colleagues to know and what they should not be told
- How friends/ colleagues can best support
- Things friends/ colleagues should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend/ colleague 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

Staff/Adult Mental Health

We recognise that anyone can experience mental health issues for various reasons which may be out of their control. There may also be work related factors that could contribute to poor mental health such as work life imbalance, work load pressure, poor working conditions.

To every extent possible, we aim to recognise and address cases of workplace pressures that contribute to mental health issues.

We aim to:

- Treat staff/adult mental illness seriously.
- Proactively support resolution of issues causing concern.
- Support staff/adult members who face mental health problems.
- Ensure Ashurst CE Aided Primary School has a pleasant working environment
- Encourage communication

Supporting staff to positive mental health and wellbeing

The Governing Body's 'duty of care' towards employees, legislation and case law, require them to manage and safeguard the physical and psychological well-being of the school's employees.

To help meet these objectives, Ashurst CE Aided Primary School has the following documents and policies, among others, to support staff well-being:

- 'The Stress Management Policy', the 'Policy Statement On Behaviour At Work for All School Based Staff' 'Grievance Policy', 'Health and Safety Policy' and the Ashurst CE Aided Primary School Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy

- this Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy which focuses on the School's obligations to supporting staff's health and wellbeing.
- It is vital that all staff are aware of these policies and the role all employees undertake to ensure we all work in healthy workplaces.

The role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body recognises that wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improved wellbeing at work. Addressing workplace wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce the risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health.

To fulfil this commitment the Governing Body and Headteacher will:

- Make health and wellbeing a core priority. Value the strategic importance and benefits of a healthy workplace. We will encourage a consistent, positive approach to all staff health and wellbeing.
- Make clear the link between employees' health and wellbeing and improved performance.
- Ensure all at Ashurst CE Aided Primary School, including Headteacher and Governors, are committed to the health and wellbeing of staff and act as good role models.
 - Make communication clear to ensure that staff have realistic expectations of what's possible, practical and affordable.
 - Be aware that a return to work from sickness does not necessarily indicate that an employee's health and wellbeing has improved. Return to work interview that considers that aggressive return to work procedures can encourage presenteeism to the detriment of our school.
 - Ensure health and wellbeing policies are included in any induction, training and development programmes for new staff.
 - Have a proactive and visible commitment to health and safety and its role in improving the health and wellbeing of staff, that is, view health and safety as part of the culture of a caring and supportive employer - not only a statutory requirement.
 - Create a supportive environment that enables employees to be proactive when and if possible to protect and enhance their own health and wellbeing
 - seek to identify potential circumstances that may affect the wellbeing of staff and conduct risk assessments;
 - increase awareness and understanding of how to promote wellbeing at work and the avoidance of absence;
 - ensure advice and guidance is available to leaders in dealing with wellbeing concerns of staff;

- ensure that there is a culture where there is no expectation that staff communicate about work outside of normal working hours (except in an emergency, e.g. child protection issues);
- ensure that all staff take part in a supportive performance management process;
- conduct an annual (anonymous) staff survey in order to collate information from all staff groups, which will inform future strategies to support the health and wellbeing of staff;

Where possible, staff are supported with their work/life balance and wellbeing outside the school. Examples of this could include providing staff with paid leave for both special events and celebrations, and time off to deal with family problems.

All staff are encouraged to take a responsible approach to health and wellbeing issues, including adopting a robust self-management to their own health.

Wellbeing Audit

To ensure the protection and fostering of staff wellbeing is increasingly embedded in our management methods and systems, staff wellbeing audits will be carried out during 2024/25 to assess and audit current level of wellbeing, so that an Action Plan can be developed which will enable Governors and staff to decide where the priorities are for Ashurst CE Aided Primary School, where we want to be and to formulate a strategy for further development.

Approved by FGB	September 2025
Next review date:	September 2026