

Skirlaugh CE Primary School

'a caring Christian learning community where everyone is valued'



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Approved by Governors

Autumn 2025

Last Renewal Date

Autumn 2025

Next Renewal Date

Autumn 2028

Vision Statement

Jesus said, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.'
Luke 10:27 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

Policy Statement

At Skirlaugh Primary School, we are committed to creating a caring, welcoming community which supports the emotional health and wellbeing of our school community. We know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable, and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health and wellbeing is everybody's responsibility and that we all have a role to play in promoting and supporting this. Our mental health and wellbeing team are passionate about making a difference to the lives of our community; whatever the issues faced, our team are quick to react, support and pull together. This is a reflection of our school's Christian vision to 'love our neighbours as ourselves'.

Aims

At Skirlaugh CE Primary School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders. This policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our school community;
- Remove the stigma of mental health issues;
- Encourage a mentally-healthy environment where everyone feels safe and nurtured and resilience is high;
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in pupils, themselves and each other;
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support, both for themselves and pupils, who may have 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 was written in consultation with the Mental Health Schools Team and our Wellbeing Governor.

It should be read alongside the following policies:

- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Managing Sickness and Absence Policy
- Non-Sickness Absence Policy
- Code of Conduct

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding risk factors. If any member of staff is concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Senior Mental Health Lead. Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing:

Mrs C Pitois	Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), SENDCo & Senior Mental Health Lead
Mrs E Cook	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead & Mental Health First Aider
Mrs J Leonard	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Miss A Sugden	PSHE & RSE Lead
Mrs P Evans	Wellbeing Governor
Ms S Charlton	Wellbeing Team - ELSA

Our Senior Mental Health Lead has the following responsibilities:

- Leading and working with all staff to coordinate whole school activities and approaches which promote positive mental health and wellbeing;
- Working closely with the PSHE and RSE Lead to ensure effective teaching around all aspects of mental health and wellbeing;
- Providing advice and support to staff and organising training and updates regarding relevant issues faced by the children in our school community;
- Liaising with external agencies and make referrals to these where appropriate;
- Providing a listening ear and signposting staff to relevant organisations and avenues of external support.

The role of the Wellbeing Governor

Mental health and wellbeing is an integral undertaking in schools. As a result, it needs to be considered through all aspects of the school experience. The link governor role creates a connection between the governing board and the wider school. The role is focussed on supporting the school to embed its mental health and wellbeing provision across all aspects of school life.

It is also recognised that the Senior Mental Health Lead may also need support. This will be provided in a similar way through the Wellbeing Governor who will seek to offer a confidential, listening ear and provide them with signposting as appropriate.

Good Mental Health

At Skirlaugh Primary School, we define having 'Good Mental Health' as the ability to:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships
- Use and enjoy solitude
- Be aware of others and empathise with them
- Experience happiness and can play and learn
- Develop a sense of right and wrong
- Resolve (face) problems and setbacks and learn from them
- Develop a positive sense of self and identity
- Build protective factors in our lives which promote and protect our wellbeing when faced with setbacks and unexpected change.

Section 1: Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our robust PSHE curriculum. We follow the Jigsaw Scheme for teaching PSHE and RSE, with a core focus on developing mindfulness. The specific content of the programme also ensures effective teaching about relevant mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Throughout the year, children participate in weekly workshops with a focus on mental health. These link to specific themes identified as areas for development within school, but may include teaching which explores resilience, managing change, managing stress, anxiety, recognising emotions and understanding the link between physical and mental health.

At Skirlough Primary, we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a proactive way to avoid problems arising. We do so in a number of ways:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and well-being
- Adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management
- Teaching children the social skills needed to form and maintain relationships
- Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries
- Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better
- Promoting self-esteem and ensure children understand their importance
- Teaching children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health

We promote a mentally-healthy school environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements to promote self-esteem
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Providing access to appropriate support that meets their needs
- Providing specially-trained members of the wellbeing team to support pupils at an individual, small group or whole school level
- Teaching mindfulness and regulation through a high-quality PSHE curriculum
- Providing weekly wellbeing workshops focussing on a wide range of topics/themes in response to the needs of the school community

Early Identification and Warning Signs

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstance
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also 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 communicate their concerns with the designated safeguarding lead.

Possible warning signs may include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Recording and Reporting of Concerns

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, should record this on CPOMS in the first instance. If there is concern that the child is in danger of immediate harm, then the safeguarding policy should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated safeguarding lead.

Following identification, appropriate next steps, including interventions and referrals where required, will be determined by the Senior Mental Health Lead and Wellbeing Team. We will endeavor to ensure the child receives appropriate support at the earliest opportunity to prevent problems from escalating. Examples of such support are detailed in Appendix A - Mental Health Provision Map.

Termly Support Plans

Where a child has a recognised mental health disorder, or is experiencing a barrier to learning as a result of their mental health, their social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs will be recorded on the school's SEND register and a Termly Support Plan (TSP) will be issued. This will contain relevant targets to be reviewed each term alongside the pupil and their parents. Further information relating to TSPs can be found in the SEND policy.

Reasonable Adjustments to Teaching and Learning

At Skirlaugh Primary School, we are committed to inclusion and reducing barriers to learning and participation for all pupils. Where a child is experiencing mental ill health, a number of reasonable adjustments may be considered, depending on the specific needs of the child. Examples may include:

- Breaks from class when required;
- Provision of stress relief toys;
- Work broken into small chunks;
- Individual work stations;
- Access to a quiet space to work/regulate away from the classroom;
- Individualised behaviour/reward plans.

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 (display boards) and through our communication channels (SEND newsletters, website),

we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events. The aim of this is to ensure staff, parents and 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 next

Where support cannot be provided 'in house' , we work closely with a number of agencies and professionals:

- Educational Psychologists
- Mental Health in Schools Team
- Early Help Service
- Educational Welfare Officers
- Children' s Services
- School Nurse
- CAMHS

Section 2: Parental Mental Health and Wellbeing

Parents and carers are valued and welcomed into school regularly. We communicate often, consult and engage with parents/carers through newsletters, emails, worships, parent meetings and meeting and greeting them each morning at the school gate.

We recognise the key role that families play in influencing children' s mental health and wellbeing and aim to work in partnership with them in the following ways:

- Encouraging parents into school for events regularly (Stay & Learn, Class Worships, Award Ceremonies, Coffee Mornings, Sports Days, Concerts etc.);

- Meeting all EYFS parents in person through our stay and play events and home visits, allowing us to discuss their individual circumstances;
- Working closely with our local partners including the Children' s Centre, Health Care professionals and local feeder schools/nurseries;
- Offering 1:1 SENDCo parent meetings
- Offering parents the opportunity to meet with other professionals (Educational Psychologists, SALT, School Nurse etc.);
- Providing workshops on common themes linked to mental health and wellbeing e.g. sleep, communication, managing behaviour;
- Signposting to relevant local services through our website and newsletters;
- Offering workshops to help parents or carers develop their support at home e.g. How to read with your child;
- Ensuring parents and carers living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to promote social and emotional wellbeing (e.g. hardship funds for school trips and uniform, uniform swap shop etc.)
- Mental Health Support Team drop ins at parents' evenings;
- SLT meeting and greeting all children and their families on the school gate whenever possible;
- Providing an open door policy with access to the Senior Mental Health Lead and SLT at any point during the school week.

We also recognise that at times parents may experience their own mental health struggles, either as a result of historic or current events. In these circumstances we are able to signpost parents to appropriate mental health support - these may include, but are not limited to, their GP, Samaritans, Dove House and other bereavement services, the benefice pastoral care team and the NHS mental health website - <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/>

Section 3: Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing

We recognise that a healthy, happy workforce is essential to providing the best educational experience for all our pupils. Our expectation is that staff have a responsibility to support their own wellbeing by accessing appropriate support, looking after their own mental health and developing their resilience and coping strategies.

As a school, we are committed to encouraging staff to develop a good work-life balance and lead healthy working lives. We offer the following to support our staff's positive mental health:

- A dedicated staff room to promote a break from the classroom environment;
- Access to the East Riding Employee Wellbeing and Counselling Service;
- A number of social events throughout the year for staff to participate in;
- Lunch provided on all INSET days to promote good relationships and give time for staff to socialise;
- SLT and the Senior Mental Health Team seek to support staff experiencing mental ill health through implementing reasonable adjustments and signposting them to relevant services;
- Reasonable adjustments, in line with advice from Occupational Health, for staff with recognised mental health disorders;
- Dedicated time in each week's staff meeting to discuss wellbeing and workload concerns;
- Staff preference and mental wellbeing is taken into consideration when determining the staffing structure each year;
- A generous and flexible approach to absence (e.g. attendance at children's sports days etc.);
- Celebrations of staff birthdays and other special occasions;
- A Senior Mental Health Lead who is a champion of mental health and wellbeing and a first point of contact for all staff;
- SLT open door policy;
- Supervision sessions for ELSAs;
- Opportunities for staff to 'offload' and reflect on the everyday challenges of working with children and young people;

- Flexible working applications seriously considered within the confines of the school context and what is best for the pupils;
- No expectation to be at work outside of contracted/directed hours;
- A Headteacher who actively seeks to reduce workload and is responsive during 'pinch points' of the year (e.g. delaying data deadlines, providing additional time for report writing etc.);
- Anonymous staff wellbeing surveys conducted by the wellbeing governor at least annually which are used to shape the future of this policy

We base our school relationships on Luke (10:27) to 'love your neighbour as yourself' . In this way, we support each other through mental health and wellbeing issues. This support takes the form of journeying alongside each other and being a listening ear or critical friend. We would enable colleagues to seek appropriate help, without neglecting our responsibility to inform the senior leadership team confidentially should we have concerns for a colleague' s welfare.

Training

Annual training takes place for all staff at the start of every year as part of the safeguarding update training. Other specific training may be sourced and delivered depending on the arising needs of the staff. Training opportunities for staff who require more specific, in-depth knowledge are considered as part of the appraisal process and appropriate CPD is provided as it arises throughout the year (e.g. ELSA training, bereavement training etc.).

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health, often in collaboration with the Mental Health Support Team.

Signposting

As part of our commitment to supporting mental health and wellbeing, the school benefits from the Human Resources Service Level Agreement which provides access to

the Employee Assistance Programme. Details of this are shared on the noticeboard in the staffroom.

The contact details for this can be found below:

- 03303800658
- vivup.co.uk

Staff may also wish to access the following sites for further information, advice and support:

- Education Support - provides mental health and wellbeing support services to all education staff and organisations: **educationsupport.org.uk** - **08000562561**
- Mental Health at Work -a first stop for improving mental health at work: **.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk**
- Samaritans - confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair: **samaritans.org**
- Mental Health Foundation - provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities: **.mentalhealth.org.uk**
- Rethink Mental Illness - support and advice for people living with mental illness: **rethink.org**

Appendix A: Mental Health Provision Map



Skirlaugh CE Primary School Mental Health Provision Map

Universal • Positive behaviour policy • Reward systems • Upholding of Christian vision • Underpinned by Christian values • Effective PSHE curriculum delivered weekly • Mindfulness built into the curriculum • Calm and positive classroom environments • Strong teacher/pupil relationships • Wellbeing workshops • Celebration workshops • Celebration displays/working walls • Opportunities for responsibility e.g. Y6 helpers, Sports Leaders etc. • Pupil voice opportunities through the School Council • School-wide zones of regulation	Additional/Targeted Support • Two fully-trained ELSAs • Self-esteem workshops/interventions • Drawing and talking therapy • Lego therapy • Friendship groups • Time to Talk • Sensory Circuits • The volcano in my tummy • Self-regulation activities • EBSA meet and greets • Adapted timetabling • Forest School provision • 'Hub' access • Therapy dog	Specialist/External Support • Mental Health Support Teams for advice, direct work and parent-led CBT • CAMHS • School Nurse • Children's Social Care • Barnardo's • The Forest Project • Cruise Counselling • Jen's Special Place • Education Welfare Officer (EWO) • Beeford Children's Centre • Matthew's Hub • O-25 SEND Team • Educational Psychology • Sensory Processing Hub
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Appendix B: Signs and Symptoms of Stress

