myHappymind

St Matthews Primary School Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Date written	5 October 2026
Written by	Miss A Riaz
Approved by	LGB 15/10/2026
Review cycle	every two years

1. Vision and Ethos

At St Matthews Primary School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for every member of our school community: pupils, staff, parents and carers.

We understand that mental health is not fixed: everyone's wellbeing sits somewhere on a continuum, and can move along that continuum in either direction. We take a preventative, whole-child approach, recognising that good mental health underpins learning, relationships, behaviour and long-term life chances.

2. Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- describe our school's approach to mental health and wellbeing;
- increase understanding and awareness among staff of mental health issues, to support early intervention;
- alert staff to warning signs and risk factors so concerns are identified quickly;
- provide guidance to all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors, on supporting pupils experiencing a mental health problem;
- provide support and guidance to pupils experiencing mental health problems, and to their parents and carers.

3. Whole-School Approach

Mental health and wellbeing is embedded across our curriculum, our daily routines and our relationships, not treated as a stand-alone subject.

All pupils take part in weekly myHappymind lessons, which build preventative habits such as understanding how the brain works, recognising and regulating emotions, and using strategies like Happy Breathing. Staff model this language consistently, so pupils hear the same approach to feelings and regulation in every part of the school day.

Through myHappymind PSHE, our whole-school programme, our PSHE curriculum (including health, wellbeing, relationships and life skills) is fully joined up with our approach to mental health.

Through Belong, our dedicated inclusion programme, we work to build a school where every child feels they belong, with practical strategies for adapting environments, routines and teaching so that all children can participate and thrive.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Miss A Riaz is our PHSE Lead, responsible for the strategic oversight of this policy and our whole-school approach to wellbeing.

Mrs R McDonald is our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Any concerns about a pupil's mental health that also raise a safeguarding concern are reported to the DSL without delay, in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Mrs A Holmes is our SENCo, and is consulted where a pupil's mental health needs interact with SEND.

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, and to work within this policy and its procedures. Our governing body monitors the effectiveness of this policy annually, through CDAT.

5. Identification and Early Support

Staff at St Matthews Primary School are trained to notice early warning signs that a pupil may be experiencing a mental health problem, including: changes in eating or sleeping habits; becoming socially withdrawn; a fall in academic performance or sudden change in effort; talking or joking about self-harm or suicide; repeated or unexplained physical complaints; and changes in appearance, hygiene or increased absenteeism.

Where a member of staff has a concern, they raise it with the Senior Mental Health Lead or DSL promptly using CPOMS. We use a graduated response: early, low-level concerns are addressed through class-based strategies and increased pastoral attention; where concerns persist or escalate, we move to targeted support and, where necessary, referral to external agencies.

6. Support and Interventions

Universal support: all pupils receive weekly myHappymind lessons covering the five modules (Meet Your Brain, Celebrate, Appreciate, Relate and Engage), building preventative habits in self-regulation, self-esteem, gratitude, relationships and goal-setting.

Targeted support: pupils identified through our graduated response may access nurture group provision, 1:1 or small-group emotional literacy support (ELSA), or other targeted interventions as appropriate.

Individual support plans, where used, set out the pupil's needs, agreed strategies, key adults, and arrangements for review, and are shared with relevant staff and, where appropriate, parents and carers.

Transitions: additional check-ins, transition booklets and buddy systems are used to support pupils moving between year groups, key stages or schools, with extra planning for pupils known to be vulnerable to change.

7. Inclusion and Vulnerable Groups

St Matthews Primary School recognises that some groups of pupils are statistically more likely to experience mental health difficulties, including pupils with SEND, looked-after children, young carers, and those affected by bereavement, family breakdown or trauma. Our practice is trauma-informed: we look for what has happened to a pupil, not just what a behaviour looks like, and we remove barriers in the environment wherever we can rather than assuming the difficulty sits solely with the child.

Through Belong, our inclusion programme, we use the inclusive environment audit, classroom adaptations and a shared language and framework that helps every child feel they belong, with strategies that particularly benefit pupils with SEND, SEMH needs or EAL.

Our approach reflects the Equality Act 2010, recognising that a mental health condition adversely affecting behaviour may amount to a disability, and our duties under the SEND Code of Practice.

8. Safeguarding and Escalation

This policy operates alongside, and never instead of, our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Any disclosure or concern that suggests a pupil is at risk of harm is reported to the DSL, Mrs R McDonald, immediately, in line with statutory safeguarding procedures and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Where a pupil discloses thoughts of self-harm or suicide, or a member of staff has an immediate concern for a pupil's safety, staff will: remain calm and non-judgemental; not leave the pupil alone; inform the DSL (or deputy) immediately; contact emergency services without delay

where there is a risk to life; and record the disclosure accurately and confidentially in CPOMS.

Confidentiality: we will normally involve parents or carers where we have a concern, unless doing so would place the pupil at increased risk, in which case we follow our safeguarding procedures.

9. Supporting Peers

Where a pupil is supporting a friend experiencing a mental health difficulty, we handle this sensitively and on a case-by-case basis. We help pupils understand what they can and cannot do to help, encourage them to talk to a trusted adult rather than carry the concern alone, and are mindful not to place undue responsibility on a child for a friend's wellbeing.

10. Staff Wellbeing

St Matthews Primary School recognises that staff wellbeing underpins pupil wellbeing. We are mindful of workload and work-life balance when planning school systems, and provide well-being support for staff who need support.

As part of our myHappymind subscription, staff have access to myHappymind for You, the programme's dedicated staff wellbeing resource, helping the adults in school look after their own mental health using the same science and strategies we teach the children.

Line managers are alert to signs that a colleague may be struggling and are encouraged to have open, supportive conversations.

11. Parent and Carer Partnership

We work in partnership with parents and carers, recognising the vital role families play in supporting children's emotional and physical wellbeing. This policy is available on our website, and we welcome questions from parents and carers at any time via School Spider.

Where we have a concern about a pupil's mental health, we will normally discuss this with parents or carers at the earliest appropriate opportunity, unless doing so would place the pupil at increased risk. Through the myHappymind Parent App, families can access resources linked to our programme and reinforce strategies such as Happy Breathing at home.

12. External Support and Agencies

Where a pupil's needs go beyond what school-based support can provide, St Matthews Primary School will discuss referral to specialist services with parents or carers, including Mental Health Support Team/CAMHS/Early Help. Referral forms and thresholds are held by the Senior Mental Health Lead and DSL, and reviewed as local pathways change.

13. Training and Support for Staff

All staff receive mental health awareness training as part of induction and ongoing safeguarding training. Our staff hold Mental Health First Aider/Level 2 mental health qualifications.

All teachers complete myHappymind online training before delivering the programme, and additional CPD is arranged where needs are identified. We can request a myHappymind staff meeting through our Customer Happiness Manager to strengthen confidence and practice.

14. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Senior Mental Health Lead monitors the impact of this policy annually, drawing on pupil voice activities, attendance and behaviour data, staff feedback and outcomes from our myHappymind programme. Findings are reported to governors and used to inform priorities for the following year.

This policy is reviewed every two years, or sooner if there is a significant change in guidance or school context, and is re-published on our website following each review.

15. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside our: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Behaviour Policy; SEND Policy; RSHE Policy; Anti-bullying Policy; and Attendance Policy.

16. Legal and Statutory Context

This policy has been written with reference to: Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, statutory guidance); Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE guidance); the Equality Act 2010; the SEND Code of Practice; and the Anna Freud Centre's 5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing framework.

Built with the myHappymind Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy Builder. This policy must be personalised, ratified by the governing body and kept under regular review; it is not a substitute for professional legal or safeguarding advice. Questions? hello@myhappymind.org · 01625 447547