



**EPWORTH**  
EDUCATION TRUST

# Mental Health & Well-being Policy



For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11

Date Reviewed:	Autumn 2022
Next Review Date:	Autumn 2025
Chairs Signature	See Paper Copy
Headteachers Signature	See Paper Copy

## **Mission Statement of Nutgrove Methodist Primary School**

Nutgrove Methodist Primary School strives to provide a caring environment in which every individual can achieve his or her full potential, without limits.

This is encompassed by our Bible verse For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11.

To achieve this, we wish to create a happy, secure and purposeful culture throughout the school, which is conducive to learning and high standards, and is based on our Christian values, love, hope and respect.

Our school's motto and vision is 'My Best, Always, Everywhere' which is interwoven within our curriculum intent and design.

## **Safeguarding Statement**

At Nutgrove Methodist Primary School we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We work to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors.

## Version Control

### Change Record

Date	Author	Version	Reason for Change
Autumn 2022	R Bottell	1	New Policy

## **School Policy Statement**

*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 Organisation).*

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do:

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11.

To achieve this, we wish to create a happy, secure and purposeful culture throughout the school, which is conducive to learning and high standards, and is based on our Christian values, love, hope and respect.

Our school’s motto and vision is ‘My Best, Always, Everywhere’ which is interwoven within our curriculum intent and design.

As the World Health Organisation explain, mental health, ‘is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.’

If we want to enable the children at Nutgrove to achieve ‘My Best, Always, Everywhere’ and reach their potential, they need good physical and mental health and well-being and strategies to support this long term throughout their lives.

We aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at identified pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

## **Scope**

This document describes the school’s approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our ‘Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy’ where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils’

- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues. [SEP]
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing. [SEP]
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues.
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers.

### **Lead Members of Staff**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Designated Senior Leader – Mrs Bottell / Deputy – Mr Chuard
- SENDCO– Mrs Dawes
- Pastoral Assistant-Mrs Barlow
- Looked After and Previously Looked After Children lead – Mrs Barlow
- PSHE Leader – Mr McClurg
- Safeguarding Governor – Mrs Picton

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Designated Senior Leaders in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed.

If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to an outside agency is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the school SENDCO.

### **Teaching About Mental Health & Wellbeing**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum alongside our global well-being approaches listed later in the document. [SEP]

At Nutgrove Methodist Primary, we work together consistently to instil behaviours and attitudes into our children that promote positive mental health. Our children:

- have opportunities to develop their resilience and perseverance in a culture where they feel safe to explore new ideas and step outside their comfort zone
- have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging
- have opportunities to participate in decision-making

- have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements
- have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed
- have opportunities to develop self-confidence and a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- have opportunities to reflect
- have access to appropriate support that meets their needs
- have a right to be in an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for
- are surrounded by approachable adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times

At Nutgrove Methodist Primary, we work together consistently to create a mentally healthy environment where all staff:

- work collaboratively as a strong team
- celebrate and recognise success across the school
- have a range of strategies that support their mental health, e.g. a named person to speak to, signposting
- have recognition of their work-life balance and have the mental health and well-being of the whole staff reviewed regularly
- feel equally valued and have opportunities to contribute to decision making processes
- are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- have their unique talents and skills recognised and opportunities are provided for development
- have time to reflect and be evaluative

At Nutgrove Methodist Primary, our mentally healthy environment is a place where parents/carers:

- can be positive role models who show respect and compassion
- support mental health in their children positively and proactively, encouraging resilience and a growth mind-set
- value regular talk with their children at an emotionally appropriate level
- guide their children consistently as a parent within clear boundaries
- are provided with opportunities where they can ask for help when needed, and use these to be open about issues they may have
- positively support the work of the school, recognising the efforts that staff go to in meeting the needs of their children
- are clear about their roles and expectations of their responsibilities in working in partnership with school
- are signposted to appropriate agencies for support

At Nutgrove Methodist Primary, a mentally healthy environment is valued because the whole school community:

- is involved in promoting positive mental health
- is valued for the role it plays in promoting positive mental health
- contributes towards the ethos of the school

### **Universal School Offer**

As a school, we support children in understanding the importance of mental health from an early stage and actively promote how we can look after our mental health so that every child learns strategies if they should ever need them.

Mental health is how you feel about yourself emotionally, psychologically and socially. Everyone has mental health – some people have good mental health, some people don't, and a person's mental health can always change dependent on circumstances at any point. Mental health is just as important as your physical health, and just like your body, your mental health can be harmed by many different things, including:

- Abuse or neglect
- Experiencing trauma through crime or violence
- Social isolation
- Being bullied or discriminated against
- Feeling stressed or under pressure
- Living in poverty
- Having debts
- Losing someone close to you
- Having a physical health condition
- Having to care for a relative
- Substance misuse

When you're talking or reading about mental health, you may also come across the terms well-being and resilience. Your well-being is related to your mental health in that it describes how comfortable, healthy or happy you are. Your resilience (sometimes known as your emotional resilience) is your ability to react to and recover from the challenges you face. Just like your mental health, your resilience isn't fixed, and you can take steps to improving it by looking after your physical health, finding a support network of people you can trust, or making changes to your lifestyle.

At Nutgrove Methodist Primary School, our work to promote positive mental health, well-being and resilience for all children includes:

\* **Worry boxes** – These are present in each classroom to support children in recognising the positive things that happen each day and also a way to communicate any concerns they might have.

**\*Emotional Check-ins-** These ensure that if a child is feeling in a particular way at points throughout the day they can complete an emotional 'Check-in', Staff are then able to have a conversation with a pupil and to identify if any further action is required.

### **\*PATHS -Programme for promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies**

At Nutgrove, we incorporate the PATHS programme into our curriculum daily. The PATHS programme, which has been developed by Barnardos is designed to facilitate the development of self-control, emotional awareness and interpersonal problem solving skills in children.

- There are four major factors that are addressed by the programme which focus on self-control, emotional understanding, problem-solving skills and creative self-expression.
- First, we teach children to "Stop and Think", a response that facilitates the development and use of verbal thought.
- Second, we provide children with enriched experiences which will help mediate understanding of self and others.
- Third, we teach the children to integrate emotional understanding with cognitive skills to analyse and solve problems.
- Fourth, and very critically, we encourage the development of verbal self-control over behaviours.

### **What are the main aims of PATHS?**

PATHS Improves

- Self-Esteem
- Self Control
- Emotional Intelligence



- Classroom Behaviour
- Conflict Resolution
- Academic Engagement

#### **PATHS Reduces**

- Aggressive Behaviour
- Emotional Distress
- Conduct Problems

### **Intent, Implementation, Impact of the PATHS curriculum**

#### **Intent**

PATHS intends to encourage children to become confident Social and Emotional Learners (SEL) building on self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, responsible decision making and relationship skills. This will empower all our children to develop the fundamental social and emotional learning skills that will enable them to make positive choices throughout life.

#### **Implementation**

PATHS is a key part of our school curriculum, from Reception through to Year 6. It is a year-by-year programme which develops and builds on previous skills that have been mastered. The programme, which has been developed by Barnardo's, empowers all our children to develop the fundamental social and emotional learning skills, which will enable them to make positive choices throughout life. PATHS is explicitly taught each week.

#### **Impact**

Teaching PATHS will give pupils the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and skills they need in order to reach their potential as individuals and within the community. It will enhance the social competence and social understanding of our pupils, as well as to facilitate educational processes in the classroom, regardless of

subject. They will develop further skills to enable them to self-regulate their emotions, work well with others, have a more positive attitude to their learning and recognise their own worth. PATHS will help equip pupils with the vocabulary and skills to recognise their own and each other's feelings and emotions and as a result, pupils will then be able to reflect on their experiences and understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up. All pupils will grow confident within themselves and recognise that not only are all feelings okay but that often we can feel more than one feeling at once – and that too is okay. By integrating PATHS into the school day and considering the needs of the whole class we will arm our children with lifelong skills that support their current and future mental health and well-being.

### **Individual Care Plans**

Sometimes, children will require additional support for a short period of time linked to a specific incident or trauma and in this instance, it is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern so that the appropriate additional support can be put in place. It would also be vital for someone who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health to have an individual support plan. This will take the format of a Plan, Do, Review support plan and should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents/carers and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition; <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
- Special requirements and precautions; <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
- Medication and any side effects; <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency; <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
- The role the school can play.

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it will be discussed with the Lead Professional.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

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

## **Warning Signs**

School 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 communicate their concerns with Mrs Bottell HT, Mrs Barlow Pastoral Assistant and SENDCO Mrs Dawes.

### **Possible warning signs include:**

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental;
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits; [L][SEP]
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn; [L][SEP]
- Changes in activity and mood; [L][SEP]
- Lowering of academic achievement; [L][SEP]
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide; [L][SEP]
- Abusing drugs or alcohol;
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope; [L][SEP]
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather; [L][SEP]
- Secretive behaviour; [L][SEP]
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly; [L][SEP]
- Lateness to or absence from school; [L][SEP]
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause; [L][SEP]
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism. [L][SEP]

## **Managing Disclosures**

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff needs to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded using the CPOMS system. This written record should include:

- Date; [L][SEP]
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made; [L][SEP]
- Main points from the conversation; [L][SEP]
- Agreed next steps. [L][SEP]

This information should be shared with the Lead professional and the SENDCO, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the DSL as this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents/carers should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents/carers themselves. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents/carers for them or with them.

### **Working with Parents/Carers**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents/carers, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents/carers we should consider the following questions (on a case-by-case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable. [L] [SEP]
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral? [L] [SEP]
- Who should be present? Consider parents/carers, the pupil, other members of staff. [L] [SEP]
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents/carers to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent/carer time to reflect. [L] [SEP] We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents/carers can also be helpful too e.g. parent/carers helplines and forums. [L] [SEP] We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents/carers often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with an agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record. Parents/carers are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents/carers we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website. Ensure that all parents/carers are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child.
- Make our Mental Health Policy easily accessible to parents/carers. [L] [SEP]

- Share ideas about how parents/carers can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- Keep parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

### **Supporting Peers**

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents/carers 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; <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- Things friends should avoid doing/saying which may inadvertently cause upset; <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- Warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g. signs of relapse).

### **Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers: <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>**

- 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.

### **Policy Review**

This policy was adopted by the Local Advisory Board in Autumn 2022 and will be reviewed in line with the policy review schedule in Autumn 2025.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate if any key changes are required.