



Mental Health Policy

Updated: November 2023
To be reviewed: November 2025
Author: Abi Pomerantz

Farndon Primary School

**EQUALITY SCHEME
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR
MENTAL POLICY**

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Staff / Committee involved in development:	Teaching And Learning Committee; Headteacher	
For use by:	Staff, Governors and Parent/Carers	
This policy relates to statutory guidance:	OFSTED Handbook Teaching Standards	
Key related Farndon Policies:	Safeguarding Policy SMSC Policy	
Equality Impact Assessment: Does this document impact on any of the following groups? If YES, state positive or negative impact, and complete an Equality Impact Assessment Form or action plan, and attach.		
Groups:	Yes/ No	Positive/Negative impact
Disability	No	
Race	No	
Gender	No	
Age	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	
Religious and Belief	No	
Gender Reassignment	No	
Marriage & Civil Partnership	No	
Pregnancy & Maternity	No	
Other	No	
Reviewed by	Teaching and Learning	
Agreed by	Full Governors	
Next Policy review date	November 2025	
A copy of this form, and any related impact assessment form or action plan must be sent to the school office		

Introduction

At Farndon Primary School we want to ensure the best possible outcomes for students and staff. We recognise that The Government's Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Implementation Programme (Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England (NHSE)2023) included a focus on early intervention and prevention with a whole school policy and designated Mental Health Lead (Abi Pomerantz).

Young Minds charity reports that **one in five young adults**, and **one in ten children** have a diagnosable mental health disorder. That translates to roughly **three children in every classroom**. Mental health issues can affect a student's emotional wellbeing as well as their educational attainment.

Developing a Mental Health Policy is a first starting point in establishing a whole school approach that not only addresses student mental health but also shows students and their parents that the school is committed to the wellbeing and mental health of the students. Additionally, it signals to students that the school is understanding of mental health issues and encourages them to come forward with their difficulties. A mentally healthy school is one that has a whole-school approach to the topic of mental health and sees the mental health of its students, staff, and parents as everybody's responsibility.

We are also committed to working in partnership with parents and carers around a supportive approach to Emotional Based Non School Attendance. At Farndon School we recognise that early intervention and help for these children and families will help to lower anxiety and will encourage the push factors in to coming to school.

Key people / dates

Farndon School	Primary	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) team	Andy Walker
		Mental Health Lead (if different)	Abi Pomerantz
		Mental Health Governor link governor	Kate Osario
		PSHE/RSHE lead	Rachel McCarthy
		SENDCo	Nicola Pimparel
		Date this policy was reviewed and by whom	Abi Pomerantz November 2023
		Date of next review and by whom	Abi Pomerantz 2025

Mental Health at Farndon Primary School

We are committed to supporting the mental well-being of staff and students at our school. We will support our students and staff by embedding good practice and an on-going commitment to staff training. We will work with the wider community to promote student wellbeing, in particular liaising with the local charity Healthbox. We acknowledge Statutory guidance including 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023 (KCSIE) and 'Relationships Education and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' 2021

Who is in charge of Mental Health?

The Mental Health lead is Abi Pomerantz although we acknowledge that a whole school approach is important and as such we have closely linked MH with our SENDCo, Nicola Pimparel.

At Farndon our MH Policy will regularly be reviewed and changed to keep it updated in some of the following ways:

- Posted on the school website
- Available on the internal staff network/drive
- Available in paper format in the staffroom
- Part of school induction pack for all new staff (including temporary, supply and non-classroom-based staff)
- Integral to safeguarding updates and training for all staff (especially in September refreshers)
- Reviews of this policy will include input from staff, pupils and other stakeholders, helping to ensure further engagement

Mental Health Policy Farndon Primary School

First written: November 2021 Reviewed November 2023

1. Policy Statement

At Farndon Primary School we are committed to promoting a positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body, their families and governors. We pursue this aim using universal, whole school approaches and specialised targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students 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. We know that everyone experiences life challenges that make us vulnerable, and at times anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play. We will support children with Emotionally Based Non -School Attendance.

2. Scope

This policy 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. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

3. Policy aims

- Promote positive mental health and well-being in our school community, including pupils, parents, staff and governors
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health and wellbeing issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

4. Concerns about Positive Mental health and Wellbeing

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

- Andy Walker – Designated safeguarding Lead
- Sarah Wakefield – Deputy Designated safeguarding Lead
- Abi Pomerantz – Mental Health Lead
- Nicola Pimparel – SENDCo
- Rachel McCarthy – PHSE Lead

School staff could become aware of changes in behaviour which may indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

These changes may include:

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

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to Abi Pomerantz (Mental Health Lead MHL) in the first instance. If there is a concern that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the school's child protection procedures should be followed. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting emergency services if necessary.

On occasion, a referral to CAMHS may be appropriate, this will be led and managed by Abi Pomerantz or a trained YMHA Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in Appendix A

When a pupil 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 Care Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

5. Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy safe are included as part of our PSHCE curriculum and embedded throughout our school learning community in line with the [DfE RSE guidance](#) (note this is statutory from 2020)

So that by the end of Primary School pupils should know:

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
- how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.

- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of each cohort 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.

Lessons will also be supported by assemblies throughout the year talking about Mental Health. We will always have and awareness raising MH week in February.

6. Managing Disclosures

At times, a pupil may choose to tell a staff member concerns that they have about their own emotions or well-being. All staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

All staff should respond in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental way.

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

All disclosures should be recorded on a MH First Aid and Triage form and shared with Abi Pomerantz (Mental Health Lead), who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

6.1 Confidentiality

Staff must be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. They should never promise the child that they will keep this to themselves, and should inform the pupil who they are going to talk to, what they are going to tell them and why it is important that they pass these concerns on.

6.2 Informing Parents/Carers

Parents will usually be informed if a child makes a disclosure and staff need to be sensitive when sharing this with parents/carers. It can be upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and staff should give the parent/ carer time to reflect. A brief record of the meeting should be kept in line with school policy. Staff should always highlight further sources of information where possible to offer support to the parent

However, if a child gives reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents may not be informed and Andy Walker (Designated Safeguarding Lead) should be informed immediately so that a referral can be made.

7. Working with parents/carers and the school community

We recognise the family plays an important role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child's mental health and wellbeing

- Ensure that we act quickly and in a supportive way for any pupils with EBSNA
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.)
- Make the school policy easily accessible to parents and carers
- Keep parents informed about the topics that children are learning about in school.
- Carry out parent workshops/information sessions to raise awareness of mental health and well-being.
- Working Healthbox and other local charities who support mental health and wellbeing

8. Training

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. The Mental Health Lead will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent. We aim to have a Mental Health First Aid trained member of staff in all Milestones and in EYFS. We will publish relevant information to staff who wish to learn more about mental health and this policy will be provided to all staff as part of their induction. 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. We will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health throughout the year and as appropriate. Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Abi Pomerantz who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is **November 2025**. In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of Abi Pomerantz.

Appendix A: Guidance about CAMHS referral

For any issues or queries regarding making a referral to the CYP Mental Health Hub please contact

01606 555118 (Mon-Fri 9:00-17:00)

If you are unsure whether making a referral is the most appropriate action or would like to talk through any concerns regarding a child/ young person's mental health, please contact our CYP Adviceline on 01606 555120. Please follow the instructions provided on the answer service and we will contact you back on the number you provide (Mon-Fri 13:00-17:00).

Before making the referral, have a clear outcome in mind, what do you want CAMHS to do? You might be looking for advice, strategies, support or a diagnosis for instance.

You must also be able to provide evidence to CAMHS about what intervention and support has been offered to the pupil by the school and the impact of this. CAMHS will always ask 'What have you tried?' so be prepared to supply relevant evidence, reports and records.

General considerations

- Have you met with the parent(s)/carer(s) and the referred child/children?
- Has the referral to CAMHS been discussed with a parent / carer and the referred pupil?
- Has a parent / carer given consent for the referral?
- What are the parent/carer pupil's attitudes to the referral?

Basic information

- Is there a child protection plan in place?
- Is the child looked after?
- name and date of birth of referred child/children
- address and telephone number
- who has parental responsibility?
- surnames if different to child's
- GP details
- What is the ethnicity of the pupil / family.
- Will an interpreter be needed?
- Are there other agencies involved?

Reason for referral

- What are the specific difficulties that you want CAMHS to address?
- How long has this been a problem and why is the family seeking help now?
- Is the problem situation-specific or more generalised?
- Your understanding of the problem/issues involved.

Further helpful information

- Who else is living at home and details of separated parents if appropriate?
- Name of school
- Who else has been or is professionally involved and in what capacity?
- Has there been any previous contact with our department?
- Has there been any previous contact with social services?
- Details of any known protective factors
- Any relevant history i.e. family, life events and/or developmental factors
- Are there any recent changes in the pupil's or family's life?
- Are there any known risks, to self, to others or to professionals?
- Is there a history of developmental delay e.g. speech and language delay
- Are there any symptoms of ADHD/ASD and if so have you talked to the Educational psychologist?

Please see the MH Lead or SENDCo to complete the CAMHs form and email to:
cwp.cyp.mentalhealthhub@nhs.ne