Old Park Primary School & Nursery

Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy

Date: November 2026

Next Review: November 2027

Person responsible: K Ryder

1. Introduction

At Old Park School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. Our supportive and caring ethos is part of our culture, and we believe that supporting emotional health and wellbeing is the responsibility of every adult working in school.

At Old Park School we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times and anyone may need additional support with their emotional wellbeing and mental health. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's responsibility and that we all have a role to play. We are committed to reducing the stigma linked to mental health and acknowledging that our wellbeing and mental health can fluctuate from day to day.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. Research suggests that around one in five children and pupils experience a probable mental health difficulty. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health provision, policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils/pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

As part of our commitment, we have designated staff to support emotional health and wellbeing and mental health across the school.

2. Key Personnel

Name	Role
Kelly Ryder	Senior Mental Health Lead
Kelly Ryder	Youth Mental Health First Aider
Kelly Ryder	Pastoral Lead
Claire Ward, Michael Ward, Julie Barnes.	Pastoral Team
Claire Ward	Nurture Lead
Claire Ward and Rachel Poole	Nurture Team
Julie Barnes and Laura Parsons	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

Old Park Primary School & Nursery has a trained Senior Mental Health Lead who oversees the strategic development of emotional health, wellbeing and mental health provision across the school. The Senior Mental Health Lead works closely with school leaders, staff, pupils, parents and external agencies to promote positive mental health, provide early intervention and ensure appropriate support is available for children who may be experiencing emotional or mental health difficulties. The Senior Mental Health Lead also coordinates staff training, monitors the effectiveness of provision and supports the implementation of this policy.

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils/pupils, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing in Telford and Wrekin.

When we talk about the mental health of our pupils/pupils, we use the definition by the World Health Organisation.

"A state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the normal stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community."

At Old Park School we:

- teach and support pupils understanding of their emotions and feelings as we grow and change.
- ensure pupils feel comfortable about sharing concerns or worries about their emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- teach pupils that it is okay not to be okay.
- educate pupils about healthy relationships and support them to form and maintain relationships appropriate for their age and stage in life.
- promote the importance of good self-esteem and ensure pupils know that they have equal value to anyone else.
- encourage pupils to be confident in themselves and have a sense of pride in being who they are.
- support and develop pupils to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks in their lives.

We promote a positive mental health culture by:

- Taking openly about our emotions and mental health, so that we can begin to remove the stigma associated with it.
- Modelling healthy relationships with colleagues and actively listening to pupils/pupils so they know that they will be supported if requested.
- Promoting our school values and ethos and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making and democracy.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements in life.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others, including participating in school parliaments, student voice forums and pupils/pupils safeguarding boards.
- Providing opportunities to reflect on the choices they make and the consequences of these.
- Supporting pupils/pupils to access the right support at the right time.

We pursue our aims through:

- A universal, whole school approach to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all pupils/pupils. This includes a taught curriculum for all about mental health, through the statutory health education curriculum.
- Supporting pupils/pupils to ask for help when dealing with a mental health issue and to see this as a sign of strength.
- Teaching through health education the need to live a healthy lifestyle to keep our minds balanced.
- Spreading awareness about mental health to reduce stigma.
- Offering additional high quality in school support for pupils who are experiencing issues in their own lives that affect their wellbeing, including bereavement.
- Ensuring access to specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term mental health needs.

3. Scope of this policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding policy, Medication and First Aid Policy, Behaviour Policy, SEND and inclusion policy and RSE Policy, in cases where pupils/pupils mental health needs overlap with these.

4. Emotional Health and Wellbeing 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 child protection / safeguarding leads – James Foster, Stuart Clarke, Andy Parton, Kelly Ryder, Sarah Davies, Micheal Ward and Julie Barnes.
- Mental Health and Emotional wellbeing lead - Kelly Ryder
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant -ELSA Julie Barnes and Laura Parsons.
- Accredited Youth Mental Health First Aider - Kelly Ryder

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental RSE, PSHE and Safeguarding curriculums. The specific content of lessons is determined by the needs of the pupils within the year group and school. The teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing is linked directly to the statutory guidance for Health Education (September 2020).

5. Raising concerns about mental ill health

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to a mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a concern that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection/safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated safeguarding lead or the headteacher. 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.

6. Targeted support

At Old Park School we offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Managing feelings resources e.g. ‘worry boxes’ and ‘worry eaters’
- Emotion Coaching
- The Inner Chimp
- Developing wellbeing and resilience
- Managing emotions resources such as ‘the incredible 5 point scale’
- Peer coaching and mentoring
- 4 S’s of Attachment – Seen, Safe, Soothed, Secure
- Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups, ELSA support groups.
- Therapeutic activities including art, Build to Express, relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Therapeutic strategies including Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Solution Focused Brief Therapy and Motivational Interviewing
- Learning Lenses
- My Creative School
- Labyrinth
- Toolbox of Wellbeing
- Social Stories
- Books Beyond Words
- Calm Brain
- Sleep Champion

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire - https://www.sdqinfo.org/
- The Boxall Profile – Nurture UK
- Emotional literacy scales – GL Assessment
- Engagement Profile – (2020 Rochford Version)
- Leuven Scale

7. Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further appropriate support.

We will display relevant sources across school to ensure that pupils know:

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

8. Identifying needs and Warning Signs

When assessing pupils' mental health we should consider:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships between peers
- Approaches to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Changes in presentation
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

At Old Park Primary School & Nursery, we recognise that emotional health and wellbeing can be influenced by a wide range of factors and that some children may be more vulnerable to experiencing mental health difficulties. This may include children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Children in Care and Previously Looked After Children, young carers, children who have experienced trauma, bereavement or adverse childhood experiences, and those facing significant changes or challenges in their lives.

We are committed to promoting equality, inclusion and positive outcomes for all children. We will ensure that emotional health and wellbeing support is accessible, inclusive and responsive to individual needs. Staff will work closely with families and external agencies where appropriate to identify barriers, provide early intervention and ensure that children receive the right support at the right time.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, we will not discriminate against any child on the grounds of age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. We will strive to create a safe, supportive and nurturing environment where every child feels valued, respected and able to achieve their full potential.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / 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
- Pupils/pupils making comments about wanting to die, wishing they were dead
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Refusal to take part in PE or getting changed secretively
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

9. Managing Disclosures

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

If a child 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 child/young person's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be documented on CPOMS/ usual school procedures. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation in the child's words as much as possible
- Who the information has been shared with
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the mental health and designated safeguarding lead, who will store the record appropriately, contact Family Connect and/or other professional services if necessary, and offer support and advice about next steps.

10. Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a child/young person on, then we should discuss with the pupil:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a child/young person without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and/or a parent.

Disclosures should always be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to safeguard the child/young person and the emotional wellbeing of the staff involved, as we are no longer solely responsible for the child/young person, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the child/young person and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with. Parents will usually be informed if there are concerns about their child's emotional health, wellbeing or mental health. However, where there are safeguarding concerns or where informing parents may place a child at risk, advice will be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and appropriate procedures followed."

If a child/young person gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed immediately, they will then seek advice form Family Connect.

11. Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision Old Park School works with other agencies to support pupils' emotional health and wellbeing including:

- Emotional Health and Wellbeing Public Health School Nurse-Sandra Williamson
- Educational Psychology Services - Dr Jane Park
- Behaviour Support Advisory Team – Darren Lennon
- Paediatricians – if the child is registered
- BEE-U (Pupils and Pupils' Adolescent mental health service) – Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust(MPFT)
- Future in Mind Telford
- Counselling services
- Training for Youth Mental Health First Aiders – Siân Deane and Michelle Salter
- Early Help and Support
- Social Care
- KOOTH
- Live Well Telford - Search results | Live Well Telford
- Samaritans for Pupils - Pupils | Emotional health resources | Mental health | Samaritans

12. Working with Parents

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

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

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We are accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

It may be necessary to highlight further sources of information and signpost parents to where further information can be found. It is possible that parents may find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news about their child. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We will always provide clear means of contacting the school with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. We aim to finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

13. Working with all Parents

In order to support parents we will:

- Be open and honest about mental health and demonstrate a commitment to supporting all pupils/pupils and their families.
- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to access this support, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child.
- Parent Opening doors Telford - Together We Can Make a Difference
- Involve parents in events that raise awareness of mental health in pupils and pupils.
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their pupils, through whole school events, information sessions and the school website.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics pupils/pupils are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.
- Support parents with their own mental health needs by understanding what support is available locally.

14. 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 child who is experiencing mental ill health and their parents 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
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend may see and therefore help by seeking support from trusted adults 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

15. Training for school-based staff

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils/pupils safe. Mental health Leads attending Future in Mind Telford, receive three full days of CPD each year, along with the resources and slides to cascade their learning to staff and parents.

In addition, schools can access additional training locally to receive accredited Youth Mental Health First Aid Training.

16. Monitoring and Governor Oversight

The school is committed to regularly monitoring the effectiveness of its emotional health and wellbeing provision to ensure that children receive appropriate support and that positive outcomes are achieved for all pupils.

The impact of this policy will be monitored through a range of measures, including:

- Pupil voice and wellbeing surveys.
- Attendance and persistent absence data.
- Behaviour and safeguarding records.
- Referrals to pastoral, mental health and external support services.
- Feedback from pupils, parents, carers and staff.
- Reviews of individual support plans and intervention programmes.
- Analysis of relevant school improvement priorities and outcomes.

The Senior Mental Health Lead, alongside the Senior Leadership Team, will review this information regularly to identify emerging needs, evaluate the effectiveness of provision and inform future developments.

The Governing Body has strategic oversight of emotional health and wellbeing within the school. Governors will receive appropriate updates on the school's wellbeing provision, priorities and outcomes and will challenge and support leaders to ensure that effective systems are in place to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all members of the school community.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner in response to changes in legislation, statutory guidance or local need, to ensure it remains effective and reflects current best practice.