

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Old Newton CE Primary School</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Inspire - Nurture - Flourish <i>Increasing in Wisdom - Growing in Love</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Policy Document</b></p> <p>Agreed: October 2025 Review: Annual Date: October 2026</p>
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“Emotional health and wellbeing is the emotional resilience that enables us to enjoy life and to survive pain, suffering and disappointment. It is a positive sense of wellbeing and an underlying belief in our own worth and of others. Emotional health and well being is embedded in social relations but upon social skills that are developed from birth.” (Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer, 2001)

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## 1.0 Policy statement

At Old Newton we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all children, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows pupils' voices to be heard, 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.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Old Newton's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies including Behaviour, SEND, safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

## 3.0 Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and pupils.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in pupils.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.

- Provide the right support to those with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst pupils 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 pupil welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

## 4.0 Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- SENCO - Mrs Gill Watson
- Designated Safeguarding Leads - Mrs Jo Lockyear & Mrs Leanne Lambourne
- Mental Health First Aid Champion - Miss Lauren Symonds
- RSHE Coordinator -Mrs Jenny Sturgeon
- Designated governor Libby Brooks

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil, in the first instance they should speak to the DSL or SENCO.

If there is a concern that the pupil is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

## 5.0 Individual Care Plans

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.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Any additional provision or intervention for the child from both within school and by outside agencies
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

## 6.0 Teaching about mental health

What does good emotional health and wellbeing look like in our school?

The ability to develop caring concerns for others.

The ability to recognise, acknowledge and manage feelings.

The ability to develop meaningful, positive and long lasting relationships.

The ability to take responsibility for themselves and make practical decisions.

The ability to develop emotional resilience and manage setbacks.

We hope we can support our children to;

Be effective and successful life long learners.

Make and sustain positive relationships among staff and children.

Be able to face and resolve conflict effectively.

Learn how to negotiate with others to solve some problems without adult intervention.

Learn how to manage feelings of anger, frustration and anxiety.

Have a calm and optimistic outlook allowing for achievement of goals.

Develop resilience to setbacks and to persevere when things go wrong.

Cooperate with others in work and play.

Have a healthy attitude to competition, losing with dignity and showing respect towards other competitors.

Recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others in an appropriate manner.

Recognise and value similarities and differences between themselves and others and understanding that others may have different values and beliefs to them.

We promote a mentally healthy environment by

Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging

Promoting pupil voice and giving opportunities to be part of decision making.

Celebrating achievements both academic and non academic.

Providing opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for themselves and others to support a sense of worth

Ensuring opportunities of reflection and having a designated space for reflection outside

Provide appropriate support to meet the needs of pupils

The skills, knowledge and understanding our children need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHEe curriculum and our peer mentoring programme.

We will follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing> Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote students' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of students' own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing pupils who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges. **See Section 14 for Supporting Peers**

## 7.0 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 with posters and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students and families 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

## 8.0 Sources of support in the local community

### Working with other Agencies

As part of our whole school approach, we will work with other agencies in the community, to support our pupils emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- the school nurse
- Community Paediatrician
- CAMHS
- Counselling services
- Therapists
- Family Support Workers
- Psychology and therapeutic services - Inclusion Facilitator, Psychologists
- Emotional Wellbeing hub - Emotional wellbeing practitioners

## 9.0 Warning Signs

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 alert the DSL or SENCO.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

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

## 10.0 Targeted support

### **Identifying need and monitoring impact**

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who have had or are currently experiencing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as those in care, young carers, those that have experienced any kind of abuse or neglect; or those who have had previous access to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). Also those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence, substance misuse or criminality.

Through our knowledge of individual children and their circumstances, children are effectively identified early by class teachers or teaching assistants and are discussed with our SENDCo. They are supported through timely, accessible and effective programmes of intervention and/or nurture sessions.

For some children, drawing on expertise from outside the school is necessary to meet their needs. A referral by the school or parents to the Emotional Wellbeing Hub, the school nursing service or their GP, may be required.

Each programme of support and involvement from outside agencies is closely monitored and reviewed. Target setting, good communication between professionals and regular staff meeting discussions provide opportunities for the quality of care to be evaluated and developed and for staff training needs to be identified.

### **Covid-19**

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the wellbeing of a greater proportion of pupils may have been directly impacted by the unique difficulties and challenges that a national lockdown will have imposed; pupils are more likely to have a range of unmet needs that will impact their ability to be present and learn. They may well have been exposed to more frequent and consistent adverse experiences in the home without the support and reassurance from others outside the home. Pupils may return to school less resilient, mentally unwell, or with challenging behaviours and will require a recovery curriculum that



recognises and responds positively to a child's emotional, mental health and/or behavioural needs.

## 11.0 Managing disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on the student's personal file, or where there is a safeguarding concern, on the safeguarding recording form, including:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with DSL and SENCO

## 12.0 Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student. We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we will tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the pupil first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

Parents must always be informed.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

## 13.0 Whole school approach

### 13.1 Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present – students, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the pupil's record and an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate.

## 13.2 Supporting parents

We recognise the family plays a key 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 all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

## 14.0 Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering 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 needs help (e.g. signs of relapse)

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

## 15.0 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 Headteacher and nominated wellbeing champion will have completed training in mental health i.e. Mental Wellbeing in Children and Young People, Leading a Mentally Healthy School or equivalent.

Training opportunities for staff are provided e.g. 'Empowering the Anxious Child' by the Suffolk Primary Mental Health team. Additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations. For example, staff may complete training such as An Introduction to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Early Trauma. Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health. Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Mrs Gill Watson (SENDCo) who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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 due to developing situations with one or more students.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with DSL or SENCO who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

## 16.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is **October 2024**

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of the Head Teacher in liaison with the SENCO.

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.