

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

Date policy reviewed:	1 September 2025
Date of next review:	1 September 2026
Person(s) responsible for review:	SLT (VF)

DfE GUIDANCE: 'MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS (November 2018).

The school has regard to the above guidance. Please view the full document at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools_.pdf

DfE GUIDANCE: 'KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION'.

The school has regard to the above guidance. Please view the full document at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At The Manor, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. Whilst this policy is focused on our provision for children, please refer to our Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for further information on how we support staff in this area.

Our culture is supportive, caring and respectful. We encourage pupils to be open and we want each child to have their voice heard.

At The Manor, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that children may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that any child may need additional emotional support. At our school, positive mental health is everybody's responsibility. We all have a role to play.

This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers, governors and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach to promoting student mental health and wellbeing. It should be read and understood alongside our Safeguarding; Anti-Bullying; Bereavement; Curriculum; Cyber-bullying; E-Safety and Acceptable Use; First Aid, Health, Illness and Medicine; Pastoral Care; Learning for Life (PSHEE and PSED); SEND - Learning Support; Relationships, Sex and Health Education; and Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development policies.

The aim of our policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our pupils. At The Manor, we will always:

- Help pupils to better understand their emotions and experiences
- Ensure our pupils feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries
- Help pupils to form and maintain relationships
- Encourage pupils to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem
- Help pupils to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks

We will always promote a healthy environment by:

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all pupils
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements
- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect
- Promoting our pupils' voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making
- Celebrating each pupil for who they are and making every pupil feel valued and respected
- Adopting a whole-school approach to mental health and providing support to any pupil who needs it
- Raising awareness amongst staff and pupils about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms
- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental health issues in pupils
- Approaching behavioural concerns using restorative practice (please refer to our Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion Policy for further information)

KEY STAFF MEMBERS

All staff members have a responsibility to promote and support children's mental health and wellbeing. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

Staff Role	Name of Staff Member
Head	Mrs Rachel Hamlyn
Deputy Head Pastoral, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Senior Mental Health Lead	Mr Varun Footring
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Mrs Pippa McConnell Mr Neil Jackson
Head of Learning for Life (PSHEE/PSED)	Miss Ellie Ingram
Mindfulness Coordinator	Mrs Jennifer Shaw
SENCO	Mrs Judith Grant
Heads of Section	Mrs Pippa McConnell (Head of Pre-Prep) Mrs Jennifer Shaw (Years 3 and 4) Mr Neil Jackson Years 5 and 6)
School Nurse	Mrs Ellie Mitchell
Form Teachers	

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student, then in the first instance they should speak to the Deputy Head Pastoral (and Designated Safeguarding Lead/Designated Senior Mental Health Lead), Mr Varun Footring.

If a child presents a medical emergency then relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the School Nurse and the emergency services.

IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND WARNING SIGNS

All of our staff are trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems. This means that they will be able to offer help and support to pupils who need it, when they need it.

These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs will communicate their concerns with the Deputy Head Pastoral as appropriate:

- Physical signs of harm
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in mood
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope
- Secretive behaviour
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption

Staff should also be aware of and identify a range of other issues, including:

- Attendance and absenteeism, including emotionally based school avoidance
- Punctuality and lateness
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education
- Family and relationship problems

Staff will also be well-placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a child's mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement and health difficulties.

Negative experiences and distressing life events can affect mental health in a way that can bring about changes in a young person's behaviour or emotional state, displayed in a range of different ways, all of which can be an indication of an underlying problem. This can include:

- Emotional state (fearful, withdrawn, low self-esteem)
- Behaviour (aggressive or oppositional; habitual body rocking)
- Interpersonal behaviours (indiscriminate contact or affection seeking, over-friendliness or excessive clinginess; demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent disapproval; failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed; coercive controlling behaviour; or lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions)

Where there are concerns about behaviour, the school will instigate an assessment to determine whether there are any underlying factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with speech and language, child protection concerns or mental health problems.

The Manor recognises the two key elements that can enable schools to reliably identify children at risk of mental health problems as set out by the Government guidance document 'Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Guidance':

- **Effective use of data** so that changes in pupils' patterns of attainment, attendance or behaviour are noticed and can be acted upon; along with
- **An effective pastoral system** so that at least one member of staff (e.g. a Form Teacher or class teacher) knows every pupil well and has received training to spot where challenging or unusual behaviour may have a root cause that needs addressing.

If the school suspects that a pupil is having mental health difficulties, we will not delay putting support in place, using a graduated response process:

- An assessment to establish a clear analysis of the pupil's needs;
- a plan to set out how the pupil will be supported;
- action to provide that support; and
- regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of the provision and effect changes where necessary.

The school may refer to tools such as the 'Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire' and the 'Boxall Profile' to support us through the process where necessary. These will help us to provide a basis for ascertaining whether the initial intervention is working or whether something different needs to be tried. We will also work collaboratively with other agencies if children need further support.

Early intervention to address underlying causes of disruptive behaviour should include an assessment of whether appropriate provision is in place to support any SEN or disability that a pupil may have. In some cases, the school may consider use of a multi-agency assessment such as through the LCSS's 'Strengths and Needs' process. The scope of such assessments could also include a focus on SEND or the wider context of the child's life in the family home and their community.

Whilst not all children with mental health difficulties will have SEN, persistent or serious mental health difficulties will often meet the definition of SEN. Please note the below wording from the 'SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years' (2024):

6.32 Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

6.33 Schools and colleges should have clear processes to support children and young people, including how they will manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour so it does not adversely affect other pupils. The Department for Education publishes guidance on managing pupils' mental health and behaviour difficulties in schools (...).

The graduated response process set out in the SEND Code of Practice provides a framework for deciding what support to offer, which would be good practice regardless of whether or not a pupil has SEN. The SENCO and Deputy Head Pastoral will ensure colleagues understand how the school identifies and meets pupils' needs, provide advice and support to colleagues as needed and liaise with external SEND professionals as necessary.

TEACHING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Positive mental health and wellbeing is actively promoted for pupils in terms of being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution and economic wellbeing. This is addressed in the curriculum and through assemblies.

Our Learning for Life (PSHEE/PSED) curriculum follows the Jigsaw scheme and is developed to give pupils the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy.

Mental health and wellbeing may also be discussed in Circle Time and Enrichment sessions, and the children are encouraged to share their experiences and questions during this time.

Mindfulness is taught explicitly in Year 3 and 4 as part of the Enrichment curriculum, and this is delivered by a trained member of staff.

The Manor participates in Place2Be's annual 'Children's Mental Health Week' initiative, as a further means of promoting an awareness of this topic across the school. Anti-Bullying Week is also championed throughout the school by the Head of Learning for Life each year.

The ethos of The Manor is to promote social and moral wellbeing, to teach pupils to take care of and to value themselves, and to think in terms of making a positive contribution to society as adults.

SUPPORT AT SCHOOL AND IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Manor realises the great importance of 'the child's voice' and for all members of the school community to listen to the views of the child. The School ensures that its arrangements to listen to children are effective, including the use of counsellors/listeners, use of helplines, questionnaires, worry boxes, 1:1 check-ins with Form Teachers, Heads of Section, members of the Learning Support Team and the Deputy Head Pastoral to gain views and insight. In our regular questionnaires of children, the school checks that pupils confirm that they have someone they can talk to if they experience difficulties. The Form Teacher plays a major role in this regard but **all** staff are aware that children may choose to confide in them.

Where we feel that children would benefit from additional support, we may organise sessions with our qualified ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant). Our ELSA sessions helps children to develop emotional literacy, positive mental health, social skills and emotional regulation. 'Drawing & Talking' sessions are also offered at the school's

discretion as a gentle, non-intrusive method of working with children who need a little help to support their emotional needs. These sessions are free of charge and will be taken by trained staff for half an hour, at the same time and on the same day each week. There is also a professional School Counsellor available to support certain pupils and staff members, individually. Sessions with the School Counsellor are organised either through the School Nurse or Deputy Head Pastoral. Family support and/or therapy could also be considered by the Deputy Head Pastoral, SENCO and mental health professionals in some contexts.

There is a focus on child welfare and pastoral matters in all staff meetings, particularly in weekly meetings of the individual sections of the school, in Senior Leadership Team meetings, Learning Support meetings and in Safeguarding Team meetings.

The Manor will also liaise, as appropriate, with outside services including:

- MASH
- Children's Social Care Team
- LCSS, who may advise on local processes for support such as a Strengths and Needs (Early Help) Assessment
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- Paediatricians
- Therapists
- Family support workers
- Behavioural support workers
- Educational Psychologists

WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY APPROACH

We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our pupils. This means working with parents and carers.

We aim to support parents as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and offering our support at all times. This support may include the following:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school
- Share and allow parents to access further support
- Ensure parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child
- Give parents guidance about how they can support their child's positive mental health (including through newsletters about mental health and wellbeing in the Weekly Mailing)
- Ensure that this policy is easily accessible to parents
- Keep parents informed about how mental health is covered in our school curriculum

SAFEGUARDING AND MENTAL HEALTH

The school recognises the important role we play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils in the context of Safeguarding, in line with the DfE statutory guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the child protection procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy, and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy as soon as possible.

We recognise that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Governors work with the Deputy Head Pastoral and SLT to ensure there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

EMOTIONALLY BASED SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) describes a child or young person who experiences difficulty in attending school.

If a child at The Manor experiences EBSA, the Deputy Head Pastoral, Heads of Section, SENCO and Head will liaise closely to support the child and their family, in liaison with other staff best placed to support the individual child. Depending on the nature of the concern and the levels of attendance, we will usually take advice from the County Attendance Team, the LCSS and/or other agencies in liaison with the family. Other agencies may include CAMHS, counsellors, clinical psychologists and cognitive behavioural therapists. Please also refer to The Manor's Attendance Policy.

Where children experience ESBA, The Manor recognises that the three key elements to helping children return after a period of prolonged non-attendance are:

Relationships:

Support may consider:

- Holistic approach
- Relationships with teachers
- Relationship between home and school
- Young people recognising the impact of ESBA
- Confidence and experience of key adults involved
- Availability of others to parents and young people

Agency and Control:

Support may consider:

- Child and Family having input into the return to school process
- The structure of the day and learning environment
- Motivation and autonomy
- Making sense of experiences of ESBA (emotional literacy, self-esteem)

Practical Support:

Support may consider:

- Home-school support and communication
- Gradual and flexible return
- Links and supported access to other agencies
- Space in school

- Managing worries and social support

When children return to school, we may also look to implement the following support strategies:

1. Ensure teachers and school staff are aware of the child's needs and can support or guide them towards support. This will include sharing how the child will signal anxiety and how to respond.
2. Provide regular supported opportunities for the child to calm during the school day (supported by identified key staff).
3. Consider graduated increases in expectations (e.g. time in school, time in lessons) based on progress (plan, do, review). We will ensure that all steps are negotiated and agreed with the pupil, moving at their pace.
4. Consider a programme of further emotional literacy support.

SUPPORTING PEERS

We understand that, when a pupil is experiencing mental health difficulties, it can be a difficult time for their peers. In response to this, we will consider, on a case by case basis, any peers who may need additional support.

We will provide support in a one-on-one or group setting. These sessions will be guided by the student, but they will discuss how peers can help, how peers can access support themselves, and healthy ways of coping with any emotions they might be feeling.

TRAINING

All staff will receive regular training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of their regular Safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep children safe. Training at The Manor includes online EduCare training modules relating to mental health and wellbeing, in-person INSET training with the Designated Senior Mental Health Lead (Deputy Head Pastoral) and SENCO, staff bulletins and training from outside speakers such as the Oxfordshire Education Safeguarding Advisory Team (ESAT).

We will consider additional training opportunities for staff and we will support additional CPD throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with pupils.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every year. This is so that it remains up to date, useful and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.