



Filey Junior School

...ns and reaching our potential. Respecting the world and each other.
A happy, healthy and positive learning community.

Date this version of policy adopted by the Governing Body: Oct 2025

Reviewed date: Oct 2026

Next review date: Oct 2027

Signed Headteacher: *Michael Taylor*

Signed DSL: *L. Grice*

Signed Chair of Governors: *L. Beighton*

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

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 Organization)

At Filey Junior School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students' 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. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole-school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Filey Junior School's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

The policy aims to:

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

- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience-building techniques.

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 training and roles to support pupils and staff:

DSL - Mr Ian Grice

DDSL - Mr Michael Taylor

Senior Mental Health Leads - Mr Ian Grice and Mr Michael Taylor

Pastoral Lead and SENDCo - Mrs Angela Grice

PSHE Lead - Mrs Jenny Hall

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student, in the first instance, they should speak to the Senior Mental Health Leads. If there is a concern that the student 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.

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.

Elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is closely linked to mental health and well-being, as feeling safe, respected, and supported is essential for a person's emotional and psychological health. Effective safeguarding helps protect individuals from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm, while also creating an environment where they feel able to speak openly about concerns and seek help. Experiences of abuse, neglect, discrimination, or unsafe environments can have a significant impact on mental health, potentially contributing to anxiety, stress, low self-esteem, depression, or feelings of isolation. Promoting positive mental health therefore forms an important part of safeguarding, alongside early identification of concerns, appropriate support, and access to relevant services. By taking a person-centred approach and listening to individuals' needs and wishes, professionals can help promote both safety and overall well-being.

Inclusion

Inclusion at Filey Junior School is important for supporting children's mental health and emotional well-being. An inclusive environment ensures that every child feels valued, respected, accepted and able to participate, regardless of their abilities, background, culture or individual needs. When children feel that they belong and are treated fairly, this can help develop their confidence, self-esteem and positive relationships with others. Filey Junior School promotes inclusion by providing appropriate support, encouraging children to express their feelings, celebrating differences and creating a safe environment where children feel comfortable asking for help. Staff should also be aware of changes in a child's behaviour or emotional well-being and work with parents, carers and relevant professionals when additional support is needed. By promoting equality, belonging and understanding, primary schools can help create a positive environment that supports children's mental health and overall well-being.

Teaching about mental health

Our PSHE curriculum has been designed to support mental health and wellbeing. It provides the skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe.

Additionally, we will use individual lessons as a vehicle for providing students 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. Included in our curriculum are lessons focussed around:

- Healthy Lifestyles: Physical and Emotional Health
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing: Identification and Strategies

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services. Within the school (noticeboards, common rooms etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, website, Facebook and Class Dojo), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events. The aim of this is to ensure students 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

Sources or support at school and in the local community

- In-school pastoral support

- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists
- Early help services

Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs, which indicate a student 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, DDSL or Pastoral Lead.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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
- 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
- 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

Pastoral Pathway and targeted support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness, those living in households experiencing domestic violence, those who have experienced an ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience). We work closely with a range of teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely and collaboratively with professionals from a range of agencies.

- Identifying and assessing in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. Agree an Individual Care Plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach;
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, According to the child's needs;
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;
- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it;
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

Serious Mental Health Concerns

The school recognises that serious mental health concerns may become safeguarding concerns and should not be viewed solely as pastoral or wellbeing matters. Staff should remain alert to indicators of significant risk, including self-harm, suicidal thoughts or behaviours, eating disorders and other behaviours that may place a child at risk of harm. Where a member of staff has a concern about a child's mental health or believes that their mental health is affecting their safety or welfare, they must follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report the concern promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL. The DSL will consider the appropriate level of response, including whether a safeguarding referral or referral to specialist mental health services is required. The school will respond sensitively and proportionately, working with the child, parents/carers and relevant professionals to ensure that appropriate support and protection are provided.

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, 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 the DSL and DDSL and other relevant staff members on a need to know basis.

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're going to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the student 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, but students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, a timescale of 24 hours is recommended to share this information before the school makes contact with the parents/carers.

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

Whole school approach when 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 on CPOMs and an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate.

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, Facebook, Class Dojo 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;
- 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.

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

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. A nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent.

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 developing situations with one or more students.

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 the Senior Mental Health Leads, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum.

The next review date is October 2027

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes.

This is the responsibility of (Ian Grice and Michael Taylor – Senior Mental Health Leads).

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.