



Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Last updated:	March 2026
Approved by Governors:	16.3.26
Review cycle:	3 years
Review date:	15.3.29

1. Introduction

At High Ash CE school we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of all pupils. Our school motto is 'Grow Together Shine Forever' and at the heart of this is the desire for all our children to live and experience life in all its fullness with a healthy mind and the opportunity to share their thoughts, feelings, worries and aspirations in a safe and caring school.

The school's role is to ensure that the school is a calm, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn, and which is the foundation of securing good attendance. We will achieve this by promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing through a whole-school approach to pupil mental health, and by developing a trusted relationship with parents/carers and families that involves them in the conversation about the school's ethos, and emphasises the importance of supporting mental health and regular attendance.

The purpose of the policy is to set out how High Ash will encourage positive wellbeing and the interventions that will be made for those children who need additional support. Where a child's whose mental health is a barrier to attendance then reference is made to the alternative policy *Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School*.

2. Approach

In order to achieve our vision we have a whole school approach to positive Mental Health and Wellbeing:

- Leadership and management that support and lead by example when it comes to mental health and wellbeing across the school
- An ethos that promotes respectful relationships across the school
- Identifying needs and early intervention
- Monitoring impact of interventions
- Working with parents and carers and the wider community
- Effective curriculum, high quality teaching

3. Teaching mental health

Curriculum

Through Jigsaw PSHE lessons, we teach children the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient and understand about mental health.

EYFS children learn:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.
- Know the names of some emotions such as happy, sad, frightened, angry
- Recognise emotions when they or someone else is upset, frightened or angry
- Understand that challenges can be difficult
- Resilience
- Recognise some of the feelings linked to perseverance
- How their behaviour affects other people

KS1 and KS2 children learn:

- that mental well-being 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
- isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
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- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental well-being
- 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 well-being or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental well-being and happiness
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests
- 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

4. Targeted Approach

Our pupil wellbeing offer follows a four stage approach:

Level 1- this is our universal wellbeing offer providing pastoral care for all children through our PSHE curriculum, our Reflections and class circle times and pupil voice surveys. Children in Key Stage Two work with a growth mindset coach from Fortitude MK who comes into school each week to work with the children on developing resilience and empathy (see Appendix 1).

Level 2 - this is when we provide some short-term interventions to support children who may need that extra care. This is in the form of daily check ins with a trusted adult, use of zones of regulation.

Level 3- We have a fully trained counsellor in school to offer bespoke 1:1 support for children who need more specialist support. We currently have capacity to provide this for 3 afternoons per week.

Level 4 - if children need longer term specialist support that we cannot offer in school, we may refer then to external play therapists or to providers such as Ride High which can offer bespoke therapeutic support. We would also look to refer to CAMHS at this point too.

5. How we identify need

- Half termly analysis of behaviour, attendance and exclusions
- Staff reporting concerns about individual children to the relevant lead people
- Termly pupil progress meetings
- Counselling referral forms

- Worry boxes in each class for children to raise concerns which are checked by class teachers
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer
- Parents Evenings
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff

All staff have completed safeguarding training and are aware of the protective and risk factors and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. School staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions or perform mental health interventions, but they are expected to work to ensure regular attendance for every child, as per the Working together to improve school attendance.

6. Signs of child mental health issues

There are ways you can identify if a child needs support with their mental health.

By being attentive to a child or young person's mood and behaviour, you can recognise patterns that suggest they need support. Common warning signs of mental health issues include:

- sudden mood and behaviour changes
- self-harming
- unexplained physical changes, such as weight loss or gain
- sudden poor academic behaviour or performance
- sleeping problems
- changes in social habits, such as withdrawal or avoidance of friends and family. (Source: NSPCC website)

7. Staff roles and responsibilities

- Kate Goodger (Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Senior Mental Health Lead)
- Naomi Roberts (School Counsellor, Pastoral Lead, DDSL)
- Cate Bird (Assistant Headteacher, DDSL)
- Ally Edwards (SENDCo – from April 2025)
- Angela Northen (Senior Mental Health Lead)

8. Working with parents/carers

- Workshops and information evenings
- Curriculum overview include mental health topics that are covered in PSHE lessons
- Provide information and websites (NSPCC) for parents to help support their children
- Meetings with parents/carers about support and agree actions
- Agree any Support Plans and arrange follow up meetings/calls
- Discuss how parents can support their child

9. Working with specialist services

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- Educational Psychology Services
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- School Nursing Service
- Behaviour support through Pathways pupil referral unit
- Children's and Family Services
- Therapists
- Family support workers
- Counselling Services

Appendix

Fortitude MK

Growth Mindset Coaching for your young people

Fortitude in many ways is the ability to experience a wide range of emotions and still feel like ourselves. It helps us bounce back from stress, failure, mistakes and adversity in our lives.

To develop and practice these skills I lead fun, engaging, practical based and teamwork orientated sessions as a tool to facilitate discussion around mindset. Children have the opportunity to fail and struggle in a safe, supported and enabling environment empowering them to face any future obstacles with fortitude

All of our KS2 children work weekly with Trooper Pete to go through this character development programme. It is based around the R in our PROUD Principles for Respect and covers resilience, empathy and team work

