



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

Date adopted: 3rd December 2024

Date for next adoption: Autumn Term 2025

Reviewed by: FGB Committee

This is a whole school policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Pastoral Support Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

1. Aims

At Talbot Heath School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and wellbeing.

It aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about and reflect on their experiences of mental health
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Inform pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources

2. Legislation

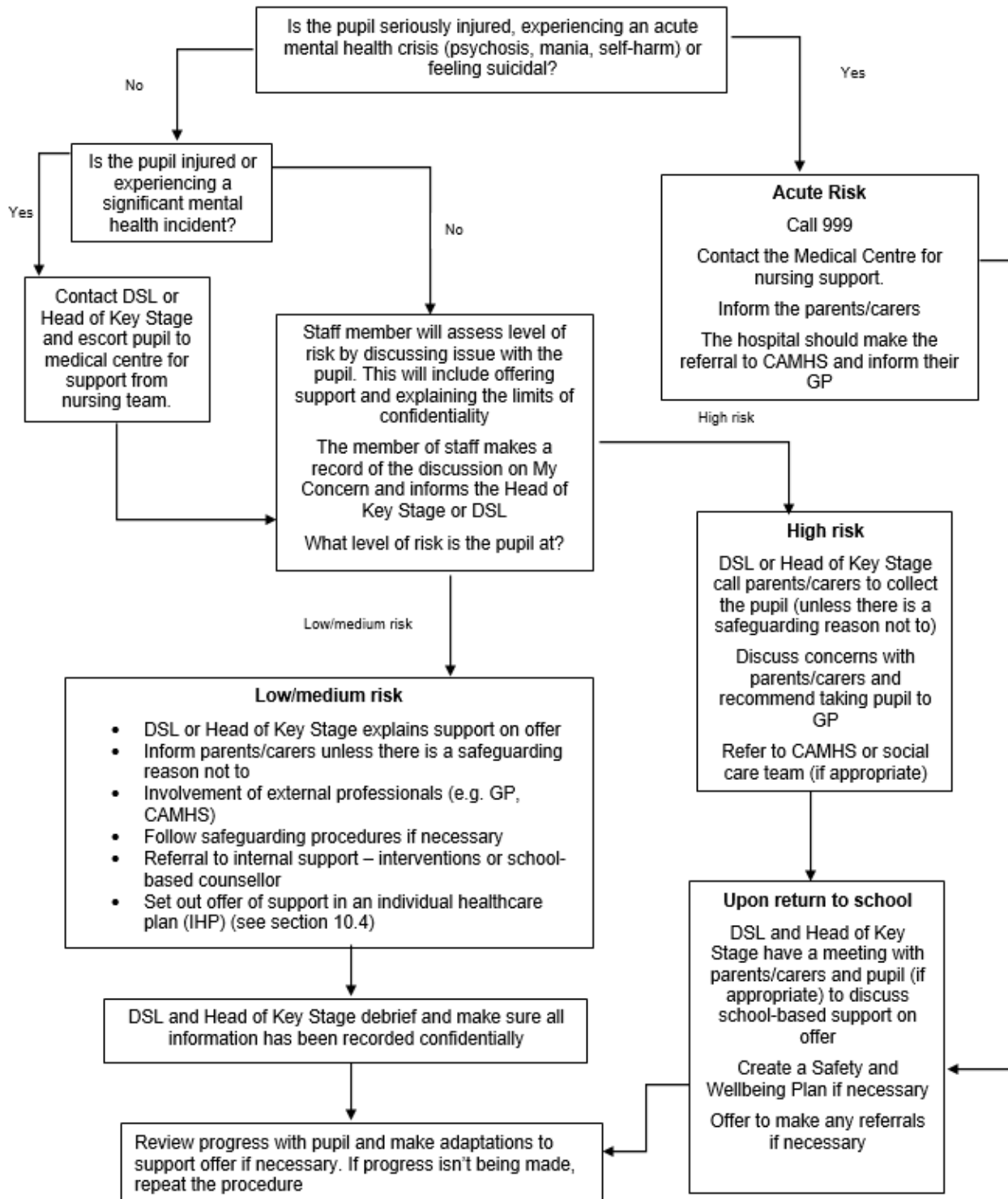
This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Designation Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



5. Warning signs

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in:
 - Mood or energy level
 - Eating or sleeping patterns
 - Attitude in lessons or academic attainment
 - Level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Rapid weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

6. Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow our school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All disclosures are recorded on My Concern.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

- The full name of the member of staff who is making the record
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

7. Confidentiality

Staff will not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret – instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school
- Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures on My Concern. The DSL will decide if information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the DSL/ Head of Key Stage will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with

- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

The DSL or Head of Key Stage will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

7.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with DSL/ Head of Key Stage
4. DSL or Head of Key Stage will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who the information will be shared with and why
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure on My Concern
6. The DSL/ Head of Key Stage will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

8. Supporting pupils

8.1 Baseline support for all pupils

As part of our school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, our school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of our school that is negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring all pupils' mental health through assessments, such as surveys.
- Appointing a Senior Mental Health Lead and a Whole School Wellbeing Lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support, through Heads of Key Stage, ELSAs, Wellbeing Counsellors.
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing.

8.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the Head of Key Stage/ DSL will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above in section 8.1.

Our school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

8.3 Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

- ELSA Intervention Groups
- Reduced timetable
- 1:1 ELSA sessions
- Exit Card
- Counselling
- Support in the Wellbeing Room. (The Oasis)

8.4 Individual safety and wellbeing plans

A pupil will be offered an individual safety and wellbeing plan if they are assessed to be at a high mental health risk.

Individual safety and wellbeing plans are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carer, and any other relevant professionals.

The pupil's individual safety and wellbeing plan will be tailored to the individual pupil and may contain the following details:

- The mental health issue (and may include its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments where appropriate)
- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in our school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency/ if they do not turn up to class

8.5 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer our school provides, our school will make, or encourage a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- Their GP or a paediatrician
- CAMHS
- Mental health charities (e.g. [Samaritans](#), [Mind](#), [Young Minds](#), [Kooth](#))
- Local counselling services

9. Supporting and collaborating with parents/carers

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Signposting to sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent/carer forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents/carers about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face-to-face where possible.

These meetings can be difficult, so our school will ensure that parents/carers are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded on My Concern.

If appropriate, an individual safety and wellbeing plan will be created in collaboration with parents/carers (see section 10.4).

10. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be very challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

11. Signposting

Sources of support are displayed around our school, so pupils and parents/carers are aware of how they can get help.

The Head of Key Stage/ DSL will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

12. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

12.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE, Tutor Time and during Wellbeing Wednesday.

We follow the [PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing](#).

Pupils are taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

Junior Wellbeing Assemblies and the Senior Tutor Time programme focus on mental health and wellbeing including emotional literacy and developing positive and healthy coping strategies when facing challenges.

12.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging pupils to disclose when their mental health is deteriorating

13. Training

All staff will be offered training so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are

- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

14. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment