



## **Ludlow CE School**

# **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

Approved By	School Performance Committee
Date Approved	20 <sup>th</sup> May 2019
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Review Date	July 2025

## Policy Statement

*Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 Organisation)*

At Ludlow CE School, our Christian vision shapes all we do. Nurturing the health and wellbeing of students is a key facet of holistic education for human-flourishing, as exemplified in the Church of England Vision for Education.

We aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim, using both universal, whole-school approaches, and specialised, targeted approaches, aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

## Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy, in cases where a student's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with, or is linked to, a medical issue, and should also link with the school's SEND Information Report, where a student has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and students
- 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 students suffering mental ill health, and their peers and parents/carers

## Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Lyn Hughes	- Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer (DSL)
Emma Morris	- Senior Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead
Antonia Rooke-Ley	- Lead First Aider
	- (Bob Sumner, Nicole Sampson and Sharon Vickers – First Aiders)
Lyn Hughes	- Lead for Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes
Graeme Sampson	- Head of PSHE and CPD Lead

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the Mental Health Lead, in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal Child Protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Child Protection Lead, or the Headteacher. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the First Aid staff and contacting the emergency services, if necessary.

Where a referral to BeeU/CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Emma Morris, Mental Health Lead. Guidance/further information can be found on the found on [www.beeu.org.uk](http://www.beeu.org.uk).

### **Individual Care Plans**

It is helpful to draw up an Individual Care Plan for students causing concern, or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the student, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a student's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact, in an emergency
- The role the school can play

### **Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves, and others, physically and mentally healthy and safe, are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner, which helps rather than causes harm.

We will be introducing a 'Wellbeing Week' in January 2023, to provide students and staff with activities to promote good mental health and wellbeing. This will include signposting and fundraising for the charity 'Young Minds' and a meeting-free week for staff, when there will be other activities offered, such as Zumba, Yoga, aromatherapy and a prayer group.

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. The support available within our school and local community, and who it is aimed at, and how to access it is outlined in Appendix 1: Signposting. Further information will also be made available on the school website.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets, and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of a student seeking help by ensuring students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

### **Warning Signs**

School 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 communicate their concerns with Emma Morris, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead, or Lyn Hughes, DSL.

Possible warning signs 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

### **Managing disclosures**

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health, or that of a friend, to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the student's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the Mental Health Lead, Emma Morris, or the DSL, Lyn Hughes, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

### **Confidentiality**

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent, particularly if a student is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health Lead, Emma Morris. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student. It ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their child's mental health and wellbeing, and students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the student should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying Child Protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the DSL, Lyn Hughes, must be informed immediately.

### **Working with Parents**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away, where possible, as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support, aimed specifically at parents, can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions, and consider booking in a follow-up meeting or phone call right away, as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with an agreed next step, and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

### **Working with all Parents**

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our Mental Health Policy easily accessible to parents

### **Supporting Peers**

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends, as often they want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider, on a case by case basis, which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either 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. Areas to consider:

- 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 may need 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, in order to enable them to keep students safe. 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 Appraisal 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 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 Graeme Sampson, our CPD Coordinator, and the Headteacher, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in July 2025.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Emma Morris, our Mental Health Lead: [e.morris@ludlowschool.com](mailto:e.morris@ludlowschool.com)

This policy will be updated to reflect personnel changes.

**Support in School**

- Pastoral support (Tutor and CLT), with tutor time activities in the Spring term PSHE programme
- Family Support Worker – Paula Marshall
- ‘Think Good, Feel Good’ – Lorraine Withers
- Talk About and ELSA trained – Alice Oakley
- Key Person Role
- Rainbow Room / Soul Space – Leah Harper
- School Mentor – Reverend Wayne Davies
- School Counsellor – Derek Ball
- School Nurse – Elise Reilly
- Safeguarding Lead – Lyn Hughes
- Senior Mental Health Lead – Emma Morris
- DHMAT’s ‘Care First’ webinars and resources for staff

**Support in the Local Community**

- Bee U
- Kooth
- BEAM
- Healios
- Life Lines
- Young Carers
- Divert
- CLIMB
- GP
- Shropshire Youth Mental Health Clinic drop-in – Tuesdays at Homework Club
- Social Prescribing (NHS) – Sharon Cochrane