

Witley C. of E. Infant School

Learn, love and flourish together

Mental Health and Wellbeing for our School Community Policy

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1 Policy statement

At Witley Infant School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our children, staff, volunteers, parents/carers and our whole school community. Our culture is supportive, caring and respectful. We encourage everyone to be open and we want each member of our school community to have their voice heard. Our school vision underpins our ethos:

Learn, love and flourish together

At our school, we know that everyone experiences different challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. At Witley Infant School, positive mental health and wellbeing 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 should be read and understood alongside our other relevant school policies (including Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy) and those of our employer, Surrey County Council (including their Management of Work-Related Stress Policy, Health Safety & Wellbeing Policy, Absence Management Policy and Ending Bullying and Harassment Policy).

2 Policy aims

The aim of our policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our staff, children and our school community.

At our school, we will always:

- Help everyone to understand their emotions and experiences better
- Ensure everyone feels comfortable sharing any concerns and worries
- Help everyone to form and maintain healthy relationships
- Encourage everyone to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem
- Help everyone 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 children and staff.
- 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 each and everyone's voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making
- Celebrating individuals for who they are and making every individual feel valued and respected
- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to anyone who needs it
- Raising awareness amongst the school community about mental health issues, signs and symptoms
- Enabling individuals to respond to early warning signs of wellbeing
- Supporting staff, children and our school community who are struggling with their mental health

Key staff members

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of children and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Helen Szczepanski
- Our Deputy DSLs are Becky Latham, Phillipa Allison, Sarah Dutton
- Our Home School Link Worker is Sarah Dutton
- Our SENCO is Phillipa Allison and our external SEN consultant is Sara Alston
- Our trained Mental Health Lead is Becky Latham

- Our chair of Governors/governors are leads for supporting Headteacher wellbeing

3 Support at school and in the local community

We have a range of support available in school for any children requiring wellbeing support, as listed below:

- Our PSHE (personal, social and health education) scheme delivered through Jigsaw every week in every class for all children
- Play Therapy delivered weekly through our external provider
- Mane chance and Huckleberries Nurture Farm who are local external providers
- Our Forest School and outdoor learning provides regular wellbeing experiences
- External Alternative Provision for children struggling to attend and access learning in school

We can also access several support agencies through Surrey County Council. There are also many support networks available for children in the local community like Mindworks Surrey (CAMHS – Child and Mental Health service) and as a Church School through All Saints Church.

Information about mental health is often included in our weekly newsletter for parents/carers. Please see the links at the end of this policy.

Signposting for staff

We will ensure that all staff are aware of the support that is available in our school for mental health. This includes how to access further support, both inside and outside of school hours. We have a dedicated Wellbeing notice board in our staffroom with further information as well as information posters around the school.

Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead, Becky Latham, is trained in First Aid Mental Health and Witley C of E Infant School is signed up to the DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter; signposting and encouraging staff to regularly visit the Education Support website and sign up to their newsletter:
https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/

Witley C of E Infant school purchases an enhanced Occupational Health package which includes a comprehensive Employee Assistance Programme (Health Hero and Smart Clinic). These programmes provide access to fantastic wellbeing services such as counselling and emotional support, financial advice, physiotherapy, anxiety management, online CBT and interactive self-help content. All staff are given free access to these programmes, are regularly reminded of these and signposted as and when needed.

Governors also play an active role in monitoring wellbeing through our regular staff surveys and meetings with the Headteacher and staff.

4 Identifying needs and warning signs

All of our staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems. All staff have read and understood our Witley Safeguarding Policy which reinforces the message 'it could happen here.' This means that staff will be able to offer help and support to any member of our learning community and each other if or when it is needed. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and anyone who notices any of these signs will communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate. Our staff will be vigilant in looking for signs in our whole school community, including colleagues and parent/carers.

Staff will be able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:

- 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.
- Non-engagement.
- Withdrawal.
- 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.
- Wearing sunglasses in winter/dull weather
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:

- Attendance and absenteeism.
- Punctuality and lateness.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.
- Family and relationship problems.

Finally, staff will be well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may affect mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement and health difficulties.

5 Managing disclosures

If a member of our school community discloses concerns about themselves or a friend, to any member of staff, then all staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner. All disclosures will be recorded confidentially and only shared with the appropriate authorities if it's necessary to keep the child/adult safe, in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

The disclosure record will contain:

- The date and time of the disclosure.
- The name of the staff member to whom the disclosure was made.
- The nature of the disclosure and the main points from the conversation.
- Agreed next steps.

Confidentiality

If a member of staff thinks it's necessary to pass on concerns about a child or adult, either to somebody inside the school or somebody outside it, then this will first be discussed with The Designated Safeguarding Lead. However, in respect of a child, it may not be possible to gain parent/carer permission, such as in the case of children who are at immediate risk. Protecting an individual's safety is our main priority so we would share disclosures if we judged an individual to be at risk.

6 Whole school approach

We aim to support staff, parents/carers, and our school community as much as possible. This includes keeping parents/carers informed about their child and offering our support at all times.

To support parents/carers we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school through our newsletter.
- Share and allow parents/carers to access further support.
- Ensure they are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.

- Give guidance about how they can support their child's/children's positive mental health.
- Ensure this policy is easily accessible on our website.
- Keep parents/carers informed about the mental health training our school staff receive and how mental health and wellbeing is covered in our school curriculum.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other professional agencies to support our children and staff's emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- our school nurse
- our Home/School Link Worker
- educational psychologist
- paediatricians
- Mindworks Surrey (CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- counselling services
- therapists
- family support workers
- behavioural support workers
- HR advisors
- Occupational Health team

Training and updates

All staff will receive regular training and updates in wellbeing and 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 and adults safe. Training records will be held in staff files.

We will post all relevant information, and additional information, on our school website so parents can learn more about mental health. We will consider additional training opportunities for staff and we will support additional CPD (continued professional development) throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with pupils.

Useful links

- Young Minds is one of the UK's leading charities for children and young people's mental health.
- Place2Be is one of the UK's leading children's mental health charities.
- Mind is the UK's leading mental health charity.
- Children's Mental Health Week is an annual opportunity to encourage children, young people and adults to celebrate their uniqueness.
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) provide support to children and young people with a wide range of behavioural and emotional issues
- NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 or email help@NSPCC.org.uk
- Education Support Helpline 0800 0562 561
  Education Support self care resources
  Mental wellbeing | Healthy Surrey
  Dealing with an adult mental health crisis | Healthy Surrey
- Online Chat | YS Home yoursanctuary.org.uk Employees can phone the Surrey Domestic Abuse Helpline on 01483 776822, 9am to 9pm 7 days a week (provided by Your Sanctuary) or use the confidential online chat service
- Surrey Against Domestic Abuse | Healthy Surrey further information about DA and support services available

- Citizens Advice can be contacted either online or by phone for info and advice around Managing universal credit or help with claiming universal credit, debt, pensions, budget advice
- Surrey Crisis Mental Health Helpline: 0800 915 4644
- Mental Health Helpline for Urgent Help - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
- Samaritans: Tel 116 123 or Text SHOUT to 85258

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years. This will ensure it remains up to date, useful, and relevant. We will also regularly review the policy in accordance with current school provision, local and national policy changes.

June 2026
Completed by: B Latham