

# Mental health and well-being policy

## Arunside Primary School



**Approved by:** Donna Jagger - Headteacher

**Date:** November 2025

**Last reviewed on:** New Policy

**Next review due by:** November 2027

## Policy statement

We are committed to creating a school culture where wellbeing is valued and supported for pupils, families, and staff alike. As part of this commitment, we are currently working towards the **Wellbeing Award for Schools**, which reflects our dedication to nurturing a positive, supportive environment for everyone. Through this process, we aim to further develop our whole-school approach to emotional wellbeing, strengthen the support systems available to our community, and celebrate the many ways in which we care for one another. Our goal is to ensure that wellbeing remains at the heart of everything we do, enabling every member of our school community to feel safe, respected, and able to flourish.

We aim to build a nurturing, inclusive environment where everyone feels safe, valued, and respected. We create a culture where it's ok to talk about feelings, and ensure that appropriate support is available when needed.

Through a whole-school approach, we prioritise wellbeing in our policies, curriculum, and daily practice—helping everyone to develop resilience, emotional literacy, and healthy coping strategies for life.

## Aims

We recognise that mental health is just as important as physical health and are dedicated to fostering a supportive, inclusive, and respectful environment. Our aims are to ensure that all stakeholders are able to maintain positive wellbeing and mental health, for best possible outcomes in life, no matter what the circumstances are.

Additionally, we aim to raise awareness and ensure everyone has access to resources and support. We are committed to providing a workplace culture where individuals feel safe, valued and supported. We aim to recognise and respond to mental ill-health.

This policy provides a framework for procedures and responsibilities to support the health and wellbeing of the whole Arunside community.

**Key staff members** This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils and each other. However, key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Sara Lee – Senior Mental Health Lead/ Mental Health First Aider/ Well-being Champion/ Family Welfare Officer/ Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Donna Jagger – Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Victoria Hills – SENCO/ Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Sharon Roberts – Assistant SENCO/ ELSA/ Drawing and Talking Practitioner/ Wellbeing Champion/ Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Shelley Cootes/ Michelle Evans – Assistant Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Kylee Phillips – PSHE Lead
- Anna Conley – Mental Health and Wellbeing Governor
- Yusaf Ahmad – Safeguarding Governor

## Pupil Wellbeing

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or well-being of a pupil should speak to the Senior Mental Health Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated safeguarding lead. If the pupil presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the lead first aid member of staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary. The school also has a Mental Health First Aider who can assist if the pupil presents with a mental health problem or is in crisis. Where a referral to the SPOA (Single Point of Access) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by our Senior Mental Health Lead (A pupil may also be referred to the SPOA through their GP or parent, which would be independent of the school).

At Arunside we believe that **all children have mental health**. We believe that teaching them to understand and manage their wellbeing and emotions will equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to stay well and achieve their full potential. As with all of the learning at Arunside, our hope is that the skills we teach our pupils now will continue to be helpful to them in their futures.

We are committed to the aims through a combination of whole school strategies and targeted interventions when needed. Specifically, we will:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing among all pupils by developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.
- Teach children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health, so that they understand their emotions and feelings better (using Zones of Regulation)
- Use our learning powers; Rosie Resilient and Izzy Independent
- Follow a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management.
- We develop an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health
- Raise awareness and understanding of common mental health issues in an age-appropriate manner
- Support and train staff to develop their skills and own resilience
- Provide support to pupils experiencing mental ill-health, as well as to their peers, parents, and carers

We promote a mentally healthy environment for children through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- Promoting pupil voice
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Giving opportunities to reflect
- Providing the chance to feel good about themselves by learning to take care of themselves and others
- Enabling access to appropriate support such as; ELSA, Drawing and Talking, various therapies such as music and art, pastoral team check-in's, Time to Talk drop-in, sensory room time and small group interventions (ELSA based)
- The Jigsaw PSHE whole-school curriculum
- Giving all children access to Forest School and outdoor learning

## **Early identification and warning signs**

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health and or emotional wellbeing, including:

- Physical signs of harm
- Changes in mood or activity
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Changes in clothing – e.g., long sleeves in warm weather
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Recent bereavement
- Family circumstance
- Lateness or absence from school
- Increase in lateness or absence from school
- Sudden decrease in academic achievement and attitude

When a concern has been raised to the Senior Mental Health Lead or SENCO they will:

- Contact parents to discuss further and share any outcomes from assessments
- Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies
- Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away
- Create a chronology of actions and events
- Agree a plan of action and include clear next steps
- Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parent support groups

## **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 and families may be referred to one of the following services for additional support:

- SPOA (Single point of access)
- CAMHS
- School nurse – Healthy child programme
- Children's and Family Services
- LBAT (Learning Behaviour Advisory Team)
- Educational Psychology services
- ASCT (Autism Social Communication Team)
- Voluntary Organisations such as Reaching Families
- EMTAS Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Services
- Parent Carer Forum

## **Staff Wellbeing**

Arunside School provides a working environment in which staff are able to carry out their duties effectively and where wellbeing is supported. This policy applies to all employees working at Arunside School and all staff are encouraged as individuals, to accept responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional well-being. We will ensure the Senior Mental Health Lead and Wellbeing champions will promote and keep Mental health high on the agenda.

### **Staff support**

- Effective support is offered through having a Mental Health First Aider available for informal chats or to support a crisis. The MHFA will also be supported by the wider pastoral and senior leadership team
- The school has access to the West Sussex Employee Assistance Programme which can help employees, their partners or children (aged 16 – 24 years' old who are living at home and in full time education) deal with personal problems that might adversely impact on work performance, life, health or well-being.
- Education support offer confidential advice and support for all school staff. This includes an emotional support telephone line: 08000 562 561.
- Additional PPA time bi-weekly to support and encourage a healthy work-life balance, which can be taken at home
- Whole school training events, including Safeguarding, first aid and mental health training.
- Access to appropriate external training
- Employment of a Family Welfare officer to support staff in their interactions and engagement with parents and carers
- Calendar of Staff Social events to encourage and improve comradery
- Staff wellbeing display board
- Staff 'Shout-outs'

**Building a resilient and mentally healthy whole school community** – a whole-school approach where mental health is not a separate initiative but woven into the fabric of school life – from leadership and policy to classroom practice, staff culture and parental engagement. How do we do this?

- We have clear policies; Safeguarding, Relationship & Behaviour, SEND, PSHE
- A staff code of conduct
- An open-door policy for all stakeholders
- A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health
- Good relationships between pupils/teachers/staff/parents
- Positive classroom management
- A highly effective early help process
- Positive parent engagement including coffee mornings and workshops
- Respectful friendships
- A mental health lead
- Deliver high-quality PSHE / RHSE lessons

- Use Zones of Regulation to support development of emotional literacy
- Include stories, assemblies and class discussions that explore feelings, challenges and resilience
- Celebrate diversity and individuality
- Show empathy
- Gather feedback
- Work together to achieve a Wellbeing Award for schools

## **Parent Wellbeing**

We recognise that supporting the wellbeing of our parents and carers is essential to the wellbeing of our pupils. We aim to create an open, supportive partnership with families. Examples of how we support parents include:

- Providing guidance and information on child wellbeing and mental health
- Offering workshops, drop-ins, and access to support networks
- Encouraging open communication and involvement in school wellbeing initiatives

## **Useful links**

<https://www.westsussexmind.org/>

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/>

<https://mindedforfamilies.org.uk/>

<https://www.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk/changing-lives/mental-health/mental-health-wellbeing-resource-hub/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://giveusashout.org/>

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/childrens-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing/information-for-school-and-college-staff/staff-wellbeing-and-staff-development/staff-wellbeing/>