THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The Methodist Church

John Fletcher of Madeley
Primary School

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart",
Colossians 3:23

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING POLICY

Reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2026

Introduction

Staff health and well-being at work is recognised as part of a broader approach to promoting health. It involves all stakeholders associated with the school community including parents, students, service providers and educational support services.

It is evident that staff morale, job enrichment, quality of work and work-life balance alongside continuous improvement of educational achievement are all important, positive outcomes. Ultimately this can lead to improved productivity and the improvement of overall organisational performance. It is also evident that organisations who adopt an organisational approach to improving the health and well-being of staff within the organisation can achieve substantially reduced costs associated with staff turnover, absenteeism and risk management.

It is also essential that the healthy organisation recognises people as its main strength and resource. It is essential, therefore, that they develop policies, systems and practice which optimise people's ability to work together and achieve their full potential within an inclusive, empathic and emotionally literate context.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of this establishment to:

a) promote health and well-being throughout all management policies and support services including information networks and health promotions: alcohol awareness, diet, self-management exercise and by a liaison with appropriate external agencies;

b) to prevent as far as possible any circumstances that could be described as detrimental to the mental health and well-being of staff and students. The purpose of the policy is as follows:

- To support staff effectiveness and teaching and other associated activities which contribute to achieving the school's objectives;
- To ensure that staff's ability is enhanced in order to benefit from all provisions;
- To ensure that when responding to one individual's health difficulties that this approach does not significantly affect other people's health and well-being within the institution.

Definitions

The term mental health difficulties can encompass a wide range of experiences. These can range from stress and anxiety through to serious mental illness and conditions which are diagnosed and treated by specialist health providers. Although a difficult definition to give in absolute terms it is important that all within the community avoid the use of negative terms with stigma attached. This kind of behaviour may well deter staff and students from accessing the support required. Inappropriate use of medical terms might also be misleading and cause unnecessary labelling. Consequently within this institution all staff and students will be encouraged to respond to individual needs as opposed to specific labels.

Links with Other Policies

This health and well-being policy interacts with and refines several already established policies. The institution's duty of care towards both staff and students is determined externally by legislation such as:

- the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974;
- Human Rights Act 1988;
- Data Protection Act 1988;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Act 2001.

Its links between this policy and other guidance are clear and include the following:

- Health & Safety Policy;
- Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Complaints and Grievance Procedures;
- Sickness Absence Policy,
- Capability Procedures;
- Stress Management Guidance,
- Occupational Health Guidance;
- Confidentiality Policy;
- Disability Statement and Policy;
- Disciplinary Procedures;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Accessibility policy.
- SEND policy.

Confidentiality

It is important to note that confidentiality is of paramount importance with regard to those experiencing mental health difficulties and problems. However, it is essential that students and staff are aware that, in certain circumstances, where an individual is deemed to be at risk then this policy will need to be breached. At all times it is the safety of the majority that needs to take precedence over confidentiality of the individual and the majority that need to take precedence over confidentiality.

Responsibility of the Institution

It is the responsibility of this institution to:

- Promote the emphasis towards good health and well-being and consideration of the school within all relevant aspects of its day-to-day runnings;
- Ensure the provision of central support and advisory services as appropriate;
- To produce and disseminate explanatory notes to the policy in order to offer practical step-by-step procedures and guidance;
- To provide training to staff and students in the area of well-being and mental health problems;
- To promote and encourage a non-stigmatising community in order to enhance the effectiveness of its actions;
- To monitor the effectiveness of this policy through annual reporting to the governing body.

Responsibility of Key Role Holders

It will be the responsibility of school based staff to:

- Provide external health services and specialist therapeutic agencies with accurate information on all aspects of work activities for members of staff or students in order that informed recommendations can be made;
- To advise external health service agencies with regard to the scope of the support services the school can offer to staff and students;

- To ensure the establishment of effective monitoring processes so as to be able to evaluate the impact of the policy;
- To make recommendations on developments and improvements to the policy;
- To establish an on-going effective communication with external agencies and ensure appropriate supervision for those within the school who are providing therapeutic input;
- To ensure the promotion of this policy throughout the whole school organisation.

Responsibility of Staff

It is the responsibility of all school based staff and support staff to ensure the following:

- Maintain a non-stigmatising community;
- To treat each other and all students with dignity and respect as an individual and not as a problem or condition;
- Access and take advantage of appropriate training and sources of information;
- To uphold confidentiality while safety is not at risk;
- To recognise their own limits in terms of how they can support both themselves and others.

It is the responsibility of students to also:

- Contribute towards the maintaining of a non-stigmatising community;
- To treat each other and their teachers with dignity and respect and not to label one another or treat each other simply as a problem or condition;
- To access appropriate support on offer within the school context including both individual and group support;
- To understand the confidentiality procedures and the fact that these will need to be breached if their behaviour is evidently going to put them at risk;
- To recognise their own limits as to how they can support others and know when to seek help and advice.

The Sources for School Based Staff who Provide Support for Others

The school will ensure that all staff members, who are providing any form of therapeutic input or support for students with mental health difficulties, are appropriately supported and supervised. This will be ensured through links with external specialist therapeutic agencies alongside access to school based specialists including the clinical psychologist known to the school, the learning support advisory team; behaviour support team and the educational psychologist.

The SENDCo /Deputy Head Teacher attends the Future in Mind.

Services available to students and staff will be made public by regular awareness campaigns and by a staff induction procedure and publicity for students on the school web.

Key Indicators

1. Physical health
   There is much research evidence to show that regular ie daily, light or moderate exercise is beneficial for the prevention of heart disease alongside a range of life threatening diseases. There is also a clear link between physical exercise and mental well-being. The provision of opportunities for physical activity is one way in which the school could contribute to promoting health and preventing illness in both students and their teachers. We are, therefore, committed to ensuring that the following are in place:

- Staff are encouraged to participate in fitness or exercise activities both inside and outside of the school day;
- The existence and quality of an on-going staff health promotion/education programme which covers physical health issues;
- The existence of other preventative initiatives in the area of physical health including the Telford and Wrekin TLC membership scheme.

2. Personal well-being
There are many psycho-social factors which influence health and well-being and it is evident that mental health promotion in the workplace can prevent stress alongside promoting and understanding of mental illness. We would consequently aim to ensure that the following is in place:

- Ongoing mental health promotion through identified programmes for both staff and pupils. As a school, we ensure that all programmes are of high quality and where possible are supported by external agencies;
- As far as possible we will respond to requests for flexible working arrangements in order to cater for family and other external responsibilities or demands;
- We will ensure that diversity is embraced, both amongst staff and students, and that there is an awareness of the relevant legislation amongst both staff and students;
- All school staff will have access to the Mental Health Service Directory. The directory highlights services that Telford and Wrekin are able to support for children aged 0-25. https://www.telfordsend.org.uk/info/1/home/101/mental_health_service_directory
- We will ensure the existence and quality of effective communication systems in order to reduce stress across all curriculum areas and across all procedures and systems.

3. Organisational health
There is a great deal of research to show that harmonious working relationships which are created by effective leadership and staff involvement in decision making alongside effective administration systems are vital in terms of contributing to staff health and well-being. Administrative and professional support can assist school based staff to undertake their designated roles with organisational purpose and direction. We, therefore, seek to ensure the following:

- That leadership is considered to be supportive of all staff needs and that this is ensured via both formal and informal communication processes including a well-being questionnaire, informal consultations with staff regarding their input and feelings and regular recognition of staff achievements both formally and informally;
- We will also aim to ensure that staff are empathic and supportive of one another and that there are opportunities available on a regular basis to ensure quality staff interaction e.g. opportunities for team teaching, Mental health awareness training, social activities;
- We shall also ensure that all staff have a clear understanding and acceptance of their roles and responsibilities within the school context and this will be conducted via the reviewing of the sections and actual performance as part of our self-monitoring processes and procedures;
- At all times the work demands on staff will be reviewed and monitored to ensure that they are both reasonable and realistic and do not engender stress or low morale.

4. Community relationships
It is essential that a strong and positive relationship exists between the school and the local community. This is important for staff's support and development as well as providing co-operation and access to resources. We will therefore aim to ensure the following:

- The existence and quality of parent involvement in the school. This will include the development of a mechanism for parents' views about the school to be regularly obtained and made known to all staff;

- The existence and quality of the relationship between the school and local recreation and leisure agencies regarding access to resources and services for health and well-being; E.g. annual KS2 swimming lessons at the local leisure centre.
- The existence and quality of the relationship between the school and local businesses via the development of a formal communication process. E.g. the school parish; police; local charities; local libraries; the local leisure centres.
- We will ensure that local agencies and specialist provision are aware of the school's health and welfare policy and seek to further develop relationships and conduct regular communication with such agencies.

Mental Health and wellbeing initiatives being used across John Fletcher of Madeley Primary School:

RSE (Part of our PSHEE Curriculum)

Relationships education is an important and necessary part of all pupils' education. In our school, our curriculum delivers the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. The curriculum also sits alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. Children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. Our new RSE curriculum content will give pupils the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.

Future in Mind

Future in Mind is an emotional health and wellbeing initiative set up by the Severn Teaching alliance in conjunction with Telford and Wrekin council and the Telford and Wrekin clinical commissioning group (CCG). Future in Mind provides high quality continued professional development for emotional health and wellbeing leads and SENCOs across school. Continued professional development is shared with staff and pupils across the federation.

Emotional Health and Wellbeing Panel:

The 'Emotional Health and Wellbeing Panel' (EHWP) is a Telford and Wrekin initiative set up in 2018 to support education settings across the borough. The aims of the emotional health and wellbeing panel is to support schools and young people, by providing advice to schools, to signpost services and to ensure the students with the appropriate level of need are referred to BeeU. Schools can access the EHWP via a referral process and all schools receive advice and recommendations following the panel meeting.

Therapeutic story writing and social stories

Therapeutic story writing uses metaphors in stories written by both teachers and pupils to address emotional issues that are impeding pupils learning.

Social stories are short descriptions of a particular situation, event, activity, which includes specific information about what to expect in that situation and why.

Social stories can be used to:

- Develop self-care skills.
- Help someone to understand how others might behave or respond in a particular situation.
- Help others to understand the perspective of an individual with ASC and why they might respond in a particular way.
- Help someone to cope with changes to a routine, unexpected or distressing event.

- Provide positive feedback to a person about an area of strength or achievement in order to develop self-esteem.
- As a behavioural strategy.

Alternative Provision

Sometimes it may be appropriate to access an alternative provision outside of the school environment. Where alternative provisions are used for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, the school follows the Telford and Wrekin safeguarding guidance.

Daily Fitness

Exercise keeps our heart, body and our minds healthy. There is scientific evidence that exercise can help in depression, anxiety and even protect you from stress. Regular exercise can help you to:

- Feel good about yourself.
- Concentrate better.
- Sleep better
- Have a positive outlook on life
- Keep a healthy weight
- Build healthy bones and joints.

As a school, we believe that regular bursts of exercise is vital in promoting positive physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

Implementation Strategy

1. The governors will agree the policy
    - Staff will be consulted with and a health and well-being committee appointed
    - Roles and responsibilities will be defined
    - The policy will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated as regards effectiveness on **September 2025.**

2. Resource programme
    - External and internal resources and programmes will be clarified and reviewed ensuring both student and staff participation across the whole federation.
    - Staff will be trained appropriately and resources will be available to monitor costs against added value

3. Implement programme
    - Programmes will be trialled in key areas as agreed
    - The programme will be implemented and reviewed and extensions will be made as appropriate

4. The evaluation Programme
    - A health and well-being audit will be completed in order to assess key areas of the programme and their effectiveness
    - The evaluation will be disseminated to governors, school staff, students and parents and extensions to the programme will be clarified and articulated as appropriate.

To be reviewed September 2025

Appendices

A. How to promote positive mental health for all staff

John Fletcher of Madeley is committed, through the implementation ofthis policy and our own actions, to promoting positive mental health for all staff.
Equally, we want to provide staff with information and resources on how they canlook after their own wellbeing and to lead by example in this regard - through ourday-to-day behaviours, through providing activities within work that support individual wellbeing, and through promoting a healthy work/life balance.

The following five evidence-based steps have been researched and developed by the New Economics Foundation, and are recognised as being important for ourindividual wellbeing. These may help stimulate ideas for activities (inside and outside the workplace) that support this aim:

Connect: Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of theseas the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing these relationships.Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Be Active: Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physicalactivity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Take Notice/Be mindful: Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on theunusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world aroundyou and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

Keep Learning: Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

Give: Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incrediblyrewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

More information on the research behind these steps can be found here.

B. How to recognise signs of mental health problems at work

We may become aware of signs which indicate that a colleague is experiencingmental health or emotional wellbeing difficulties. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns to the employee's line manager and/or Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead. Possible warning signs include:

a) changes in productivity e.g. deterioration in performance at work, lethargyin a previously energetic person, new pattern of unexplained lateness or absences, recent inability to concentrate on work, recent inability to complete work;
b) changes in social functioning e.g. deterioration in social functioning,withdrawal from colleagues, isolation;
c) changes in personality or behaviour e.g. extreme mood swings, actinganxious or agitated, showing rage, uncontrolled anger, behaving recklessly;
d) increased alcohol or drug use;
e) changes in eating and sleeping patterns;
f) signs of (self-inflicted) physical harm.

C. How to identify areas of stress at work

The HSE defines stress as '***the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure orother types of demand placed on them"***. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

They identify six main areas of work design which can affect stress levels, and whichshould be managed carefully and proactively. These are:

a) **demands:** workload, work patterns, environment;
b) **control:** how much say you have in the way you do your work;
c) **support:** encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided byorganisation, line management and colleagues;
d) **relationships:** promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealingwith unacceptable behaviour;
e) **role:** understanding your role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that you don't have conflicting roles;
f) **change:** how organisational change is managed and communicated.

We undertake to support leaders to:

a) monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded;
b) monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking;
c) monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement;
d) ensure that staff are fully trained to discharge their duties;
e) ensure that good communication between management and staff,particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes;
f) attend training as requested;
g) ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction;
h) be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who isexperiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation;
i) conduct and implement recommendations of risks assessments.

D. How to support a member of staff experiencing poor mental health

Staff may notice signs of possible mental health problems in a colleague and are encouraged to approach the colleague concerned and offer to talk and to helpthem speak to their line manager as early as possible.

Line managers will arrange a time to talk privately and listen non-judgmentally to the employee's current concerns and situation, whether this arises from problems inside or outside of work. They will assess the impact on their work and if the person is well enough to be at work; whether work stressors are contributing to the currentcondition and, with the employee, agree what next steps will be most appropriate in the short term and in the medium term. They will confirm who else needs to knowand make arrangements for how best to support the employee and how often.

It may be helpful to make reasonable adjustments and /or to put in place a Wellbeing and Recovery Plan (see below). They will make notes about what tookplace as soon as possible and share these with the affected member of staff.

NB. This information and notes may be shared only on a 'need to know' basis.

How to make reasonable adjustments:

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with a disability. These can be time limited and could include for example:

a) schedule modification – start earlier/later, use leave (or be provided withadditional leave) to attend appointments, work part time initially;
b) job modification – job sharing, reassigning work, redeployment to vacantposition;
c) environmental modification – sound proofing, screens to increase privacy,bright lights, reserved parking space, increased personal space;
d) policy changes – e.g. additional leave to attend appointments, compassionate leave, additional time to reach deadlines/milestones;
e) human assistance - e.g. allowing a job coach to come to the workplace;
f) providing mental health training for work colleagues;
g) technological assistance – e.g. allowing computer for home working, providingsoftware to assist with structure or prompts during the day;
h) supervisory assistance – e.g. extra supervision, additional training, adjustedtraining in the person's preferred learning style.

How to make a Wellbeing and Recovery Plan:

If the employee has a long standing or relapsing mental health condition it can behelpful to draw up a Wellbeing and Recovery Plan (WRAP) involving the employee, the line manager and relevant health professionals. This can include:

a) details of an employee's condition;
b) the employee's early warning signs or triggers;

c) medication and any side effects;
d) what to do, and who to contact, in an emergency;
e) the role that our school teams can play.

How to respond in an emergency:

If there is a fear that the colleague is in danger of immediate harm then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alertingthe first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary. In the event of a delay in getting to hospital staff should take a taxi rather than driving their own car.

How to stay in touch when an employee is off work:

It is important for a line manager to stay in touch with an employee when they areoff work, to let them know what is happening at work, that colleagues are still holding them in mind, and to prepare for a return to work. It may be helpful to arrange a meeting to discuss what arrangements (if any) need to be in place when they return; what work load to expect, what support and reasonable adjustments can (and cannot) be made e.g. a phased return, later starts, shorter days, time off for appointments. This plan should be summarised in writing and reviewed regularly as the employee's needs change.