

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy at Sherborne Primary

Achieving, Belonging, Caring



1. Introduction & Rationale

At Sherborne Primary School, we recognise that mental health and wellbeing are fundamental to children's learning, development and overall life chances. The school is committed to providing a culture and environment that supports mental health and wellbeing for all members of the school community.

Mental health is as important as physical health. The World Health Organisation defines mental health as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their potential, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and can make a contribution to their community. Statistics indicate that a significant minority of children and young people have mental health needs which require support; early intervention can reduce the risk of long-term difficulties.

2. Legislative & Policy Framework

This policy takes account of statutory guidance and national policy including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE)
- Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing (DfE)
- SEND Code of Practice
- Equality Act

It should be read alongside Sherborne Primary School policies on Safeguarding, Behaviour, SEND, Anti-Bullying, Attendance, PSHE/RSHE and Staff Wellbeing.

3. Vision & Aims

Our vision is to create a nurturing whole-school culture where every pupil, staff member and family feels emotionally safe, valued and supported.

Aims:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils and staff.
- Identify needs early and provide timely, evidence-based support.
- Ensure clear pathways for referral and partnership with external agencies.
- Prioritise support for vulnerable cohorts, including pupils eligible for Pupil Premium and those with SEND.
- Reduce stigma and normalise conversations about mental health.

4. Whole-School Approach



Sherborne adopts a whole-school approach that includes:

Leadership & Governance: Senior Leaders and Academy Committee champion mental health, with a named Mental Health Lead and a Academy Committee link for wellbeing. Mental health is a regular SLT and Academy Committee agenda item.

Ethos & Environment: We promote a safe, welcoming environment through restorative practice, inclusive policies and visible pastoral support. Outdoor spaces, calm zones and nurture areas support wellbeing.

Curriculum & Learning: Wellbeing is embedded through the PSHE/RSHE curriculum and across subjects. Assemblies, themed weeks and embedding of social-emotional learning support protective factors.

Pupil Voice: We facilitate pupil representation through school council, wellbeing ambassadors and pupil surveys to inform practice.

Staff Development: Regular CPD and reflective supervision are provided to equip staff to support pupil wellbeing and to manage their own wellbeing.

Partnerships: We work with families, Dorset services (CAMHS, MHST), school nursing and voluntary organisations to provide a network of support.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

All staff contribute to the promotion of wellbeing, but specific responsibilities include:

Head of School: Strategic oversight; ensures resourcing, policy implementation and staff wellbeing support.

Designated Mental Health Lead (DMHL): Stephanie Beatson

Responsibilities include coordinating interventions, overseeing Individual Care Plans, liaising with external agencies, delivering staff training and monitoring impact.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Felicity Griffiths

Ensures safeguarding procedures are followed; leads on risk assessment and child protection referrals where mental health concerns intersect with safety.

SENDCo: Stephanie Beatson

Leads on SEND-specific adjustments and ensures mental health needs are considered within SEND support plans.

Class Teachers & Support Staff:

- Promote wellbeing through daily practice; observe and concerns; implement classroom strategies; liaise with DMHL/DSL.

**Academy Committee:**

The governing body ensures the policy is implemented, reviewed and resourced; a link Academy Committee meets with the DMHL annually.

6. Identification & Support (Graduated Approach)

Early identification: Staff are trained to notice changes in behaviour, attendance, attainment or social interaction. Regular wellbeing checks (surveys, feelings charts, school development questionnaires where appropriate) support identification.

Recording: Concerns are recorded on MyConcern or the school's secure recording system. Records should be factual, include dates and action taken, and be kept confidentially.

Universal Support: Whole-class strategies, PSHE lessons, positive behaviour systems, pastoral groups, and access to wellbeing resources.

Targeted Support: Small group work, ELSA interventions, pastoral mentoring, play therapy, school-based counselling where available. Interventions are logged and reviewed.

Specialist Support: Referral pathways to Dorset CAMHS, Mental Health Support Teams (MHST), School Nurse, or other professionals. The DMHL coordinates referrals and completes required consent and forms.

7. Pastoral Care Plans & Risk Management

Where pupils have identified mental health needs that require more structured support, a Pastoral Care Plan (PCP) will be developed in collaboration with parents/carers and relevant professionals.

An PCP will typically include:

- Pupil details and key contacts
- Description of needs and triggers
- Agreed strategies and classroom adjustments
- Roles and responsibilities (school, home, external agencies)
- Emergency plans and contact details
- Review dates and measurable outcomes

Risk assessments will be completed for pupils presenting themselves or others, and actions recorded on MyConcern with oversight by the DSL.



8. Procedures for Concerns & Disclosures

If a member of staff is concerned about a pupil's mental health they should act promptly:

1. Listen and respond with empathy. Allow the pupil to speak without interruption.
2. Assess immediate risk – are they in danger now? If yes, follow Emergency Procedures.
3. Record the concern on MyConcern or the school system, noting dates, times and factual observations.
4. Inform the DMHL and/or DSL as soon as possible (same day).
5. Discuss with parents/carers, unless doing so would increase risk. Seek parental consent for referrals unless safeguarding concerns apply.
6. Agree next steps, assign responsibilities and set review dates.

9. Confidentiality & Information Sharing

We respect pupil privacy but cannot promise absolute confidentiality in situations where there are safeguarding concerns. Information should be shared on a need-to-know basis with those who can support the pupil. All information handling complies with GDPR and school data protection policies.

10. Emergency Procedures & Crisis Response

In a crisis (immediate risk of harm, self-harm or suicidal intent):

- Do not leave the child alone.
- Contact the DSL/DMHL immediately.
- Call emergency services (999) if the child is at immediate risk.
- Inform parents/carers unless this places the child at greater risk.
- Record all decisions and actions and ensure follow-up support is in place.

Post-incident support: Provide debrief for staff and pupils affected; consider external debriefing and referral to specialist services.

11. Supporting Staff Wellbeing

We recognise the importance of staff mental health. Sherborne provides:

- Regular wellbeing check-ins and access to supervision.
- Staff wellbeing newsletters and signposted resources.
- Flexible working conversations where appropriate.

- Access to external Employee Assistance Programmes or counsellors available.



Staff are encouraged to escalate workload concerns to their line manager and take part in wellbeing initiatives.

12. Staff Training & CPD

All staff receive induction training on mental health awareness and safeguarding. The DMHL, DSL and SENDCo attend specialist training. Planned CPD includes:

- Annual whole-staff refresher on mental health and safeguarding.
- Trauma-informed practice training.
- Targeted training for staff delivering interventions (ELSA, Play Therapy liaison).

Training needs are reviewed annually and recorded in the school's Continue Professional Development (CPD) plan.

13. Record Keeping, Monitoring & Evaluation

The DMHL maintains records of interventions, referrals and outcomes. Monitoring includes:

- Analysis of wellbeing survey data (pupil and staff)
- Review of attendance, behaviour and safeguarding trends
- Intervention logs and case audits

The policy will be reviewed every two years by the Headteacher, DMHL, DSL and Wellbeing Academy Committee. The Strategic Plan (Appendix C) will be reviewed annually to set priorities and actions.

Appendix A – Signs & Symptoms of Common Mental Health Difficulties

Anxiety: excessive worry, avoidance, physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches), clinginess or restlessness.

Depression: persistent low mood, tearfulness, withdrawal, changes in sleep or appetite, low energy and motivation.

Self-harm: unexplained injuries, wearing long sleeves inappropriately, secrecy, mood swings.

Eating difficulties: preoccupation with food/weight, sudden changes in weight, avoidance of mealtimes.

Behavioural changes: increased aggression, defiance, withdrawal from peers, sudden drop in attainment.



Appendix B – Pastoral Care Plan (PCP) Template

SCHOOL:		Pastoral Support Plan			
Student Details					
Student		Tutor Group		Date of Birth	
Date		Attendance		SEN Code	
Does SEN Graduated Response/EHCP require review?			YES	NO	County
Present at Meeting					
Name		Role		Contact details	
Reason for Meeting					
▼					
Analysis of Current Situation					
Strengths			Difficulties		
Strategies and Supportive Measures					
Intent		Implementation		Impact	
Stakeholder's Viewpoints					
Parent/Carer's View			Student's View		
Name		Signature		Date	

Appendix C – Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2025–26



Sherborne Primary School (1.5-form entry) – Academic Year 2025-2026

Designated Mental Health Lead: Stephanie Beatson

Reviewed by: SLT / Academy Committee / Safeguarding Lead

Vision & Aims

To foster a nurturing whole-school culture where every pupil, staff member, and family feels emotionally safe, valued, and supported. We aim to provide early intervention, build resilience, and work in partnership to promote positive mental health, with particular attention to our high proportion of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium (PP) and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Strategic Objectives (aligned to DfE 8 Principles)

Leadership & Policy

- Create the Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy reflecting PP & SEND priorities
- Communicate the role of DMHL on website and newsletters
- Link Academy Committee for mental health appointed

Staff Development

- Provide refresher training for all staff on trauma-informed practice and emotional literacy
- Termly wellbeing check-ins
- CPD session on supporting PP & SEND pupils

Curriculum Integration

- Monitor embedding of wellbeing into PSHE/RSHE schemes
- Source funding for Hamish and Milo scheme to implement as part of ELSA and PSHE
- Half termly focus wellbeing in assemblies

Early Identification

- Introduce half-termly wellbeing 'temperature' check (feelings chart, SDQ)
- Track in MyConcern with PP & SEND tags

Targeted Support

- Continue deployment of 4 ELSA practitioners for small-group & 1:1 work
- Launch newly funded Play Therapist sessions

Staff Wellbeing

- Continue implementation of staff wellbeing newsletter
- Termly staff wellbeing drop-in run by wellbeing team member
- ACR run wellbeing survey in Spring Term 2026 (as part of biannual approach)

Parent/Carer Engagement

- Termly parent wellbeing bulletin on Dojo
- Coffee mornings / webinars on anxiety & emotional regulation



Monitoring & Evaluation

- Pupil & staff wellbeing surveys termly
- Annual whole-school wellbeing meeting (with wellbeing team) to review data & set actions

Key Priorities 2025-2026

1. Establish clear referral and tracking systems prioritising PP and SEND pupils.
2. Continue to embed visible wellbeing culture across curriculum and environment.
3. Maximise impact of 4 ELSA practitioners and newly funded Play Therapist.
4. Continue to strengthen parent/carers partnerships, especially for vulnerable families.

How Success Will Be Measured

- Improved engagement, behaviour, and attendance among PP & SEND pupils.
- Reduction in escalated safeguarding concerns linked to mental health.
- Increased staff confidence in supporting wellbeing (survey data).
- Positive feedback from pupils, parents, and staff (surveys & meetings).

Appendix D – Directory of Support Services

Local Services:

- Dorset CAMHS (referral via Single Point of Access or GP)
- Dorset Mental Health Support Teams (MHST)
- School Nursing Service

National Helplines:

- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Childline: 0800 1111
- Samaritans: 116 123
- YoungMinds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Emergency Services: 999 (if a child is in immediate danger)

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