



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

East-the-Water Primary School
September 2025 – September 2028

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1. Aims

At East-the-Water Primary, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

This policy focuses on mental health and wellbeing. It aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about and reflect on their experiences of mental health
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Inform pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources for the child. School will also signpost parents who need support themselves
- Inform staff of support that is available to them to support their mental health

It should be read alongside:

- SEND policy
- Behaviour and Relational Support policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- RSE Policy

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing:

"a state of well-being 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".

Good mental health is important to pupils as it:

- Increases their ability to learn and explore the world around them.
- Allows pupils to feel, express and manage positive and negative emotions.
- Gives pupils a greater platform to form and maintain good relationships with others.
- Helps them cope with and manage change, setbacks and uncertainty – increases resilience.
- Allows pupils to develop and thrive holistically

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Senior Leadership Team.

Certain members of staff have duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Deana Smith – Senior Mental Health Lead (Organisational Lead)
- Sean Matthews – lead on in-class provision for all pupils
- Julie Servaes – lead on provision to support for staff
- Julie Servaes and Katie Everett – lead on signposting parents
- We also have teaching assistants that provide a high level of pastoral support, intervention and attachment mentoring throughout the school

4. Warning signs

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in:
 - Mood or energy level
 - Eating or sleeping patterns
 - Attitude in lessons or academic attainment
 - Level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Rapid weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes

- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

5. Supporting pupils

5.1 Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision for all pupils

As part of our school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, our school offers support to all pupils in class in the following ways:

- Raising awareness of mental health during planned assemblies throughout the year and through the RSE curriculum (in place)
- Teachers greet pupils at the door each morning having a welcoming conversation to build relationships (in place)
- Teachers use the '10 a day' approach in class (to be embedded academic year 2025-2026)
- All pupils have access to play and lunchtime groups (in place)
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online or phone support by having Childline posters displayed around the school (in place)
- Monitoring all pupils' mental health through surveys (started Spring 2025)
- Daily movement or brain breaks between lessons or when the need arises (in place)
- Calm Boxes in class (in place)
- Offering pastoral support through Place2Talk or through our Pastoral Team (in place)
- Pupils to be Mental Health Ambassadors (to start academic year 2025-2026)

This is overseen by Sean Matthews, Deana Smith and Julie Servaes

5.2 Assessing if further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the school will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above in section 5.1.

Our school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

This is overseen by Deana Smith

5.3 Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

- Daily check ins and focused support with mentors
- Counselling
- Comic Strip Conversation support
- Time-out pass
- Attachment mentors
- Place2Talk & Place2Be Counselling

This is overseen by Deana Smith, Julie Servaes and Katie Everett

5.4 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by our internal offer or we feel a different service is required, in agreement with parents we will consult with the Mental Health in Schools Team to see if they can offer support for pupils with mild to moderate symptoms of low mood, worry and behavioural difficulties (including phobias, sleep difficulties, panic disorders, OCD and low level self harm). If they are unable to support the pupil, a referral to CAMHS or a different service will be made. Signposting to mental health charities will also be given (e.g. Happy Maps, Stop Breathe Think, Young Minds).

This is overseen by Deana Smith, Julie Servaes and Katie Everett

5.5 Individual Care Plans

When agreed by staff and parents, an Individual Care Plan may be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals. This plan should include:

- Details of the child's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

This is overseen by Deana Smith, Julie Servaes and Katie Everett

5.6 Managing Disclosures

If a child chooses to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. All disclosures will be recorded

confidentially on CPOMs and logged in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

6. Supporting and collaborating with parents/carers

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their own mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support/signposting them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support for their child and for themselves

When informing parents/carers about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face-to-face.

These meetings can be difficult, so our school will ensure that parents/carers are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to CPOMs.

7. Pupil Voice

Involving pupils in decisions that impact on them can benefit their emotional health and wellbeing by helping them to feel part of the school and wider community and to have some control over their lives. We are committed to providing structures that allow pupils to play an active role in developing a mentally healthy school through:

- Senior Leaders having an Open Door Policy to children
- Having an active School Council including a voted on member by SLT
- Carrying out Mental Health Questionnaires with pupils and taking actions linked to findings – the findings are then discussed with pupils in a variety of ways eg assemblies or letters
- Pupil voice in My Plans and Pupil Profiles
- Mental Health Ambassadors (to be embedded during 2025-2026)

8. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be very challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

Additionally, we will highlight:

- 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

9. Signposting

Sources of support are displayed around our school and on our school website, so pupils and parents/carers are aware of how they can get help.

Julie Servaes and Katie Everett will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

10. 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 and safeguarding training to enable them to keep pupils safe. All staff will be offered training through the Mental Health in Schools Team from Autumn 2025 so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

Additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with pupils.

The MindEd learning portal (www.minded.org.uk) provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

11. Support for staff

We recognise that at times staff may need support with their own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously and support staff with their own mental health
- Offer an employee assistance programme called Health Assured
- Offer staff supervision sessions through Place2Be and the Mental Health in Schools Team's Reflective Space
- Offer an employee assistance programme called Health Assured
- Signpost staff to further resources such as TalkWorks and Education Support

Details about Health Assured, Place2Be, Reflective Space and further resources are available in the staff room for all staff to access

12. Action Plan

We have written an Action Plan for the school year 2025-2026 with the Mental Health in Schools Team. This will be reviewed annually and amended with new actions.

Please see Appendix 3.

Appendix 1 - Talking to pupils when they make mental health disclosures

The advice below is from pupils themselves, in their own words, together with some additional ideas to help you in initial conversations with pupils when they disclose mental health concerns. This advice should be considered alongside relevant school policies on child protection and safeguarding and discussed with relevant colleagues as appropriate.

Focus on listening

“She listened, and I mean REALLY listened. She didn’t interrupt me or ask me to explain myself or anything, she just let me talk and talk and talk. I had been unsure about talking to anyone but I knew quite quickly that I’d chosen the right person to talk to and that it would be a turning point.”

If a pupil has come to you, it’s because they trust you and feel a need to share their difficulties with someone. Let them talk. Ask occasional open questions if you need to in order to encourage them to keep exploring their feelings and opening up to you. Just letting them pour out what they’re thinking will make a huge difference and marks a huge first step in recovery. Up until now they may not have admitted even to themselves that there is a problem.

Don’t talk too much

“Sometimes it’s hard to explain what’s going on in my head – it doesn’t make a lot of sense and I’ve kind of gotten used to keeping myself to myself. But just ‘cos I’m struggling to find the right words doesn’t mean you should help me. Just keep quiet, I’ll get there in the end.”

The pupil should be talking at least three quarters of the time. If that’s not the case then you need to redress the balance. You are here to listen, not to talk. Sometimes the conversation may lapse into silence. Try not to give in to the urge to fill the gap, but rather wait until the pupil does so. This can often lead to them exploring their feelings more deeply. Of course, you should interject occasionally, perhaps with questions to the pupil to explore certain topics they’ve touched on more deeply, or to show that you understand and are supportive. Don’t feel an urge to over-analyse the situation or try to offer answers. This all comes later. For now your role is simply one of supportive listener. So make sure you’re listening!

Don’t pretend to understand

“I think that all teachers got taught on some course somewhere to say ‘I understand how that must feel’ the moment you open up. YOU DON’T – don’t even pretend to, it’s not helpful, it’s insulting.”

The concept of a mental health difficulty such as an eating disorder or obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can seem completely alien if you’ve never experienced these difficulties first hand. You may find yourself wondering why on earth someone would do these things to themselves, but don’t explore those feelings with the sufferer. Instead listen hard to what they’re saying and encourage them to talk and you’ll slowly start to understand what steps they might be ready to take in order to start making some changes.

Don't be afraid to make eye contact

"She was so disgusted by what I told her that she couldn't bear to look at me."

It's important to try to maintain a natural level of eye contact (even if you have to think very hard about doing so and it doesn't feel natural to you at all). If you make too much eye contact, the pupil may interpret this as you staring at them. They may think that you are horrified about what they are saying or think they are a 'freak'. On the other hand, if you don't make eye contact at all then a pupil may interpret this as you being disgusted by them – to the extent that you can't bring yourself to look at them. Making an effort to maintain natural eye contact will convey a very positive message to the pupil.

Offer support

"I was worried how she'd react, but my Mum just listened then said 'How can I support you?' – no one had asked me that before and it made me realise that she cared. Between us we thought of some really practical things she could do to help me stop self-harming."

Never leave this kind of conversation without agreeing next steps. These will be informed by your conversations with appropriate colleagues and the schools' policies on such issues. Whatever happens, you should have some form of next steps to carry out after the conversation because this will help the pupil to realise that you're working with them to move things forward.

Acknowledge how hard it is to discuss these issues

"Talking about my bingeing for the first time was the hardest thing I ever did. When I was done talking, my teacher looked me in the eye and said 'That must have been really tough' – he was right, it was, but it meant so much that he realised what a big deal it was for me."

It can take a young person weeks or even months to admit they have a problem to themselves, let alone share that with anyone else. If a pupil chooses to confide in you, you should feel proud and privileged that they have such a high level of trust in you. Acknowledging both how brave they have been, and how glad you are they chose to speak to you, conveys positive messages of support to the pupil.

Don't assume that an apparently negative response is actually a negative response

"The anorexic voice in my head was telling me to push help away so I was saying no. But there was a tiny part of me that wanted to get better. I just couldn't say it out loud or else I'd have to punish myself."

Despite the fact that a pupil has confided in you, and may even have expressed a desire to get on top of their illness, that doesn't mean they'll readily accept help. The illness may ensure they resist any form of help for as long as they possibly can. Don't be offended or upset if your offers of help are met with anger, indifference or insolence, it's the illness talking, not the pupil.

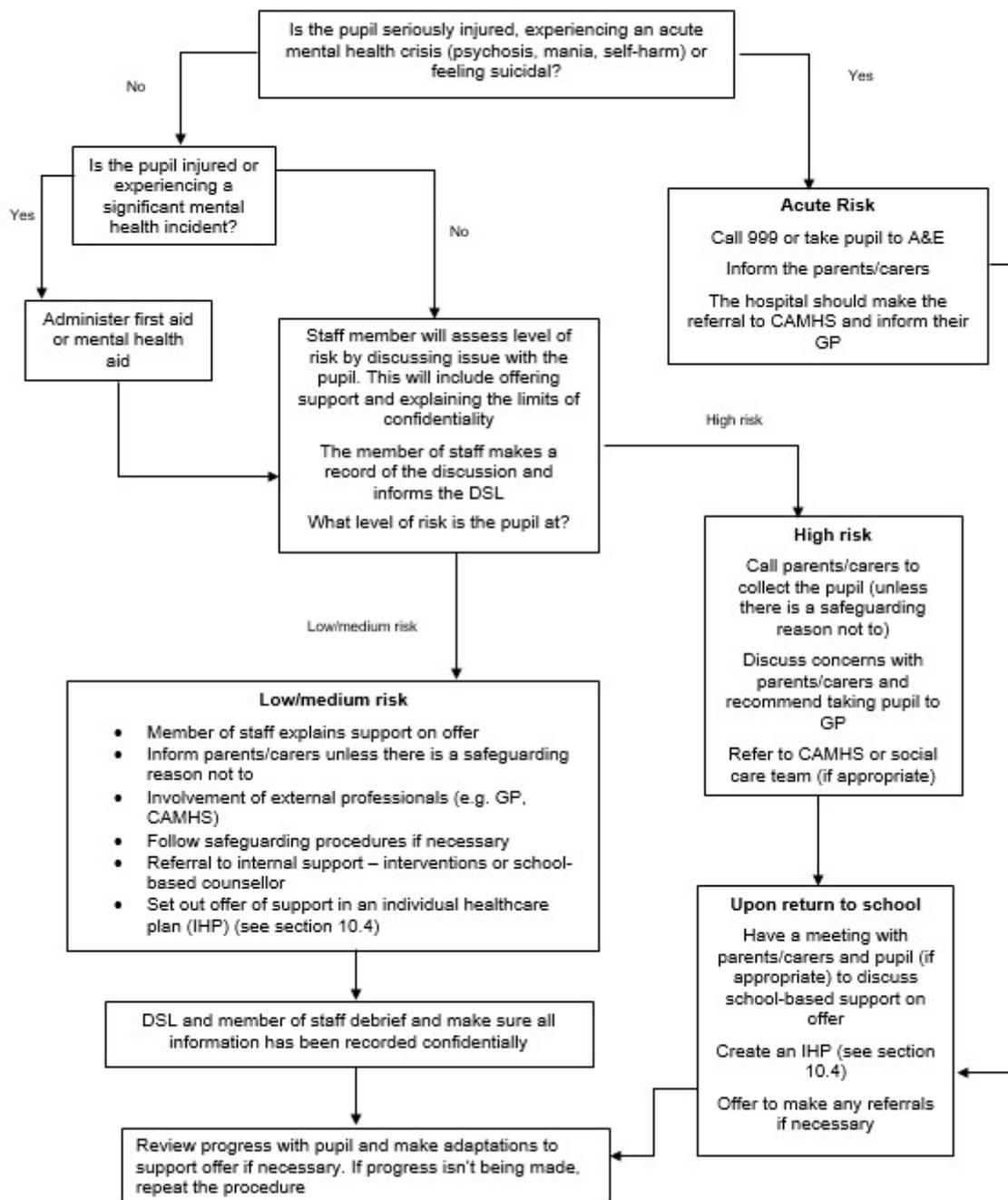
Never break your promises

“Whatever you say you’ll do you have to do or else the trust we’ve built in you will be smashed to smithereens. And never lie. Just be honest. If you’re going to tell someone just be upfront about it, we can handle that, what we can’t handle is having our trust broken.”

Above all else, a pupil wants to know they can trust you. That means if they want you to keep their issues confidential and you can’t then you must be honest. Explain that, whilst you can’t keep it a secret, you can ensure that it is handled within the school’s policy of confidentiality and that only those who need to know about it in order to help will know about the situation. You can also be honest about the fact you don’t have all the answers or aren’t exactly sure what will happen next. Consider yourself the pupil’s ally rather than their saviour and think about which next steps you can take together, always ensuring you follow relevant policies and consult appropriate colleagues.

APPENDIX 2 – Procedure to follow in case of an acute mental health crisis

Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



APPENDIX 3 – School Action Plan 2025 – 2026

Source:	Existing good practice	Area of Development	What do we want to achieve (SMART goal)?	Next Steps & Actions	Lead	Review Date
Pupil survey outcomes	<p>Pupils feel safe and welcome in school and pupils feel that E-T-W school helps people to be themselves by respecting and appreciating what makes them different.</p> <p>Pupils recognised that adults in the school know when children have a problem and can get them help. They feel that the school asks what they think and listens to their ideas.</p> <p>Pupils feel like there is a good range of afterschool clubs and lunchtime activities that they can get involved with.</p>	Assemblies for mental health to keep in mind. 10-a-day implemented across the school.	Assembly – introducing and promoting 10-a-day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deana to speak to Sean ready for September. - assembly date to be confirmed - MHST to support in delivery. <p>Assembly to be delivered.</p> <p>Year 6 to trial summer 2.</p>	Sean	September
		Pupils want to be asked their opinion on mental health provision in the school	Mental health ambassadors trained and used to develop provision within the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assembly booked for MHA introduction - MHST deliver assembly - Year 4s to apply to role - Deana and team to select 8 pupils - Training in September 	Deana/MHST	September
Parent survey outcomes	The majority of parents feel welcome at the school and would feel comfortable contacting school about well-being concerns.	Increase parental engagement and awareness of mental health support.	Share with parents what is available in school and community.	- Deana compose a list of mental health support available in school and in community for both pupils and	Deana	September/October

	<p>Parents feel that diversity is celebrated and that there is a range of extra-curricular activities for their children.</p> <p>Most parents feel that their child is safe and feels listened to and valued.</p>			parents to be part of school newsletter to all parents.		
		Engagement with MHST		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MHST to be present at school fayre June/sports day to raise awareness. - coffee mornings/afternoons. 	MHST/Deana	September
Staff survey outcomes	<p>Most staff identify a shared understanding of what well-being means and feel the school breaks down mental health stigma.</p> <p>Most staff feel a sense of belonging at the school and feel they can ask for help without judgement.</p> <p>Most staff would feel confident raising a concern about a child.</p> <p>The vast majority of staff feel confident developing positive relationships with parents and pupils and feel they could recognise if a pupil needs mental health support.</p>	Not all know staff who the DMHL is.	All staff to know who the DMHL is.	- Deana to finalise the mental health and wellbeing policy and share DMHL info.	Deana	September
		Staff training to be reviewed	Training to be offered in Autumn term by MHST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff training on anxiety - staff training on staff wellbeing/stress management 	MHST/Deana	September

		Awareness for staff of what support is available	Staff resources to be more easily available within school without having to ask for it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Julie to revamp resources and add signposting for staff. - Julie to find others within staff group who can work together to improve access to resources and celebrate achievements and celebrations of staff. 	Julie	September
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff wellbeing group 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Julie to arrange regular sessions for staff to get together to share experiences and socialise. 	Julie	September