

# **Carr Manor Community School**

## **Positive Mental Health Policy**

**This policy applies to staff, pupils, parents and governors**

**Adopted by the governing body: July 2026**

**Review date: July 2028**

## Policy Statement

*Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community. (World Health Organization)*

At Carr Manor, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

## Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

## The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers

## Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Bridie McLoughlin - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Rachael Hallam – Safeguarding Team Manager
- Sam Somers - Safeguarding Officer in the Primary Phase
- Laeton Grant - Safeguarding Officer in the Secondary Phase
- Megan Singleton - Safeguarding Officer in the Secondary Phase
- Maria Rall - Safeguarding Officer
- Matthew Skinner - PSHCE/RSE
- Pete Grealish – PSHCE Primary Phase

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the 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 child protection officer, the head teacher or the designated governor. If the pupil presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to MindMate/Cluster is appropriate, this will be led and managed by a member of the Safeguarding Team.

## Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE, RSE, PPD and Coaching + curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the [PSHE Association Guidance](#)<sup>1</sup> to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

In both phases there are intervention groups, such as social skills groups in the Primary Phase. There is also access to a therapy dog 'Chester' in the Primary Phase. Coaching Plus and PPD are universal ways in which pupils are supported in school.

## Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. Who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in Appendix D.

We will display relevant sources of support on the Safeguarding noticeboard and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

## Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with a member of the Safeguarding team.

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<sup>1</sup> [Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing](#)

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

CPD around such warning signs will be delivered every year to all staff.

## Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'.

All disclosures should be recorded in writing on a Cause for Concern form and discussed with a member of the Safeguarding team. This will be held on the pupil's confidential file in CPOMS.

This information should be shared with a member of the Safeguarding Team, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. For guidance about making a referral to MindMate, see one of the Safeguarding Team.

## Confidentiality

We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on, then we should discuss with the pupil:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent/carers for pupils up to the age of 16.

Always share disclosures with a member of the Safeguarding team. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence; and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents and carers must always be informed if a pupil expresses suicidal ideation or is in danger of significant harm. Pupils will be encouraged to tell their carers themselves. We will always give pupils the option of us informing parents/carers for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents/carers should not be informed, but the safeguarding team must be informed immediately.

### Working with Parents and Carers

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents and carers, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents or carers we should consider the following questions (on a case-by-case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents and carers to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent/carer time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents/carers can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow-up meeting or phone call right away as parents /carers often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

### Working with all Parents/carers

Parents/carers are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents /carers, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents /carers are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our Mental Health Policy easily accessible to parents /carers
- Keep parents /carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

## Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support. We will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend may need help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- 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

## 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 to enable them to keep pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The [MindEd learning portal](#)<sup>2</sup> and the National College provide free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Sarah Holdsworth/Julie Harkness, our CPD Coordinators, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in July 2028.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Rachael Hallam/Bridie McLoughlin, via email [safeguarding@carrmanor.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@carrmanor.org.uk)

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)