



**The Acorns**  
Primary and Nursery School

*Mutual respect*

*Equity*

*Inclusivity*

*Love*

# **Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy**

July 2025

## Policy Document Version Control

Responsibility for Policy:	<i>Karene Bentley</i>
Policy approval/date:	<i>July 2025</i>
Frequency of Review:	<i>Annual</i>
Next Review date:	<i>July 2026</i>
Related Policies:	
Minor Revisions:	<i>Page 5 - Changes to practitioner names</i> <i>Page 5 - Introduction of My Happy Mind</i>
Major changes	
Full re-write	

**Mission:** Be The Best You Can Be

**Vision:** Providing A World-Class Start to Life

At The Acorns Primary & Nursery School, we are a Rights Respecting School where everyone is welcome - we have No Outsiders. We equip our pupils with the skills and knowledge they need to become positive, global citizens. During their time here, children develop into intrinsically motivated, life-long learners: they understand the value of working hard and they aspire to achieve.

Our pupils leave us with a strong, moral compass, comfortable in their own skin, and knowing their own minds. They are brimming with self-belief and self-worth and are capable of being in respectful, trusting relationships with others in their community.

Throughout their time at The Acorns, we instil the characteristics of effective learning. These allow our pupils to develop into confident, resilient, and independent adults, prepared to succeed in the modern world.

We achieve this vision through our daily mission - Be the Best You Can Be - and by remaining true to our core values of Mutual respect, Equity, Inclusivity and Love.

**Values:**

Mutual respect



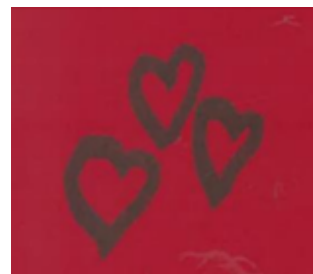
Equity



Inclusivity



Love



## We are a Rights Respecting School with No Outsiders

### **Policy Statement**

At The Acorns Primary and Nursery school, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos, and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

At our school we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count
- encourage children to be confident and celebrate difference
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs.

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder and those who have experienced trauma.

### **Scope**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Relationship and Healthy School policy which demonstrates the school's commitment to being a trauma informed setting. Where pupils' mental health needs overlap with other needs, this policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical Needs policy and our SEND policy. It also sits alongside and does not replace child protection procedures.

**Article 39: Any child who has been neglected, exploited, abused, tortured or involved in armed conflict should be supported to recover their health, self-respect and dignity, and to reintegrate.**

## Lead Members of Staff

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

~~Hannah Broom, Executive Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Adult Mental Health First Aider (MHFA)~~

**Nathan Painter**, Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Adult MHFA

**Emma Leslie**, Deputy Headteacher Early Years Lead, Adult MHFA

**Karene Bentley**, Inclusion Manager, Senior Mental Health Lead, Adolescent MHFA

~~Pam Ramsay, School Family Liaison Officer, Safeguarding officer, ELSA~~

**Sarah Savory**, School Family Liaison Officer, Safeguarding officer, ELSA

**Catherine Lenihan**, School Family Liaison Officer, Safeguarding officer, Trauma Informed Practitioner

## Identifying needs and Warning Signs

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil/student should record their concerns on CPOMs. Where a child is considered at risk of immediate harm, DSL should be notified in the first instance.

All staff will record any information regarding children on CPOMs. This is aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties, including:

- Attendance - increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative OR unusual behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

## Teaching about Mental Health

We are proud to be a My Happy Mind school. The program is delivered at the same time weekly to all classes from Nursery through to Year 6, ensuring fidelity to the scheme.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are also included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use relevant and appropriate guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

## **Targeted support**

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils, which may include:

- My Happy Mind
- Circle time approaches
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry monsters'
- Use of 'Zones of Regulation'
- Referral to Local Mental Health Support Teams
- ELSA support
- Therapeutic activities including Art Therapy, Theraplay, Lego Therapy, ELSA and supported play times
- Support for parents through Youth Connect 5

## **Working with Parents**

To support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Share details regarding 'My Happy Mind' parent app
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

## **Working with other agencies and partners**

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing, including:

- Mental Health Support Team
- LD CAMHS
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Family support workers
- Early Help & Prevention
- Edge of Care
- School Health
- TAF
- Koala NW
- Thor (Previously Polaris)

## Staff well-being and Mental Health

All school staff are encouraged to:

- Understand this policy and seek clarification from management where required.
- Consider this policy while completing work-related duties and at any time while representing The Acorns Primary and Nursery School
- Support fellow staff in their awareness of this policy
- Support and contribute to The Acorns Primary and Nursery Schools aim of providing a mentally healthy and supportive environment for all staff.

All school staff have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care of their own mental health and wellbeing, including physical health
- Take reasonable care that their actions do not affect the health and safety of other people in the workplace.
- Raise concerns with their line manager if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their well-being.

Managers and Senior Leadership have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that all school staff are made aware of this policy.
- Manage and support the implementation and review of this policy, including its goals
- Champion good management practices and the establishment of a work ethos within The Acorns Primary & Nursery School which discourages assumptions about long term commitment to working hours of a kind likely to cause stress and which enables staff to maintain a reasonable “work life balance”.
- Encourage staff to use strapline below for email signatures:  
*‘The Acorns Primary & Nursery School promotes the work-life balance of its staff. We do not expect our staff to respond immediately to emails or to respond outside normal working hours’.*
- Promote effective communication and ensure that there are procedures in place for consulting and supporting employees on changes in the organisation, to management structures and working arrangements at both at school-wide and class-wide level.
- Encourage initiatives and events that promote health and well-being.
- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support individuals experiencing stress, referring them to the Trust’s Occupational Health advisers where appropriate.
- Collate management information which will enable the school to measure its performance in relation to stress management and employee well-being, such as:

- Sickness absence data
- Staff turnover, exit interviews
- Number of self-referrals to the counsellor service
- Number of referrals to Occupational Health support
- Numbers of grievance and harassment cases
- Seek the views of employees on the effectiveness of the School's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy and stress management arrangements using staff surveys and other appropriate questionnaires.
- Staff will be supported with:
  - Direct advice and support through an effective support line
  - PPA from home, when appropriate
  - Flexible and generous staff absence trust policies
  - Referrals to occupational health
  - Phased returns after a period of absence

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually.

The effectiveness of this policy will be assessed through feedback from staff, pupils and parents and the review of the policy by SLT and governors to determine if objectives have been met and to identify barriers and enablers to ongoing policy implementation.