Shine as Lights in the World
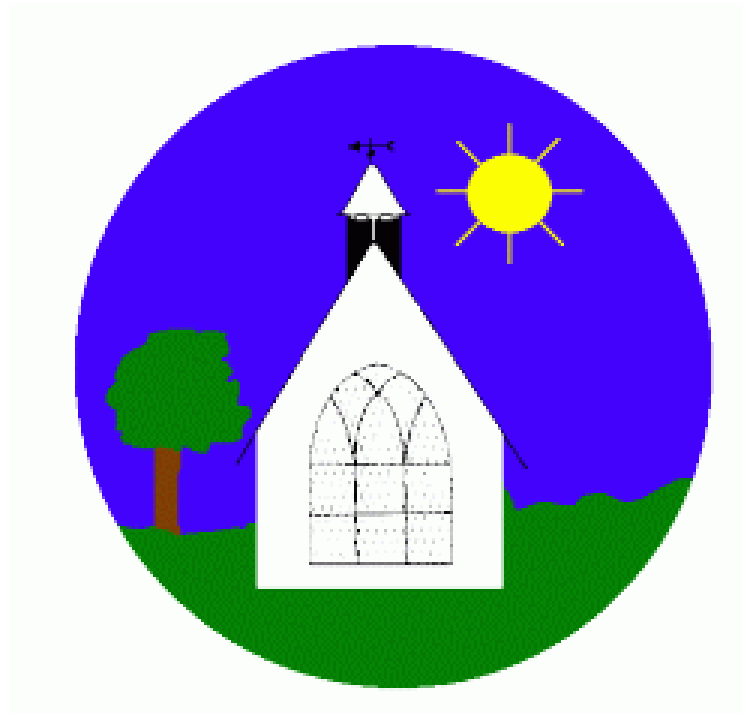

St. Michael's Woolmer Green C of E Primary School

Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Date of review: **January 2026**
Date of next review: **January 2028**
Responsibility: **Full Governing Body**

Contents

1. Aims

Our School Vision and Values promote respect for difference and diversity. Our Vision, Shine as Lights in the World, encourages pupils and staff to be the best versions of themselves and feel ready to shine in the world. Our core values such as love and respect, encapsulate the culture we want to create here at St. Michael's

At St Michael's Woolmer Green School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of staff and other stakeholders.

The school is committed to an inclusive culture where mental health is recognised as a core part of well-being, staff should feel able to speak openly about pressures or difficulties without stigma and know that they will be met with understanding discretion and appropriate support

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

Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all staff across our school

Provide guidance to staff in supporting their mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which they 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 staff about the support they can expect from our school in respect of their mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources

This policy was written in consultation with and should be read alongside:

 SEND policy

 Pupil Behaviour Policy

Child protection and safeguarding policy

Staff Handbook (including staff code of conduct)

Whistle blowing policy

Leave of Absence policy

Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing policy

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 for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a colleagues mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) Jan Martin or mental health lead Sarah Holden

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

Headteacher

Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

Mental Health Leads

School Business Manager (HR concerns)

4. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis

Is the member of staff seriously injured, experiencing an acute mental health crisis (psychosis, mania, self-harm) or feeling suicidal

Acute Risk

Call 999 or take staff to A&E and contact next of kin?

Is the staff member experiencing a significant mental health incident

Provide mental health first aid and notify Head Teacher / Deputy Head

 Upon return to school

Have a meeting with MHL or DMHL and Head Teacher / deputy head to discuss school-based support on offer (Education Mutual counselling, Mind, GP, mental health services)

Offer to make any referrals if necessary

Create an individual Wellness Action Plan (WAP). See Appendix 1

5. Warning signs

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

Changes in:

- Mood or energy level

- Eating or sleeping patterns

- Attitudes towards colleagues and pupils

- 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

Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted

Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

5. Managing disclosures

Advising Staff on Disclosing a Mental Health or Wellbeing Concern About Another Member of Staff

Purpose of Reporting

> Staff may become aware that a colleague is experiencing difficulties that could impact their wellbeing, safety, or ability to carry out their role. Reporting a concern is not meant to be punitive—its purpose is to ensure that:

- The colleague receives appropriate support early
- Risks to staff or pupils are minimised
- The school meets its duty of care

When to Share a Concern
Staff should consider raising a concern if they notice:

- Significant or sustained changes in a colleague's behaviour, mood, or ability to cope
- Signs of distress, burnout, or withdrawal
- Comments that indicate hopelessness, self-harm, or emotional crisis
- Behaviors that may put the colleague or pupils at risk

Encourage staff to trust their professional judgement— "If something feels not quite right, it is appropriate to speak to someone."

Who to Share the Concern with
Concerns should be shared as soon as possible with:

- The Headteacher, or
- The Deputy Headteacher, or
- The Designated Mental Health Lead (DMHL), or
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where there is any risk of harm

If the concern is about the Headteacher, staff should report directly to the Chair of Governors or a Deputy DSL (according to the school's whistleblowing/safeguarding procedures).

How to Raise the Concern
Advise staff to:

- Speak privately and discreetly
- Describe specific observations or incidents rather than assumptions
- Avoid making diagnoses
- Share concerns factually and compassionately
- Use the school's reporting form if one exists (e.g., concern form)

Example statement:
"I've noticed that [colleague] has seemed very overwhelmed lately, and today they were visibly upset and said they were struggling to cope. I'm worried about them and wanted to share this with you."

Confidentiality and Sensitivity
Make clear that:

- Concerns will be handled with strict confidentiality and only shared with those who need to know
- The identity of the person raising the concern will be protected wherever possible
- Gossip or informal sharing of concerns among colleagues is inappropriate

Supportive, not Punitive
The policy should affirm that raising a concern:

- Is an act of care, not criticism
- Will not be treated as a disciplinary issue unless there is genuine misconduct
- Enables access to support such as occupational health, counselling, adjustments, or wellbeing resource

What Happens After a Concern Is Raised
Outline a transparent process:

- Senior staff will meet with the concerned staff member (if needed) to clarify details
- The colleague of concern will be approached sensitively
- Appropriate support pathways will be discussed (internal support, occupational health, GP referral, etc.)
- Follow-up actions will be documented and reviewed
- Safeguarding procedures will be triggered if required
- A wellbeing action plan will be created

6. Confidentiality

Staff will not keep a disclosure secret – instead they will be upfront about informing the relevant person

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

Being the sole person responsible for a mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing

Staff should always share disclosures with at least 1 appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL/mental health lead. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

7. Supporting staff

Baseline support for all staff

As part of our school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for staff, our school offers support to all staff by:

➢ Termly drop in coffee and a chat session (15mins. in the first instance) where classes are covered by teacher/TA or it is during assembly time.

➢ Raising awareness by signposting to services available for mental health, wellbeing, finances and work unions

➢ Creating a WAP as necessary

➢ Open door policy with SMHL and DMHL

➢ Having open discussions about mental health during staff training sessions

➢ Providing staff with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of our school that is negatively impacting their mental health

➢ Monitoring all colleagues' mental health through anonymous Q&A sessions so staff can securely share their ideas and feelings

➢ We have a Senior Mental Health Lead and Deputy with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing

➢ Opportunity to take PPA off site

➢ Creating a safe space for staff to manage their mental health and wellbeing

Assessing what further support is needed

If a colleague is identified as having a mental health need, the MH or DMLH will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above.

Our school will offer support in cycles of:

Assessing what the staff mental health needs

Creating a plan to provide support Wellbeing action Plan (WAP)

Taking the actions set out in the plan

Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

Wellbeing Action Plan (WAP)

A colleague will be offered a WAP as a practical tool to help look after their own mental Health and wellbeing. This will reflect their needs, voice and how they would like to be supported at different times

WAPs are written in collaboration with the staff member

➢ The WAP will contain the following details:

➢ Support they feel would help them to improve their mental health and wellbeing to include

➢ Techniques to optimise your mental health

➢ Early warning signs that you and your line manager could look out for example triggers, symptoms

➢ What enables you to have positive mental health

➢ How do you feel when you are thriving at work

➢ An agreed time to review the WAP and adjust support as needed
➢ By engaging with this process, it may help to open up conversation which can tackle any issues that arise at work and with the right support in place can prevent mental health problems from spiraling out of control.

8. Supporting peers

Watching a colleague experience poor mental health can be very challenging for other staff members. This may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all members of staff 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 colleagues

Things they should avoid doing/saying

Warning signs to look out for

➢ Signposting to sources of external support

9. Signposting

Sources of support are displayed around our school in the staffroom and private areas so all colleagues are aware of how they can get help.

The SMHL and DMHL will be available to provide further information if you want to learn more about what support is available.

10. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

St Michael's will create an open culture around mental health by:

Discussing mental health with all staff to break down stigma

Encouraging colleagues to communicate when their mental health is deteriorating

Treat mental health concerns seriously

Offer staff supervision sessions

Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves

Create a pleasant and supportive work environment

➢ Offer an employee assistance programme through Education Mutual

11. Training

All staff will be offered training so they:

Have a good understanding of what mental health needs are

Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health

Know a clear process to follow if you feel need of help

Encourage open discussion around Mental Health in whole school inset.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by MHL, DMHL and the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Full Governing Body

Appendix 1

Individual Wellbeing Action Plan (IWAP)

Purpose

This plan is for staff who have been identified, by themselves or others, as experiencing difficulties with their mental health or wellbeing. It is a supportive document designed to reduce barriers at work and agree reasonable adjustments.

The plan aligns with the Equality Act 2010 and supports the school's duty to make reasonable adjustments. Participation is voluntary, confidential, and non-judgmental.

Staff Details

Name:

Role:

Year Group

Line Manager / Wellbeing Lead:
Date Agreed:

Review Date:

How I Am Currently Feeling at Work

What aspects of work are impacting my wellbeing?

Are there particular tasks, times, or situations that feel challenging?

Early Signs I May Be Struggling

Signs I notice in myself:

Signs others might notice:

What Helps Me Stay Well at Work

Supportive actions from my manager:

Support from colleagues:

Working conditions that help me perform well:

Agreed Reasonable Adjustments (Equality Act 2010)

Workload:

Hours / Flexibility:

Environment:

Duties:

Support:

Support and Resources

Named school contact:

External support (optional):

If My Wellbeing Deteriorates

Who should be contacted:

What support would help:

Approaches that may not be helpful:

Review and Monitoring

Frequency of check-ins:

How we will know the plan is helping:

Next review date:

Agreement

Staff member signature: _____ Date: _____

Line manager / Wellbeing lead signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2   Procedure to Follow Related to Mental Ill Health

Concern identified (by staff member or others)

↓

Supportive conversation

(with line manager / wellbeing lead)

↓

Is additional support needed?

↓

Yes ———————————————————— No

↓   ↓

Introduce WAP as a support tool   Continue informal support

(voluntary and confidential)   and monitor wellbeing

↓

Collaboratively complete WAP

(focus on support & reasonable adjustments)

↓

Implement agreed actions (adjustments, check-ins, support)

↓

Regular review meetings. (adapt support as needed)

↓

Wellbeing improves?

Yes ———————————————————— Ongoing concern

↓   ↓

Continue / gradually step-down   Review WAP

support   Consider further support:

Occupational Health

HR advice

External support