

Scarning VC Primary School

Mental Health Policy 2025

Adopted by FGB: 14.10.25

Review Date: September 2027

Policy Statement

At Scarning Primary, we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers).

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

We endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change, stress, and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to access help when they need it.

We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

At our school, we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support.



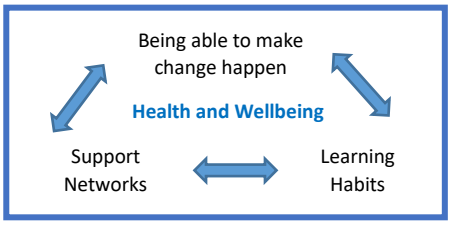
School can truly be …

a guiding lighthouse and safe haven

in a sea of uncertainity.

We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

Teaching about mental health at Scarning we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a pro-active way to avoid problems arising.



We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and well-being.
- Adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management.
- Implementing pillars of recovery, re-affirming strengths, values, re-affirming relationships, acknowledge loss and change, ensure safety and routines.
- Helping children socially to form and maintain relationships: social scaffolding.
- Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries.
- Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better.
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world.
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

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.

• Enabling access to appropriate support.

• Mental Health and SRE / PSED and PATHS for all year groups

• Wellbeing week and access to information around the school



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.

Staff roles and responsibilities

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

Head Teacher and Pastoral Team – Nick King
Mental Health Lead and Pastoral Team – Erika Simpson (SENDCO and Mental Health Champion)
Deputy Mental Health Lead and Pastoral Team – Michelle King (ELSA)
Governor SENDCO – Margaret Hollingworth
Staff Wellbeing Team: Amy Tullock, Stephanie Leithall, Pippa Gunn and Jack Casey

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental SRE (Sex and Relationship Education), PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) and through our Safeguarding curriculum. We teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Targeted support

The school will offer Psychological First Aid Support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils, which may include:

• Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.

• Targeted use of ELSA resources and ELSA support sessions

•Time to Talk: Managing feelings resources e.g. 'memory jars' and 'worry eaters'.

• Therapeutic activities including 'Drawing and Talking', 'Lego Therapy' and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

Tracking and Assessing Wellbeing

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- ELSA impact forms
- Wellbeing questionnaires
- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.



Early Identification and Warning Signs

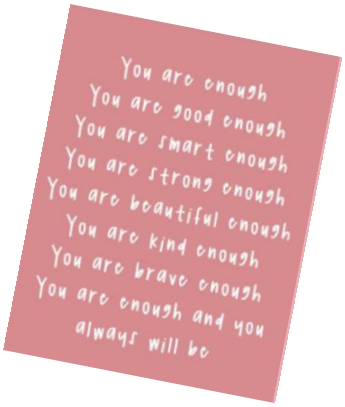
All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including:

• Attendance
• Punctuality
• Relationships
• Approach to learning
• Physical indicators
• Negative behaviour patterns
• Family circumstance
• Recent bereavement
• Health indicators

School staff may also 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 the designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the Mental Health Pastoral Team as appropriate. This is to ensure the child gets the support they need, from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism



Working with parents and carers.

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Leads / Pastoral Team for assessment.

To support parents and carers we will:

• Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
• Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
• Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
• Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in SRE, PATHS and Safeguarding and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.

When a concern has been raised, teachers or the Mental Health Leads / Pastoral Team and SENDCO will:

• Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (Although there may be cases, parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection issues.)
• Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies, such as CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service), Just One Norfolk, Educational Psychology Services CEPP etc.
• Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
• Create a chronology of actions and events.
• Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.

Links to other policies

This policy links to our Child Protection Policy, Anti Bullying, SEND Offer, our Behaviour Policy.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy will be published on the school website - hard copies are available on request. The policy will be reviewed every three years