

FST Primary Schools Federation

Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy



Love, Learn and Grow Together

At Foston CE and Terrington CE (VA) Schools, our commitment is to exploring sustainability, affirming diversity, embracing community, and inspiring creativity. Our core Fruit of the Spirit values of love, joy, patience, and self-control are rooted in the words of St Paul (Galatians 5 v 22-23). These Christian values are fostered in the pupils and staff, building an ethos where all can flourish.

At Stillington Community Primary School our commitment to exploring sustainability, affirming diversity, embracing community, and inspiring creativity is rooted in the core values of love, joy, patience, and self-control. These core values are fostered in the pupils and staff, building an ethos where all can flourish.

Our vision for Langton Primary School is to be an excellent school, where outstanding practice and a nurturing ethos enable every child to thrive.

Agreed by the Governing Board: January 2025

Next Review: January 2026

Foston CE (VC)
Primary School
Foston
YO60 7QB

Stillington Community
Primary School
Main Street
Stillington
YO61 1LA

Terrington CE (VA)
Primary School
North Back Lane
Terrington
YO60 6NS

Langton Community
Primary School
The Green
Langton
YO17 9QP

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).

FST Primary Schools Federation and Langton Primary school collaboration aims to promote positive mental health and support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders. 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 and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to the need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant, and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

Scope

This document describes our Federation and collaboration's approaches 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 and wellbeing 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 and wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/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:

- **Katie Stringer – Head of School, Designated Safeguarding Lead / Langton SENCo (Foston and Langton)**
- **India Tordoff – Head of School, Designated Safeguarding Lead (Terrington and Stillington)**
- **Vicki Allon - Pastoral and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead across the Federation and Collaboration**
- **Katie Allwood - PSHE and RSE lead across the Federation and Collaboration**

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing 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 Safeguarding Lead. If the pupil presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Pastoral Lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS can be accessed on the NYC website.

[Children and young people's mental health | North Yorkshire Council](#)

Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

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 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 Guidance¹ to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

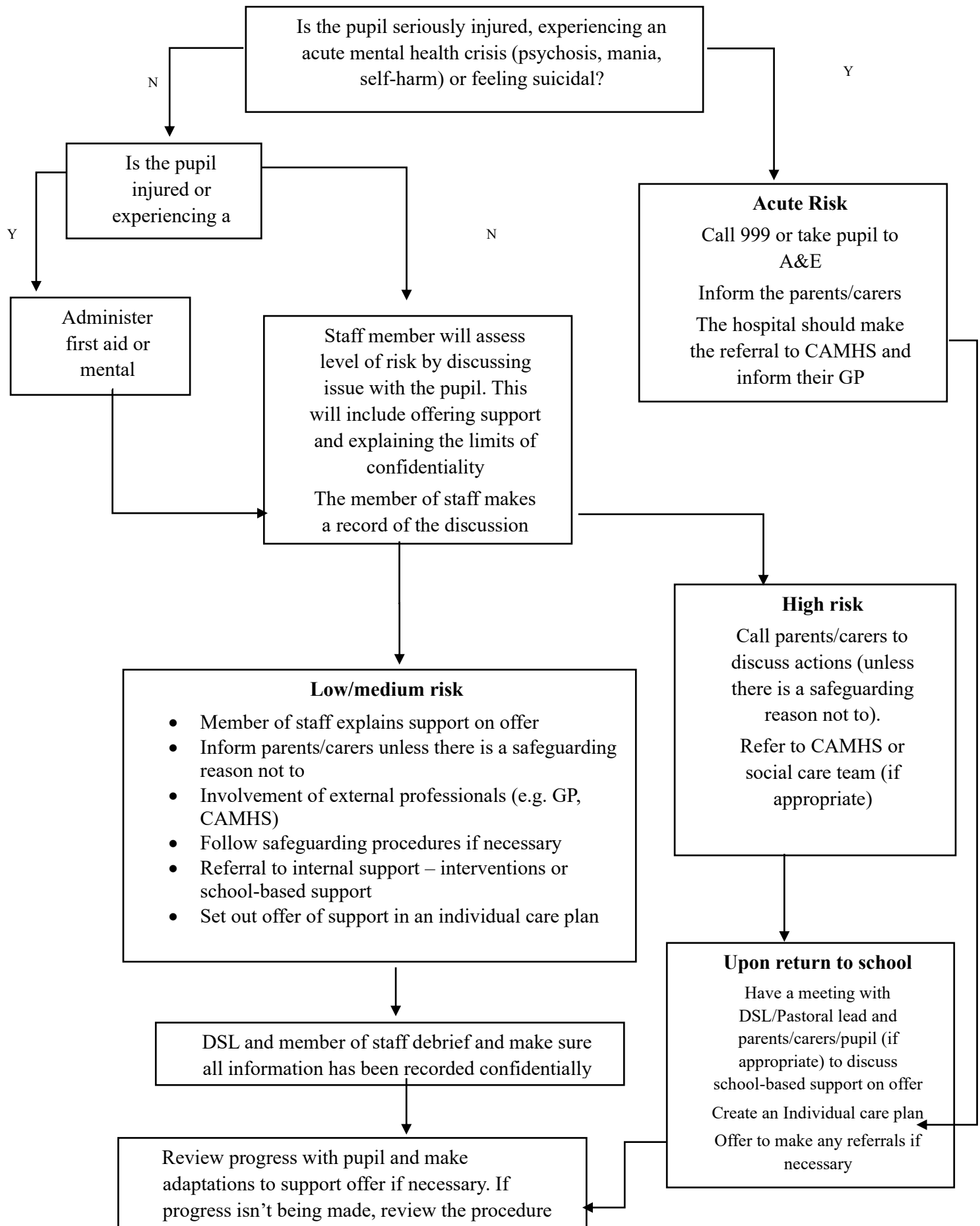
Warning Signs

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 Vicki Allon, our Pastoral and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

Possible warning signs include:

- **Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental**
- **Changes in eating / 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**

Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



Signposting

We ensure that staff, pupils, and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as staff rooms and toilets as well as 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**

Managing disclosures and Confidentiality

Staff will not promise to a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret – instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school
- Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures with at least 1 appropriate colleague, usually the Pastoral and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead, Vicki Allon, as 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. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about a child's mental health and wellbeing, and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the Designated Safeguarding Leads, Katie Stringer

(Foston and Langton) and India Tordoff (Terrington and Stillington) must be informed immediately and the safeguarding policy followed.

Working with Parents

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

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- 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 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 time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and sign post parents to support 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 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 often have questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and keep a record of the meeting on the child's confidential record monitoring system, CPOMs.

Supporting 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 by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on our school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of our school that is negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring all pupils' mental health through assessments e.g growing up in North Yorkshire Survey
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight
- Offering pastoral support
- SEMH training for all staff and strategies implemented within class and around school

Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:

- Worry Monsters
- Circle time
- Daily check in
- Emotion expression through books

Assessing what further support is needed for individuals

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the pastoral and mental wellbeing lead, Vicki Allon, will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide. Our schools 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
- Specific interventions – Circle of Friends, talk boost, managing emotions etc

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer our schools provide, our schools will make, or encourage parents/carers to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- Their GP or a paediatrician
- CAMHS
- Compass Pheonix
- Mental health charities (e.g. [Samaritans](#), [Mind](#), [Young Minds](#).)
- Local counselling services

Individual Care Plans

In some cases, an individual care plan may be drawn up for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

Working with All Parents

Parents 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, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get 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
- 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

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. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom 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 / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs 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 (should parents consent to sharing information)
- 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 child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

For staff who wish to learn more about mental health, School will provides training suitable for those 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 to 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.

Related Policies and legislation

FST Federation and Langton
policies:

SEND policy

Behaviour policy

Anti-bullying policy

Child protection and safeguarding
policy

This policy was written with regard
to:

[The Equality Act 2010](#)

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. 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 Vicki Allon our Pastoral and Mental Health lead via the school office.