Stone Lodge School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Approved by: **Laura Penney**		**Date:** 21.09.26
Last reviewed on:	21.09.26	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

1. Aims

At Stone Lodge Therapeutic School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

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

- Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils 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 pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources

This policy was written in consultation with the school's therapeutic team, the Mental Health and Wellbeing lead and the Headteacher.

It should be read alongside:

- SEND policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Child protection and safeguarding 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

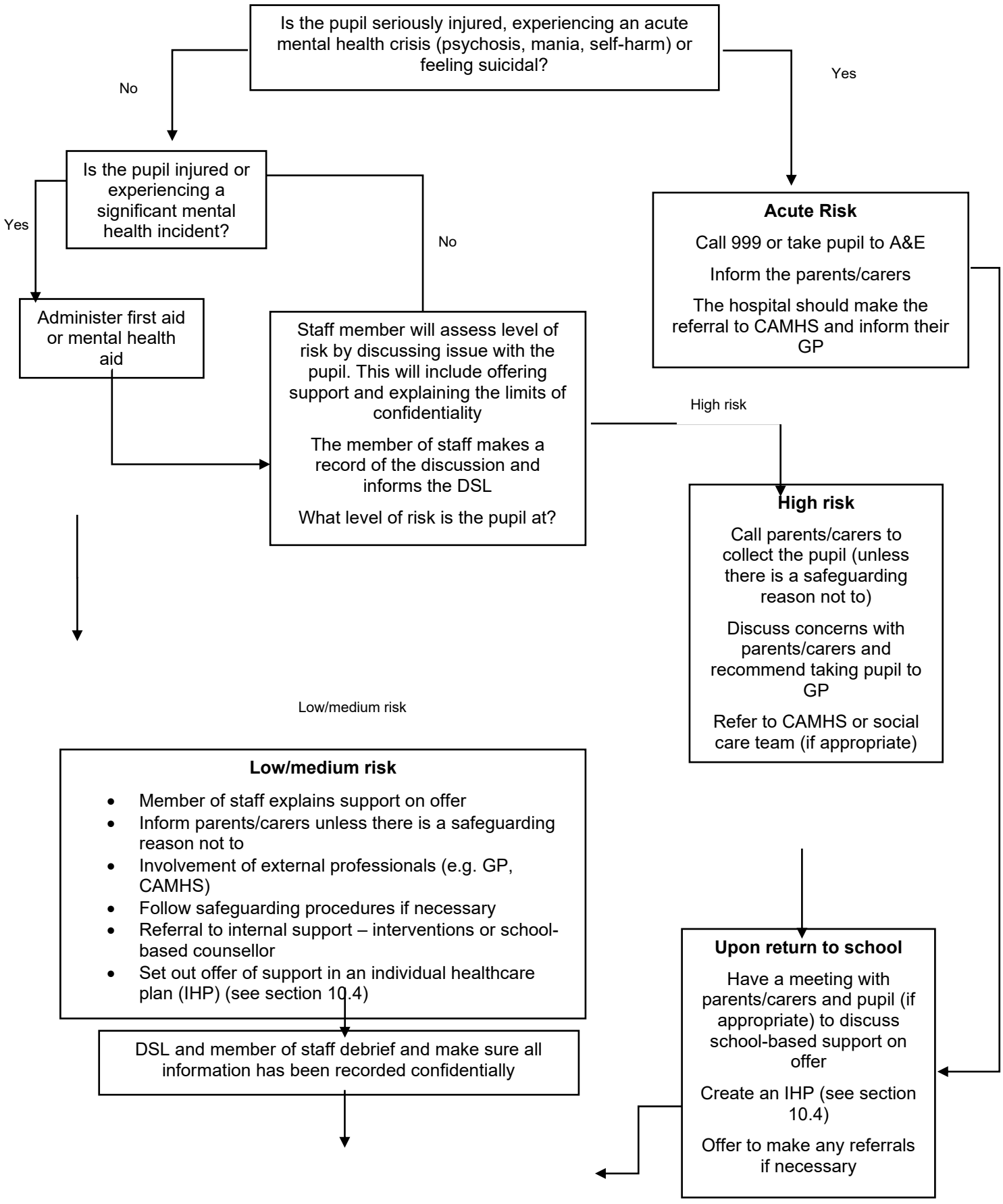
All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

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

- Head of School
- Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)
- Mental health lead

- Safeguarding Team
- Attendance lead
- Head of Therapy

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



Review progress with pupil and make adaptations to support offer if necessary. If progress isn't being made, repeat the procedure

5. Wa

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

Changes in:

- Mood or energy level
- Eating or sleeping patterns
- Attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- 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

Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously

Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes

Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause

Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted

Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

6. Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow our school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the DSL. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

- The full name of the member of staff who is making the record
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

7. Confidentiality

Staff will not promise 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. This will usually be the DSL. 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/carers will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the safeguarding will be followed.

7.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with DSL.
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who the information will be shared with and why
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the chosen elected member of staff
6. The DSL will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

8. Supporting pupils

8.1 Baseline support for all 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:

- A fully integrated therapeutic ethos, with mental health and emotional wellbeing embedded throughout the school day rather than separated from education.
- Support from a multidisciplinary therapy team including psychotherapists, clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, and therapy assistants, who work alongside teaching staff.
- **Whole-school therapeutic strategies** used routinely in classrooms, such as:
    - Zones of Regulation (helping pupils identify and manage emotions)
    - Sensory regulation
    - autism-friendly approaches
    - individual visual supports
    - trauma-informed practice based on PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy).
- Regular assessment of emotional, psychological, communication and sensory needs to build an individual clinical profile and guide support.
- Therapeutically informed interventions, with additional direct therapy provided where assessment and the pupil's EHCP indicate this is needed.
- A nurturing environment focused on pupils feeling safe, understood and supported, recognising that emotional security is necessary before learning can take place.
- Access to a Family Support Worker who works with families and carers as part of the school's "team around the child" model.

Emotional wellbeing and school attendance are closely linked. Where mental health impacts attendance, the school will work collaboratively with families, therapists and external professionals to remove barriers and support successful reintegration wherever possible.

The school will make reasonable adjustments to routines, curriculum access, sensory environments and expectations where mental health or emotional wellbeing significantly affects a pupil's ability to access education.

8.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the Head of Therapy will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above in section 8.1.

Our school 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

8.3 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer our school provides, our school 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

Mental health charities (e.g. Samaritans, Mind, Young Minds, Kooth)

Local counselling services

8.4 Supporting and collaborating with parents/carers

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent/carer forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents/carers about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face-to-face.

These meetings can be difficult, so our school will ensure that parents/carers are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

9. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be very challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils 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 friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

10. Signposting

Sources of support are displayed around our school and linked to on our school website, so pupils and parents/carers are aware of how they can get help.

The Therapeutic Team will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

11. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

11.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE

We follow the Jigsaw PSHE curriculum. This teaches mental health throughout the program rather than in a single unit. It combines PSHE, emotional literacy, social skills, and mindfulness, with mental wellbeing themes revisited in an age-appropriate way.

Pupils are taught to:

- Recognise and name emotions
- Self-esteem and identity
- Mental health awareness
- Keeping themselves safe

11.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

Discussing mental health with pupils to break down stigma

- Encouraging pupils to disclose when their mental health is deteriorating

12. Training

All staff will be offered training so they:

- Understand the impact of trauma, attachment difficulties and adverse childhood experiences on behaviour and learning;
- respond to pupils in a consistent, nurturing and trauma-informed manner;

- Use therapeutic approaches, including PACE and relational practice, to support pupils' emotional regulation and wellbeing;
- Understand safeguarding procedures and the links between mental health and safeguarding
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries whilst supporting pupils with their emotional wellbeing

13. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Offer staff reflection sessions
- Complete a daily de-brief at the end of every day
- Create a supportive work environment
- Offer private healthcare for our staff which includes a thorough mental health element (BUPA)
- Provide a dedicated mental health ambassador

Staff are encouraged to access supervision, reflective practice and the Employee Assistance Programme where appropriate.

14. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Head of School (Therapeutic) annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.