



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy			
Reviewed by	Susannah Holmes	Authorised by	WGB Committee
Last Review	Spring 2026	Date	February 2026
Next Review	Spring 2027	Review Cycle	Annually

1. Rationale

Freegrounds Infant School is a Rights Respecting school. Children and adults work together to recognise and act upon the rights of the child within our school, our local community and the wider world. We believe that by understanding their own rights children learn to respect and value the rights of others. This policy exemplifies these rights and our practise aims to ensure that the following rights are adhered to:

Article 3 The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 12 Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Article 13 Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

Article 28 Every child has the right to an education.

2. Special Educational Needs and Equal Opportunities

Freegrounds Infant School is committed to offering equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, religion, gender, ability or disability. Freegrounds Infant School is a Rights Respecting school. Children and adults work together to recognise and act upon the rights of the child within our school, our local community and the wider world. We believe that by understanding their own rights children learn to respect and value the rights of others.

3. Introduction

At Freegrounds Infant School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers) and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health.

We recognise that children’s mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement.

All children go through ups and downs during their school career and some face significant life events. In 2017, about 1 in 10 children aged 5 to 16 have a diagnosable mental health need and these can have an enormous impact on quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. In many cases it is life-limiting.

- The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that:

Mental health and wellbeing support is essential for pupils' attendance, engagement, academic progress, social development and long-term outcomes.

Good mental health helps pupils achieve, develop life skills and thrive.

School must be a place for children to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or 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.

4. Aims

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children are valued.
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- Bullying is not tolerated.

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health.
- How we prevent mental health problems.
- How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems.
- Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support.

5. Objectives

- Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
- Commitment to an environment that promotes respect, kindness and diversity, and fosters a positive climate for wellbeing.
- Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Helping children to be resilient learners.
- Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.

- Systems in place for early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
- Effectively working with parents and carers to involve them in interventions.
- Senior leadership team must champion mental health, ensuring consistent strategic oversight.
- A commitment to staff wellbeing AND staff CPD, enabling them to support pupils effectively.
- Include processes for staff to seek help.
- Mental wellbeing is embedded in RSHE and wider curriculum to build resilience and social–emotional skills.
- Opportunities for pupils to influence decisions and shape wellbeing policies.
- Systems in place for monitoring academic, behavioural and attendance data and evaluating interventions
- Clear internal processes and external referral routes for pupils with emerging or acute needs.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience. We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

6. Whole School Approach

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise.

Staff roles and responsibilities

We currently subscribe to Hampshire County Councils Employee support line for counselling. We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health.

Supporting children's positive mental health

We believe school has a key role in promoting children's positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health.
- Transition Programme
- Zen dens
- SCARF lessons and workshop visit
- Circle times
- Wellbeing awareness days - whole school focus
- Displays and information around the School about positive mental health and where to go for help and support
- Thrive
- ELSA
- Lunch club
- The Empowerment Approach
- Trick Box

Within KS1 and EYFS as part of the RSE curriculum through SCARF, Trick Box and Empowerment Approach lessons

- To recognise, name and describe feelings including good and not so good feelings.
- Simple strategies for managing feelings.
- How their behaviour affects other people.
- About empathy and understanding other people's feelings
- To cooperate and problem solve.
- To motivate themselves and persevere.
- How to calm down
- About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
- Who to go to if they are worried.
- About different types of teasing and bullying, that these are wrong and unacceptable.
- How to resist teasing or bullying, if they experience or witness it, whom to go to and how to get help.
- Help children to understand their emotions and experiences better
- Ensure our children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Help children to form and maintain relationships
- Encourage children to be confident and promote their self-esteem
- Help children to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks
- Promote our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community
- Provide opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect

Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs

Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children are paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
- Involve children in the care and support they have.

Early Identification

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- Thrive assessment
- Analysing behaviour, exclusions,
- Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons.
- Pupil Progress Review meetings termly
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer.
- Parent teacher interviews twice a year.
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff.
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff.

Signs might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
- Falling academic achievement.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE.
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Disclosures by children and confidentiality

All disclosures are recorded and held in CPOMs on the pupil's confidential file. We then implement interventions based on levels of need to ensure that children get the support they need, either from within school or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

Working with specialist services to get swift access to the right specialist support and treatment. In some cases a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Involving parents and carers.

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We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting children who do have mental health needs. On first entry to the School, our parent's meeting includes a discussion on the importance of positive mental health for learning. We ask parents to inform us of any mental health needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available. Class teachers, SLT or the Mental Health Lead/SENCO may signpost parents to different outside agencies such as CAMHS, Young Minds for further support.

Supporting and training staff

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do and where to get help. Ongoing CPD is planned and implemented to ensure staff are well equipped and supported when supporting families and individuals with their mental health. Our Mental Health Lead is Susannah Holmes and a number of our staff have completed the one day course on mental health first aid. Supporting and

promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing e.g:

- Wellbeing day once a school year
- Wellbeing check in's with member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Where possible attendance at children's activities
- Opportunities to carry out PPA at home
- 'light touch' weeks
- Access Hampshire County Council Employee Assistance Programme

7. Related Policies

The Governors are committed to reviewing the impact of the Mental Health and Wellbeing policy as part of a rolling programme, taking into account the following policies:

- SCMSC Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEN policy

There is also a wellbeing section on the website which Parents can be directed to.

Policy to be reviewed annually.

Version control	<p>February 2026</p> <p>Revised DFE definition</p> <p>Mental health and wellbeing support is essential for pupils' attendance, engagement, academic progress, social development and long-term outcomes.</p> <p>Good mental health helps pupils achieve, develop life skills and thrive.</p> <p>Updated Objectives</p> <p>Supporting children's positive mental health</p> <p>Supporting and training staff</p>
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