



# Kenningtons Primary Academy

## Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

This Policy was reviewed by the Pastoral Manager, approved by the Pupil, Admissions & Curriculum Committee and ratified by the Governing Body on a 2-year cycle.  
It must be displayed on the Schools Website.

<b>Date of Approval</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
<b>Review Duration</b>	2 Years
<b>Date of Review</b>	May 2028

# Kenningtons Primary Academy

## Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

May 2026



Children's wellbeing is influenced by a range of factors and includes their subjective feelings as well as social, physical and psychological aspects of their lives. Consequently, schools are key places for shaping general wellbeing. The health and wellbeing of children and young people contributes to their ability to benefit from good quality teaching and to achieve their full academic potential. *Public Health England*

At Kenningtons Primary Academy we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of staff, every pupil and every Parent and Carer. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised targeted approaches for vulnerable pupils. We seek advice and support from external providers when their expertise is required. Whilst we recognise that in the average classroom three children will be suffering with a diagnosable mental health condition, all children need to understand how to manage their own mental health. By developing and improving practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures, we can promote a safe environment for those affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health; for pupils, their families, and Staff.

At Kennington Primary Academy, we believe that every child is an individual. Our core values include: All members of our school community should work collaboratively to: have the skills and knowledge to be healthy in mind and body.

### Scope

This document describes Kennington Primary Academy's approach 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 overlaps with, or is linked to, a medical issue, and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

### Aims:

- To promote positive mental health in all pupils, Parents/Carers and Staff.
- To increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- To alert Staff to early warning signs of mental ill health.
- To provide support to Staff working with pupils with mental health issues.
- To provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health, and their peers and their Parents/Carers.

### Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the positive mental health of pupils, Staff with specific roles are:

Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Teacher / EFA trained: Jo Sawtell-Haynes

Pastoral Manager / Mental Health Lead / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead / EFA trained: Tracey Dole

Deputy Headteacher/ Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead / CPD: Caroline Clarke

Emotional Wellbeing TA / EFA trained: Sophie Newnes

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Headteacher or Pastoral Manager, 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. If the pupil presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the First Aid staff and contacting Emergency Services if necessary.

### **Individual Care Plans (medical)**

We use Individual Care Plans (medical) for a pupil causing concern, or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be constructed with advice and support of Health professionals, and should involve the SENCO, class teacher and pupil, and be shared with Parents/Carers. It should be reviewed as necessary.

#### **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 Kenningtons Primary Academy can play

### **Teaching about Mental Health**

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 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 students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

In line with PSHE Association Guidance to we use a whole school approach to teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. In addition, each year group learns about Mindfulness, teaching techniques such as yoga, mindfulness colour sheets, massage or meditation.

### **Provision**

We will ensure that pupils, Parents/Carers and Staff are aware of sources of support within the school, and in the local community.

#### **Support offered may include:**

- Play Therapist
- Emotional Wellbeing Team / Emotional First Aid
- Mindfulness activities including Yoga
- Family Hub referral to access surgeries offered there  
<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/childrens-centres/aveley-family-hub>
- CAMHS referral
- Support via Virtual School (LAC pupils and their Carers)

### **Operation Encompass**

We are working in partnership with Essex Police and Thurrock Children's Services to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their household.

## Warning Signs – Staff working with pupils

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 the Pastoral Manager.

### Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Changes in eating and/or sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity and mood.
- Changes in behaviour choices and responses.
- Lowering of academic achievement.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- 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.

## Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, Staff should follow the normal child protection procedures. Staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. They should listen, rather than advise and School's first thoughts should be of the pupils' emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

### This written record should include:

- Date and time of disclosure
- Name and signature of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation

This information should be shared with the Tracey Dole, Pastoral Manager, who will store the record in an appropriate and confidential manner, and offer support and advice about next steps.

## Confidentiality

### Working with Pupils

We should be honest with regards to the issues of confidentiality. A disclosure regarding mental ill health needs to be supported, and Staff should make it clear to pupils that their disclosure will be shared with Headteacher and/or Pastoral Manager to ascertain the next steps required.

If the Headteacher or Pastoral Manager feel it is necessary to pass concerns about a pupil on to a statutory agency, then there may be an age-appropriate discussion with the pupil to explain this. This conversation may include: who School are going to talk to / what School are going to tell them / why School need to tell them. It should be noted that there may be occasion not to discuss this decision with a pupil, if it was felt to do so would cause more emotional distress.

## Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform Parents/Carer, we will be sensitive in our approach.

- Information should be shared by the Headteacher and/or Pastoral Manager.
- The meeting should be face to face with the Parents/Carers, and may include the pupil if it is felt appropriate.
- The aim of the meeting should be clear, and may include providing resources for the family.

It can be shocking and upsetting for Parents/Carers to learn of their child's issues, and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during a first conversation. We are accepting of this (within reason) and understand Families may need time to reflect and come to terms with information School are sharing. We will aim to highlight further sources of information and provide appropriate resources where possible.

## Working with All Parents

**We are very focused on supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of all pupils, and support Parents/Carers by;**

- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues within the Newsletter
- Share ideas about how Parents/Carers can support positive mental health in their children through our Newsletter
- Keep Parents/Carers informed about the mental health topics pupils are learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home in the weekly overview.
- Ensure that all Parents/Carers are aware of who to talk to in school about mental health concerns.
- Make our Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy easily accessible to parents
- Share appropriate books and literature through our Lending Library.

## Supporting Peers

Discussions about mental health issues will be shared within PSHE Curriculum work. Talks and activities will be age appropriate, and supported by all Staff. These will often be through circle time. Support can also be accessed via the Oasis Room, and the Emotional Wellbeing staff.

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, and their Parents/Carers.

**Prior to any targeted work 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 and/or saying which may inadvertently cause upset.
- Warning signs to look out for; when their friend needs more 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
- 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 annual Child Protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe. Signs and Symptoms of common mental ill health conditions will also be shared at this training (Appendix 1).

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 developing situations with one or more students.

Kenningtons Primary Academy were awarded Attachment and Trauma training certificate by ACEducation. The training programme provided school with the appropriate training and tools to help us create a positive learning environment.

**Staff Support and Wellbeing**

Staff are encouraged to model the importance of mental well health, and to seek support when necessary. This may accessible via Kenningtons Primary Academy or may be via an outside service or agency. The Headteacher and Pastoral Manager both available to talk with Staff that may feel their own mental health needs additional support, or is maybe affected by those they are working directly with. Staff having concerns regarding their work colleagues should follow current policies and procedures, and raise their concern with the Headteacher.

Tricky, more complex cases are discussed at regular safeguard / vulnerable pupil meetings.

**Appendices**

Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms of common mental ill health conditions

## Risk and protective factors for CYP's mental health

