



"We all flourish from a wealth of learning experiences that positively impact on our educational, physical and emotional



Horsted School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Approved by: L Cavanagh

Date: July 25

Last reviewed on: July 2025

Next review due by: July 2027

1. Policy Aims and purpose

At Horsted School, we believe that positive mental health and wellbeing are essential to the overall development and success of our pupils and staff. Our school is committed to fostering a culture where mental health is openly discussed, valued, and supported.

We aim to provide a safe and nurturing environment where everyone can develop resilience, ambition, and the skills needed to manage their emotional wellbeing. Through our school values—**Striving, Thoughtful, Ambition, Resilience, and Supportive (STARS)**—we embed a culture of mental wellness in everything we do.

At Horsted, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils, staff, and wider school community. We recognise that positive mental health is essential to effective learning and overall development. This policy outlines our approach to promoting wellbeing, identifying and supporting those in need, and ensuring a whole-school culture of care and understanding.

2. Aims and Objectives

Our key aims are to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all members of our school community.
- Foster an inclusive environment where children feel safe, supported, and valued.
- Provide targeted support for pupils experiencing mental health challenges.
- Equip staff with the skills and knowledge to support pupils effectively.
- Work in partnership with families and external agencies to provide holistic care.

3. Teaching About Mental Health

We believe that mental health education is a vital part of our curriculum. Mental health and wellbeing are taught through our **SCARF** (Safety, Caring, Achievement, Resilience, Friendship) programme as part of **RSHE (Relationships, Sex, and Health Education)**. Lessons focus on emotional literacy, resilience, self-awareness, and coping strategies. Our STARS values are woven into these lessons, helping children understand the importance of mental resilience, ambition, and support.

We celebrate Children's Mental Health week every year, to bring attention to different aspects of mental health and wellbeing. Classes participate in a range of activities that equip them with the tools to support their mental health.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Headteacher & Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**: Oversee the implementation of this policy and ensure wellbeing remains a school priority.
- **Family Liaison Officer (FLO)**: Jane Baldwin - Provides direct support to pupils through daily meet-and-greet sessions, 1:1 support, and the running of a nurture club during break times, 'Rocket Club'—a quiet space for pupils at break and lunchtime.
- **Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)** Jane Baldwin – Provides targeted support to those children identified by staff as needing emotional support.
- **Mental Health Leads**: Lee Cavanagh and Jane Baldwin. Received Thrive training to fulfil role of Mental Health leads. To implement and monitor the success of the aims of this policy.

- **All Staff:** Promote a culture of wellbeing through trauma-informed practices and access to worry boxes for pupils to share concerns confidentially.
- **Shine Squad:** A group of trained Year 6 children, in active listening, to offer support to their peers across the school. ????
- **Sports Crew:** Support pupil engagement on the playground, helping those less confident to participate in activities.

6. Signposting, Early Identification and Warning Signs

We ensure that all members of our school community are aware of the support available both in school and externally. Staff are trained to recognise early signs of mental health difficulties, which may include:

- Changes in behaviour, such as increased irritability, withdrawal, or aggression.
- Persistent sadness, tearfulness, or expressing feelings of hopelessness.
- Difficulty concentrating or a sudden drop in academic performance.
- Physical complaints such as headaches or stomach aches without a medical cause.
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
- Increased absenteeism or reluctance to attend school.
- Social withdrawal or difficulty maintaining friendships.
- Expressions of self-doubt, low self-esteem, or feelings of worthlessness.
- Risk-taking behaviours or a sudden change in interests and activities.
- Verbal or written expressions of distress, including mentions of self-harm.

Concerns are raised with the Designated safeguard leads, FLO, Mental Health Leads, and SLT to ensure appropriate support is provided. Signposting to relevant services and external support is available to both pupils and parents to ensure timely and appropriate intervention. See the safeguarding policy for more information regarding the safeguarding of our pupils.

7. Assessment, Interventions, and Support

Our approach to mental health support includes:

- **Initial assessments** of pupils presenting with wellbeing concerns.
- **Targeted interventions**, such as 1:1 support with the FLO, access to Rocket Club, and referrals to external services when necessary.
- **Wellbeing strategies** integrated into daily classroom practice.
- **Parental involvement**, ensuring families are supported and informed.

8. Working with Specialist Services

Where additional support is required, referrals are made when necessary. We work closely with specialist mental health services, including:

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Educational Psychologists.
- School Nursing Services.
- Local charities and support groups.

We ensure that referrals are made in a timely manner and work collaboratively with professionals to provide the best possible support for our pupils.

9. Staff Wellbeing

We recognise that the wellbeing of our staff is essential to the success of our school and the wellbeing of our pupils. We are committed to providing a supportive work environment where staff feel valued, listened to, and equipped to manage their own wellbeing. Our approach includes:

- **Staff wellbeing surveys** to assess needs and concerns.

- **Opportunities for professional development** focused on stress management, mental health awareness, and resilience-building.
- **Access to mental health support services**, including Care First programmes, webinars and training as well as signposting to external professional support.
- **A culture of open communication**, ensuring staff feel comfortable discussing wellbeing concerns with SLT.
- **Flexible working practices where possible**, to support work-life balance.
- **Staff wellbeing activities and initiatives** ??????
- **A commitment to reducing unnecessary workload**, including reviewing marking policies, reducing administrative tasks, and promoting effective time management ?????

10. Parental Engagement

- **Daily contact with teachers:** Teachers are available at the end of everyday to provide regular communication if needed.
- **Weekly newsletters:** Every week, a class and whole school email is sent to parents.
- **Open door policy:** Parents can ring and request call backs from teachers and SLT if support is needed.
- **Parent Forum Feedback:** Parents provide ongoing input on the school's wellbeing initiatives, helping to shape our approach.
- **Family Support:** The FLO offers direct guidance to parents and signposts external support services when needed.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SLT and Governors, taking into account feedback from pupils, staff, and parents. The impact of wellbeing initiatives will be assessed through surveys, attendance data, and pupil progress tracking.

11. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.
- RSHE Policy.
- Staff Wellbeing Policy.

By embedding mental health and wellbeing at the heart of our school, we aim to create a nurturing and resilient environment where all pupils and staff can thrive.