Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

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Section 1 – Supporting Documents

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding Children in Education Policy
- PSHE & RSHE Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy (
- Anti-bullying Policy and Critical Incidents Policy

Related policies are held within Radar in the School's policy folder.

Section 2 – Introduction

At Snow Hill School, we believe good mental health and wellbeing are the foundation for learning and for a happy life. We treat mental health with the same care as physical health. Many of our pupils have

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lived through difficult experiences and arrive with social, emotional and mental health needs, so supporting wellbeing is not an add-on for us. It is central to everything we do.

This policy sets out our whole-school approach to promoting positive mental health, how we identify and support pupils who need more help, and how we respond with care when a pupil is struggling, including in relation to self-harm and thoughts of suicide. We work in a relational, trauma-informed way and in partnership with families and health services.

Section 3 – Aim & Scope

This policy applies to all staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers, and visitors at Snow Hills School. It aims to:

- promote positive mental health and wellbeing for every pupil and member of staff
- help staff identify pupils who need more support and respond early
- set out how we provide and arrange support, including referral to specialist services
- explain how we respond safely and compassionately to self-harm and to concerns about suicide
- make clear that mental health is treated as a safeguarding matter where a pupil may be at risk

Section 4 – Abbreviations and Definitions

Mental health and wellbeing. How a person thinks, feels and copes with everyday life. Good wellbeing is not the absence of difficulty, but the ability to cope, to recover and to thrive with the right support.

Whole-school approach. Promoting mental health across every part of school life, from ethos and relationships to curriculum, environment, pupil voice, staff training, working with parents, and targeted support.

Senior mental health lead. The member of the leadership team who oversees the school's whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Self-harm. When a person hurts themselves on purpose, usually as a way of coping with difficult feelings. It is a sign of distress and is responded to with care, not punishment.

Section 5 - Policy Content

5.1 Principles and Approach

Our approach rests on the following principles. Parity with physical health. We treat mental health and wellbeing as seriously as physical health. A whole-school approach. We build wellbeing into our ethos, relationships, curriculum, environment and daily practice, not just into our support for those in difficulty. Relational and trauma-informed. We understand behaviour as communication, and we respond with relationships, safety and understanding. Early identification. We notice changes early and act, rather than waiting for a crisis. Staff support, they do not diagnose. Our role is to notice, support and refer. Diagnosis is for trained health professionals. Partnership. We work with parents, carers and health services, and we treat mental health as a safeguarding matter where a pupil may be at risk.

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5.2 Mental Health and Wellbeing in Practice

A whole-school approach

At Snow Hill School, we promote wellbeing through a calm, safe and welcoming environment, strong relationships between staff and pupils, and a culture where it is normal to talk about feelings and to ask for help. Pupil voice shapes our approach, and wellbeing runs through our curriculum, including our relationships, sex and health education.

Promoting positive mental health

We teach pupils about emotions, resilience and how to look after their own wellbeing and seek help, in an age-appropriate and accessible way. We build in opportunities for connection, achievement, physical activity and time outdoors, and we celebrate effort and progress so that every pupil can experience success.

Identifying pupils who need more support

Staff are well placed to notice when a pupil is struggling, for example a change in mood, behaviour, attendance, appearance, friendships or engagement. We pay particular attention to pupils who are more vulnerable, including those with special educational needs, those who have experienced trauma or loss, and those facing difficulties at home. Staff do not diagnose. They record what they notice and pass it to the senior mental health lead or designated safeguarding lead so that support can be put in place.

Graduated support and referral

Where a pupil needs more than universal support, we offer help that is matched to their needs. This may include time with a trusted adult, in-school wellbeing or therapeutic support, and an individual support plan agreed with the pupil and their family. Where a pupil needs specialist help, we make a referral with consent to services such as the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service or a Mental Health Support Team, and we work alongside them. Where mental health needs are part of a wider special educational need, we link this support to the pupil's plan and the SEND Code of Practice. We use early help where a family would benefit from coordinated support.

Working with parents and carers

We involve parents and carers as partners. We tell them when we have a concern, listen to what they know about their child, and plan support together. We share information sensitively and only as needed, and we signpost families to further help. Where there is a safeguarding risk, we follow our Safeguarding Policy.

Responding to self-harm

We respond to self-harm calmly, with compassion and without judgement, and we never treat it as a disciplinary matter. Where staff become aware that a pupil may be self-harming, they keep the pupil safe, seek any needed first aid or medical help, and involve the designated safeguarding lead and a

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trained member of staff straight away. We assess risk, agree a support and safety plan with the pupil and, in the great majority of cases, their family, and we work with health services where needed. We are mindful of the wellbeing of other pupils and of confidentiality, and we balance a pupil's privacy with the need to keep them safe.

Responding to concerns about suicide

We take any sign that a pupil may be thinking about suicide seriously. Staff who have such a concern act immediately, stay with the pupil, and contact the designated safeguarding lead and a trained member of staff without delay. We secure any immediate medical help that is needed, involve the pupil's family other than in the rare case where this would increase the risk, and work with health and emergency services as appropriate. We follow a planned, trained response, and we make sure staff and pupils affected are supported afterwards, linking to our Critical Incidents Policy where needed.

Following a serious mental health incident, the school will undertake a structured debrief and review to ensure lessons are identified and support is adjusted where necessary.

Mental health as a safeguarding matter

Keeping Children Safe in Education is clear that mental health is a safeguarding issue. Where a pupil's mental health gives rise to a concern that they may be suffering or at risk of harm, we act through our Safeguarding Policy, involve the designated safeguarding lead, and record our actions. We are alert to the links between mental health and other concerns such as abuse, neglect, bullying, online harm and exploitation.

Supporting our staff

Supporting pupils with significant needs can affect staff. At Snow Hill School, we look after the wellbeing of our staff, provide access to support and supervision, and make sure no member of staff carries a serious concern about a pupil alone.

5.3 Recording, Monitoring and Reporting

Wellbeing concerns, support plans and any safeguarding actions are recorded on CPOMS. Leadership and the senior mental health lead monitor wellbeing and support data, review the impact of what we do, and report to the Proprietor and Governors, so that Snow Hill School keeps improving its approach.

5.4 Equality and Inclusion

At Snow Hill School, this policy is applied fairly and in line with the Equality Act 2010. We make reasonable adjustments so that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities can access wellbeing support, and we are alert to the particular pressures faced by different groups of pupils. Any concern that this policy disadvantages a pupil should be raised with the headteacher.

Section 6 - Responsibilities

6.1 Pupils:

- are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult about how they feel
- are encouraged to look out for one another

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6.2 Staff:

- build positive relationships, notice changes in a pupil
- pass concerns to the right person promptly
- respond to distress, self-harm or talk of suicide calmly and supportively
- involve the designated safeguarding lead whenever they feel it is needed

6.3 Leadership and the senior mental health lead:

- makes sure wellbeing is a priority across the school
- oversees the whole-school approach, the support offer, staff training
- link with relevant health services.

6.4 Governance

- Proprietor and Governors make sure the school has an effective whole-school approach to mental health
- Ensure the policy is followed, and they review wellbeing and support data.

6.5 Parents and carers:

- Work in partnership with the school regarding their child's wellbeing
- are involved in planning support

6.6 Named leads

- Senior mental health lead is Gareth Evans
- DSL is Aaron Walklate
- Mental health first aiders are:
    - .1 Sara Halden-Evans
    - .2 Lydia Latham
    - .3 Rhiannon Pateman
    - .4 Emma Mallon

Section 7 - Training Requirements

All staff receive training to understand mental health and wellbeing, to spot the signs that a pupil needs help, and to respond to distress, self-harm and talk of suicide calmly and safely. The senior mental health lead, designated safeguarding lead and mental health first aiders at Snow Hill School receive role-specific training, and our trauma-informed approach is refreshed regularly.

Section 8 - Equality Impact Statement

All policies will be developed and implemented in a manner that promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all individuals. Policies must align with relevant equality legislation and reflect the expectations and standards set by our regulatory bodies. They will demonstrate a commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences of those we support, as well as our workforce.

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Section 9 - Sources of Information / References

This policy reflects current statutory guidance and legislation, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, which treats mental health as a safeguarding issue
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges (DfE, 2021, updated 2026)
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018)
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education statutory guidance (DfE, 2025, statutory from 1 September 2026)
- Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice (2015), under which social, emotional and mental health is a type of special educational need
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2026)

Section 10 – Version Control

This document can be found in Radar.

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes. The next review date and version history are recorded in the control table above. The named owner for review at Snow Hill school is the headteacher.

Section 11 – Appendices

Appendix A – School Specific Information

Appendix B – Multi Agency Working

Appendix C - Sources of Support

Appendix D – Waves of Intervention

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Appendix A: School-Specific Information

At Snow Hill School, the following local arrangements apply:

- Senior mental health lead:
    - Gareth Evans

- Mental health first aiders:
    - Sara Halden-Evans
    - Lydia Latham
    - Rhiannon Pateman
    - Emma Mallon

- **In-school wellbeing and therapeutic support offer:**
    - Boxall Profile monitoring for each pupil to track wellbeing, understand root causes and create plans.
    - Mental Health First aiders
    - Trauma informed approaches by all staff including Emotion Coaching.
    - SMSC – scheduled mental health half term
    - Children's mental health week inline with Place2Be held annually
    - Staff supervision and wellbeing drop ins with allocated SLT.
    - Waves of Intervention

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Appendix B: Multi Agency working

Multi agency working is an integral part of our work, and we participate with external agencies in order to ensure support is received for mental health and wellbeing in a coordinated manner. The children's safety and wellbeing being paramount to our work.

Local CAMHS, Mental Health Support Team and early help contacts:

- CAMHS Call 0300 7900 235 (Open Monday–Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM).
- Early Help / Children's Social Care Direct: Contact the Targeted Early Help Service via the Integrated Front Door at 01782 234234.

Text-Based & National Alternatives

- **Shout Crisis Text Line:** Text **SHOUT** to **85258** for free, confidential 24/7 support over text.
- **Childline:** Call **0800 1111** (Free, confidential support for anyone under 19).

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Appendix C - Sources of Support

School contact for a wellbeing concern:

- Gareth Evans – Assisant Headteacher Mental Health Lead
- Aaron Walklate – DSL
- Sara Halden-Evans - SENDCO

Local services, CAMHS and the local crisis line:

NB If a child or young person is at immediate risk of serious harm or life-threatening injury, call 999 or go to the nearest Accident & Emergency (A&E) department.

For urgent mental health support that is not immediately life-threatening, you can dial **NHS 111 and select the mental health option**. This service connects directly to local crisis support teams and is available 24/7 across all these areas.

National sources of support the school signposts:

Mental Health and Whole-School Wellbeing

- Mentally Healthy Schools: A quality-assured website providing school staff and mental health leads with practical, free resources specifically tailored to support autistic pupils and those with SEND.
- Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families: Offers expert mental health resources, trauma-informed guidance, and toolkits explicitly created for schools, colleges, and further education settings across the UK.
- Young Minds: Provides dedicated mental health advice, crisis text support, and training resources for young people, parents, and education.

Autism and Neurodivergence Support

- National Autistic Society: The UK's leading autism charity. They offer extensive guidance on education, mental health, and daily living, alongside a searchable directory of local and national services.
- Ambitious about Autism: A national charity providing specialized toolkits—such as "Autistic and OK"—designed to help schools and peers support autistic pupils with their emotional wellbeing.
- Autism Central: A peer education program commissioned by NHS England that offers reliable guidance, learning resources, and workshops for families and support networks.

Self-Harm and Suicide ideation

Suicidal thoughts and feelings | Help For Young People | Young Minds

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Appendix D waves of Intervention

SEMH – WAVES OF INTERVENTION

All pupils have a highly detailed Pupil Passport which describes all their needs, including their mental health and wellbeing needs. As all our pupils have complex SEMH needs, our approach is embedded into our Waves of Intervention. NB. The first wave describes what our Quality First Teaching SEMH looks like, so all staff have a good understanding of each pupil and how best to support their needs.

Wave 1

Wave		Provision
WAVE 1 SEMH **All pupils to have access to this as a part of their daily diet at school.**		• Pupil passports – enhanced by parental input and knowledge from setting. • EHCP Outcomes – help to sharpen teacher focus towards pupil 'goals' for progression. • Boxall Learning Plans – created by a three times a year full assessment. All documents available online and a monitoring system in place.
	1	• **Trauma informed approaches**:
	1a	All staff understand that adverse childhood experiences can lead to impact on the development of the child and create a trauma presentation.
	1b	Pupils' 'root causes' are understood and all actions are based upon this understanding. All behaviour is communication.
	1c	Short breaks, time to co-regulate, being aware of triggers for the individual and guiding them on self-management over a period of time.
	1d	Use of a 5-point scale, created with the young person, with an understanding around what causes their response in specific situations.
	1e	An action plan to find alternative ways to manage their feelings.
	2	• **Small groups (no more than 8 pupils)**:
	2a	Our class sizes allow for a high level of staff to pupil ratio, so that we can give individualised support, according to the need of the child.
	2b	We understand that pupils may not be academically in line with their chronological age, so teaching is delivered in stage, not age.
	2c	We sensitively aim to close the gap in pupils' learning journeys, to bring them more in line with age-related expectations.
	2d	A bespoke way of working to help understanding of a subject and the management of the individual, should they become overwhelmed within the classroom environment.
	2e	Chunked learning in order to create processing time.

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	2f	If a child has sensory needs, we may need to give opportunities to proactively manage these needs through a sensory gym/circuit activity, planned into the day.
	3	• **Highly skilled TAs**:
	3a	All staff undergo training in a wide range of SEND including ASD/ADHD/CSE/self-harm/mental health.
		• **Annual Reviews/additional reviews of EHCPs to support progress towards outcomes.**
	4	• **Specialist curriculum offer:**
	4a	Bespoke social communication and interaction skills (e.g. use of Talk About series by Alex Kelly).
	4b	KS4 travel training (using public transport, reading timetables and contextual language).
	4c	Life skills (BTEC home cooking skills levels 1 and 2; understanding home budgets and upkeep).
	4d	RSE (understanding healthy relationships and the importance of consent).
	4e	Preparation for adulthood offsite supported activities.

Wave 2

WAVE 2 SEMH INTERVENTION Supporting the individual – next stages.	**5**	• **1:1 discussion – pupils and family with class teacher/pastoral staff:**
	5a	A clear line of communication between pupil, parent and staff to ensure consistency.
	5b	Activities that incentivise and reward individuals, according to specific interests.
	6	• **1:1 discussion - pupil with pastoral manager/Associate Head Teacher:**
	6a	Opportunities to support restorative practice – allowing young people time and privacy to explain their problems, so issues can be understood and resolved.
	6b	Change/adaptations of timetable/staffing/days of the week.
	6c	Offsite supported activities.
	6d	Opportunities to build positive relationships.
	7	• **Emotional Literacy work:**
	7a	Specific pieces of work designed to support the pupil. For example, associating facial expression and emotions as well as understanding feelings within themselves and what that means.
	7b	Developing self-regulation skills using resources such as Dealing With Feeling. This talks through particular feelings through a social story and clear ways forward to deal with situations differently.

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Wave 3

TIPPING POINT		
WAVE 3 SEMH INTERVENTION	**8**	• **Discussion between Pastoral Managers/DSL/Associate Head Teachers/SENCO:**
	8a	Consideration of all information around the pupil, including Boxall profile, to understand all strategies that have been tried and the responses given.
	8b	Action Plan for Wave 3 and 4 intervention.
	9	• **Consideration for a special support package:**
	9a	Self-care plans, to form a solution focused plan.
	9b	1:1 anxiety management strategies.
	9c	1:1 managing separation anxiety.
	9d	1:1 light touch bereavement work.
	9e	Signposting/connecting to other agencies.
	9f	Drop ins/check ins.

Wave 4

WAVE 4 SEMH INTERVENTION ***Evidence from waves 1-3 needed before progression to wave 4.**	**10**	• **Referrals to specialist support e.g. Keys AEP/EP/specialist support team.**
	10a	Problem-solving at the fortnightly check-in with AEP, to coordinate specialist intervention.
	11	• **Within LAs and Local Hospital Trusts with the permission of parent e.g. for medical diagnosis of ASD/ADHD etc.**

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