




# Mental Health and Well-being Policy

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<b>Signed (Chair of Trustees):</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>September 2025</b>
<b>Date of Review:</b>	September 2026

*Arbor Academy Trust reviews this policy annually. The Trustees may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Trust receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. This document is also available in other formats e.g. e-mail and enlarged print version, on request to the School Offices and is displayed on the schools' websites.*

## **1. Aims**

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 should be read alongside:

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

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

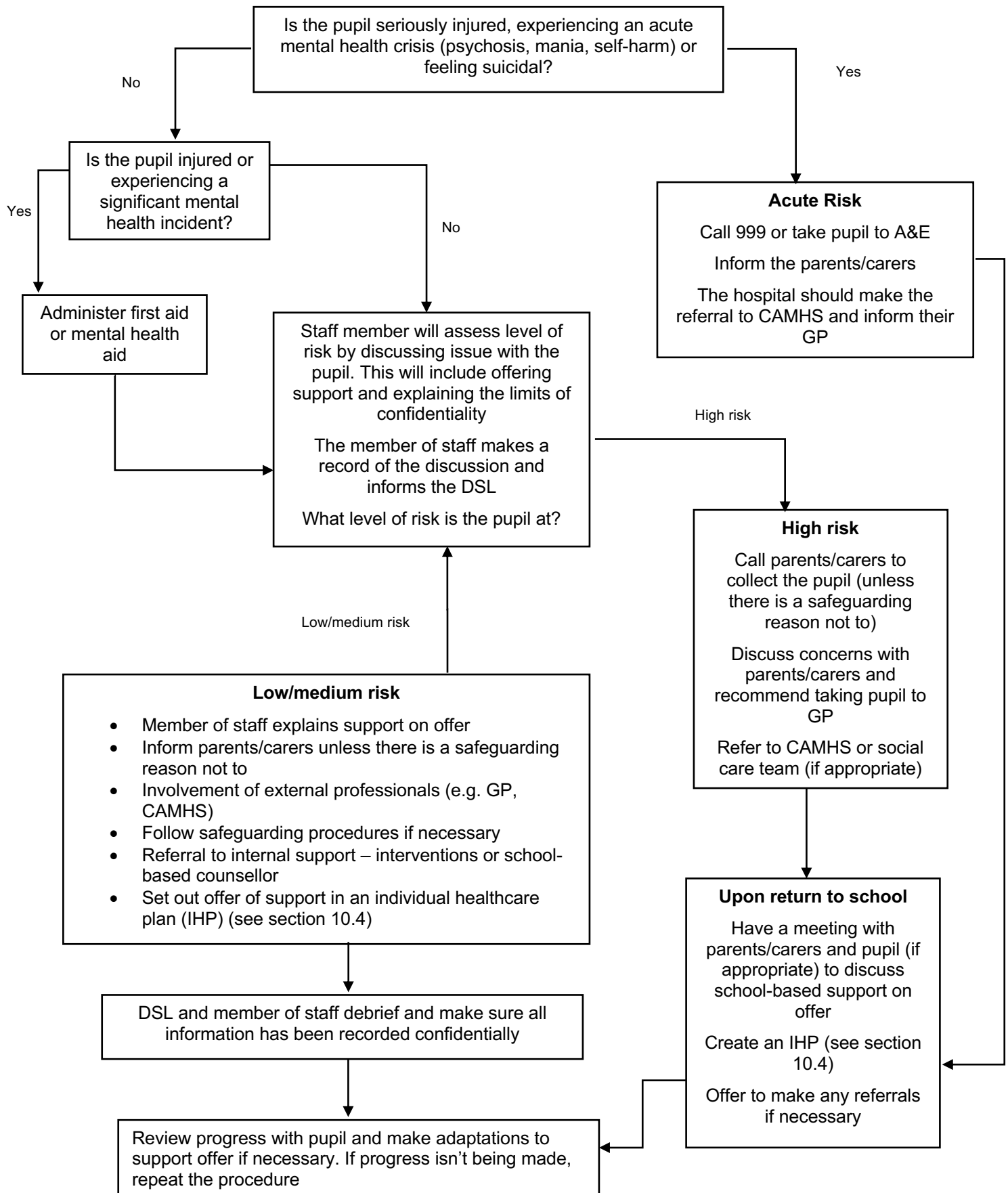
This policy was written with regard to:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Data Protection Act 2018

## **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).

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



## 5. Warning signs

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.

## 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 child protection/ safeguarding policy 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 record the disclosure and share the information with the DSL.
5. The DSL will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
6. 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:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Appointing a mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as worry boxes and circle time

### **8.2 Assessing what further support is needed**

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the SENCo 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

### **8.4 Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)**

A pupil will be offered an individual healthcare plan (IHP) if it deemed necessary, in consultation with other professionals. IHPs are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carer, and any other relevant professionals.

The pupil's IHP will contain the following details:

- The mental health issue (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)
- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition

- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in our school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

### **8.5 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

## **9. 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 to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- 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.

## **11. 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 mental health first aider will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

## **12. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness**

## **12.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE**

Pupils are taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe
- Build healthy relationships

## **12.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health**

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma and encouraging pupils to disclose when their mental health is deteriorating.

## **13. Training**

All staff will be offered training so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

## **14. 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 supervision sessions
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment
- Offer an employee assistance programme

## **15. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by Trustees.