

TEIGN SCHOOL

MENTAL HEALTH POLICY 2026/27

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1. MENTAL HEALTH - WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION DEFINITION

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) mental health is "a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to their community" (WHO, 2023).

The WHO also states the following facts about mental health:

- Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders.
- Mental health is an integral part of health; indeed, there is no health without mental health.
- Mental health is determined by a range of socioeconomic, biological and environmental factors.
- Cost-effective public health and intersectoral strategies and interventions exist to promote, protect and restore mental health.

2. AIMS

At Teign School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our student and staff body. We pursue this aim by using universal, targeted and specialist approaches. Therefore, all students will receive our universal provision, and those more vulnerable who require more than this will receive targeted and / or specialist provisions. We are proud of our social and emotional provision. This policy helps support the consistency of approach and equality of provision for our pupils. With regards to staff mental health, we offer a range of services to support and regularly communicate this with our staff body.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to ill health. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) reports that 10% of young people aged 10-15 years' experience a low sense of wellbeing (MHFA, 2023). By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health. We also recognise the link between physical activity and positive mental health and wellbeing, and we encourage our students at Teign School to be active and make the most of both provisions both within school & the local community to support positive mental health.

3. WHO IS THIS POLICY FOR?

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff and Governors. This policy has been written alongside our SEND Information Report, SEND Policy, Behaviour, Attendance & Equality Policies, all of which can be found on our website.

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students

- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of ill mental health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering ill mental health, their peers and parents/carers

4. POLICY STANDARDS

4.1 Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher - Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Associate Assistant Headteacher
- Members of the Teign School Safeguarding Team
- Leaders of Personal Development
- Student Support Centre staff
- Wellbeing Officers
- Assistant Headteacher SENCo & members of the Inclusion Team

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health and/or wellbeing of a student should speak to the student in the same way they would support students with any kind of concern. If the student does share information, it is important to notify the student that this information may need to be passed on to the Safeguarding Team. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed. If the student presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

4.2 Supportive Documentation

It is helpful to document the support given to students with mental health difficulties and also students who have parents/carers also experience mental health difficulties. There are a number of documents that could be used depending on the nature of students' mental health difficulties, including:

- Access to Learning Profiles which link to classcharts. Used to summarise students' needs and supportive strategies that can enable their access to the curriculum;
- Risk assessments. Used to manage any risks associated with students' mental health difficulties, including risks to themselves and others;

- Individual Healthcare Plans – Used to support students with more complex mental health difficulties that overlap with, or are linked to, a diagnosable medical condition that may require medication. Any supportive documentation should be drawn up involving the student, parents/carers and relevant health professionals, and should centre on the role that the school can play in supporting students' mental health difficulties.

4.3 Teaching about Mental Health & Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PHSE (personal health and social education) curriculum. This curriculum encompasses relationship and sex education (RSE), personal, health and social education (PHSE) and citizenship. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the age and specific needs of the cohort being taught 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.

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance (2023) and other relevant guidance/advice (see Appendix 1) to ensure that we teach students about mental health and wellbeing, and how it can fluctuate between both positive and negative. Where possible we try to embed mindfulness into the curriculum or enrichment time. We also ensure staff understand how important resilience is and provide opportunities to develop this.

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of what support is available within school and in the local community. An outline is also in Appendix 2.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as corridors, display boards, canteen, Student Support, Library and toilets, and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

- What help is available
- Who the help is aimed at
- How to access help
- Why it is useful to access help
- What is likely to happen next

The school also has a range of different leadership clubs which support different aspects of mental health. These include Mental Health Ambassadors, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Rights Respecting School Ambassadors, School Council and PE ambassadors, prefects and House captains.

4.4 Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or wellbeing difficulties. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Safeguarding Team via CPOMS. This will also notify relevant pastoral staff.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – eg long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Truancy PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

*A number of these raise safeguarding issues so should always be followed up by the safeguarding route

4.5 Managing Disclosures

A student 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 student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff are clear to students that the concern will be shared with the Safeguarding Team and recorded in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil. All disclosures are recorded and held on the student's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps. All disclosures will be managed in accordance with the Education South West Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

4.6 Working with Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website, eg Think you know, MindEd, NSPCC, Young minds, Childline
- Ensure that all parents/carers are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our Mental Health Policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in their PHSE curriculum and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home
- MHST to have a stand at our Parents' Evenings and also be part of our Community Hub work.

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents/carers to learn of their child's difficulties, and many may respond with anger or fear, or become upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent/carer time to reflect. We will always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents/carers can also be helpful too eg helplines and forums as listed in Appendix 3.

We will always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents/carers often have many questions as they process the information. Each meeting will be finished with agreed next steps and a brief record of the meeting on the student's record will always be kept.

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents/carers, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents/carers we should consider the following questions (on a case-by-case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, other members of staff
- What are the aims of the meeting?

4.7 Support for Significant Others, including peers

When a student 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. Social and emotional support may be offered to children impacted by a friend's problem and/or behaviours. Advice and help is also gained from Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) agencies and external providers.

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 student who is suffering and their parents with whom 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 / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend may need help (eg 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

It is also important to acknowledge the difficulties families and communities can face when a student is suffering with mental health struggles. Support can include Team around the family meetings, signposting to adult mental health services and accessing GPs for further support.

4.8 Targeted & Specialist Support Available at Teign School

The school has the following support routes in place, which are always being reviewed as part of our provision:

- NHS funded Mental Health Support Team (MHST) working in school one day a week. The key functions of this team are as follows:
 - to deliver evidence-based interventions for mild-to-moderate mental health issues;
 - support the [senior mental health lead](#) (where established) in each school or college to introduce or develop [whole school or college approach](#) and;
 - give timely advice to school and college staff and liaise with external specialist service to help children and young people to get the right support and stay in education.
- Counsellors who are funded by the school to work with either groups or individuals
- Mentoring services provided by tutors, Wellbeing Officers, Inclusion Team & other staff members
- Access to support families & children to make referrals to external agencies such as Young Devon, CAMHS & other services. This can include via Team around the Family meeting (TAF) through Early Help.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) working with the Pastoral & Safeguarding team and all staff and pupils when a need is highlighted

5. TRAINING

As part of a whole-school approach to mental health, at least one member of the Senior Leadership Team has accessed the Department for Education funded Senior Leader Mental Health training. We also have several members of staff who have completed both the Youth Mental Health First Aid training and Adult Mental Health First Aid through Mental Health First Aid.

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health difficulties as part of their regular safeguarding training, in order to enable them to keep the students safe. Further training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional continuous professional development (CPD) will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more students.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team members who are responsible for staff & student mental health, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

6. **MONITORING & REVIEW**

Monitoring of mental health issues and policy implementation will be carried out via:

- CPD sessions delivered to staff relating to mental health
- PHSE curriculum relating to mental health
- Annual report on the number of safeguarding logs
- Annual meeting with parents & carers
- Review via the Teign School's Mental Health Ambassadors

There will be a full policy review of this policy annually. Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis.

7. REFERENCES

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Youth: *would you know how to help?* Available at: <https://mhfaengland.org/individuals/youth/> (Accessed 13th October, 2023).

PHSE Association (2023) *Guidance on teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing*. Available at: <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-teaching-about-mental-health-and> (Accessed 13th October, 2023).

World Health Organisation (2023) *Mental health: strengthening our response*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response> (Accessed 13th October, 2023).

Appendix 1: Guidance & advice documents

- [PSHE Association : Preparing to Teach about Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing](#) – PSHE Association teacher guidance funded by the Department for Education.
- [Mental health and behaviour in schools : Departmental advice for school staff](#). Department for Education (2018).
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KiCSE\). Statutory guidance for schools and colleges](#). Department for Education (2023)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#). Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. Department for Education (2015).
- [Future in mind. Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#). A report produced by the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce to examine how to improve mental health services for children and young people. Department of Health (2015).
- [NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education](#).
- [Academic Resilience Resources and Auditing Tool – Young Minds](#)

Appendix 2: Support available both in school & local context

[Education and skills websites - The-Emotional-Health-and-Wellbeing-Pathway \(1\).pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

This document outlines the universal, targeted and specialist support available both locally and nationally which Devon County Council has created.

Public Health Nursing Service



THRIVING – Universal level	What can the school/setting do?	Community Support
Most children and young people thrive and cope with the 'normal' difficulties and challenges of life and of growing up. They usually cope with challenges using their own resilience, the support of family and friends and support from their school. Children and Family Health Devon: https://childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk/ Pinpoint Devon: https://services.pinpointdevon.co.uk/kb5/devon/services/results.page?qt=&communitychannel Devon Education Services: SEND, inclusion and safeguarding support for schools/settings DES (devoneducationservices.co.uk)	- Develop and publish a Mental Health Strategy which focuses on resilience and wellbeing of both staff and students - Involve parents and pupils in decision making and policy development - Promote an emotionally healthy whole school environment which includes Mental Health Ambassadors, peer mentors etc. - Use PSHE delivery (<i>Rise Above for Schools</i>) to raise awareness and promote emotional health and wellbeing - Embed 10 a day for Mental Health - Have effective and supportive policies on Inclusion, anti-bullying - Employ Relational Approaches to teaching and learning and develop a Relational Behaviour Policy https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/send/areas-of-need/social-emotional-and-mental-health/relational-learning/ - Have a system of early identification and support i.e. re early absence, changes in behaviour/engagement in learning, early transition planning and support - Individual Health Care plans and reasonable adjustments for known health conditions/SEND (and staff training on identification and management of these needs) - Anna Freud Schools in Mind Network: www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges - Staff training – MH First Aid, EH4MH, MindEd: https://www.minded.org.uk/ - Mentally Healthy Schools: https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/ - Solihull Parenting Online: www.inourplace.co.uk (access code TAMAR) - Useful Resources include - We Eat Elephants, My Big Life and Living Life to the Full: https://www.fiveareas.com/	Children's Centre for 0-8 School Nursing: ChatHealth (text a Devon SN 11-19yr olds) – 07520631722, https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/devon/ https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/ Devon Children and Families Partnership: https://www.dcfp.org.uk/early-help Space Youth Centres: https://www.spaceyouthservices.org/ Devon Young Carers: https://devoncarers.org.uk/am-i-a-carer/young-carers-2/what-happens-at-devon-young-carers/ Prevent: https://saferdevon.co.uk/preventing-radicalisation/ National support Place 2Be: https://www.place2be.org.uk/ Young Minds: https://youngminds.org.uk/ Rise above (for young people): https://riseabove.org.uk The Mix (for under 25s): call 0808 808 4994 www.themix.org.uk YSmart: http://ysmart.org.uk/ LGBTQI: www.intercomtrust.org.uk, https://www.stonewall.org.uk/young-futures Show Racism the Red Card: https://www.theredcard.org/

GETTING ADVICE: Targeted support	What can the school/setting do? <i>In addition to the previous support</i>	Community Support
Some CYP show signs of emerging mental health needs and/or are struggling with their emotional well-being. Problems may be outside the normal range for their age or gender and of a mild to moderate nature. These will be starting to cause difficulties with their school work, friendships or family relationships. Kooth https://www.kooth.com/ Lumi Nova https://childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk/lumi-nova/ Happy Maps: Reliable Resources to support Emotional Health and Wellbeing www.happymaps.co.uk/	- Explore concerns with parents and the CYP - Be alert to signs of emerging emotional problems; use data and evidence-based tools to assess such as the SEN Graduated Response document and No Need to Exclude Document to identify pupils who need targeted school-based or community interventions https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/document/category/inclusion/ - Consider whether there are other needs that require support i.e. is it an emotional response as a normal reaction to a stressful situation or unmet need (individual, family or environmental)? - Refer to the School Nurse: https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/health/public-health-nursing - Consider referring to School Counsellor, Educational Psychologist, SEMH Advisory teacher.	Integrated Children's Services: CFHD.DevonSPA@nhs.net or phone on 03300 245 321 Counselling: Self-referral for online emotional wellbeing support and counselling www.kooth.com Young Devon: https://www.youngdevon.org/what-we-do/mental-health-well-being National Support Childline: 0800 1111 https://www.childline.org.uk
GETTING ADVICE: Specialist support	What can the school/setting do? <i>In addition to the previous support</i>	Community Support
A few CYP will show signs of significant mental health problems that impact on daily activities and prevent them from functioning within the norms for their age. These may be persistent and moderate to severe in nature, causing significant difficulties with their achievement and relationships.	- Continue to use school-based interventions to support the pupil - Contact CAMHS pre-referral helpline for advice/consultation and follow advice given (this may be to refer in for CAMHS specialist support) - Consider referring to an Educational Psychologist: https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/send/educational-psychology/ - Consider any Safeguarding concerns/implications https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/safeguarding/	Specialist CAMHS: Single Point of Access (CAMHS- SPA): TSDFT.DevonSPA@nhs.net on 0330 0245 321 Devon Children and Families Partnership: https://www.dcfp.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing/emotional-and-mental-health National Support NHS - 111 Shout - Text 'SHOUT' to '85258' for crisis support via text.

GETTING MORE HELP: Urgent mental health support	What can the school/setting do? <i>In addition to the previous support</i>	Community Support
This may be needed for serious mental health crisis (e.g. psychosis), suicidal ideation or serious weight loss and signs of an eating disorder. CYP with complex and significant learning needs may express their mental health needs via challenging behaviour or detachment/withdrawal. Seek support from the Learning Disability team. You may need to contact the Police if behaviours are aggressive. Follow safeguarding procedures.	- Contact parents immediately unless you have safeguarding concerns that would increase the risk to the child/young person by discussing with the parent/carer - Contact CAMHS-SPA on 0330 0245 321 for advice and for a decision on the urgency of the mental health need. After 5pm, contact 0300 555 5000 or the out-of-hours GP service by dialling NHS 111, or take to Accident and Emergency	IF A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER CONTACT THE POLICE ON 999 If a child or young person is in need of protection or safeguarding contact Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): Ring 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk Consider Exploitation: https://www.preventingexploitationtoolkit.org.uk/ National Support NSPCC https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/our-services/nspcc-helpline/ 0800 800 5000
GETTING RISK SUPPORT: Emergency medical help needed to preserve life following life threatening self-harm	What should the school/setting do? <i>In addition to the previous support</i>	Community Support
Call the Police if CYP has absconded or is expressing suicidal ideation. DCFP provide further guidance on suicide prevention: https://www.dcfp.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing/suicide-awareness/	- Contact parents immediately unless you have safeguarding concerns that would increase the risk to the child/young person by discussing with the parent/ carer. - Call 999 - CAMHS assessment would be undertaken in A&E - Check in with CYP and parent following an incident and identify support in school should they want this - Self-Harm Guidance for Schools: https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/inclusion/emotional-health-and-wellbeing/self-harm/self-harm-guidance-for-school-staff/	Pete's Dragons provide post suicide support for families and schools: http://www.petesdragons.org.uk/ CAMHS - 0330 0245 321 DCC: https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/send/educational-psychology/educational-psychology-resources-old/critical-incident-pack-information-for-schools/ National Support Winston's Wish –Bereavement support: https://www.winstonswish.org Papyrus – Suicide Prevention for schools: https://papyrus-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/toolkitfinal.pdf

Appendix 3: Parent/carer links to support their child

The following websites may provide further support:

Local: [Home - Devon Schools Wellbeing Partnership](#)

[I'm Looking for Useful Resources | Devon Wellbeing Hub](#)

<https://www.devonnewscentre.info/nhs-chatthealth-for-parents-and-carers/>

National:

[Finding the right support for you and your family | Anna Freud](#)

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>