

Thames View Junior School

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Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy

September 2026

Updated by J. Hall



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Date adopted: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

Responsible member of staff: J. Hall -AHT & Inclusion Lead

Approved by: Governing Body / Headteacher

1. Introduction

At Thames View Junior School, we recognise that positive emotional health and wellbeing are fundamental to pupils' development, learning, relationships and future outcomes.

We are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment in which all pupils feel valued, respected and able to seek support when they need it. We recognise that pupils' emotional wellbeing can affect their attendance, behaviour, relationships, engagement with learning and academic progress.

As a junior school educating pupils aged 7–11 in Years 3–6, we have an important role in helping children develop the emotional literacy, resilience and coping strategies they need as they grow and prepare for the transition to secondary education.

Our approach is based upon the principle that supporting emotional health and wellbeing is the responsibility of the whole school community and should be embedded within our culture, curriculum, safeguarding practice and provision for pupils with additional needs.

2. Aims

Through this policy, Thames View Junior School aims to:

- promote positive emotional health and wellbeing for all pupils;
- create a culture in which pupils feel safe, valued, respected and able to talk about their feelings;
- develop pupils' emotional literacy, resilience, confidence and ability to manage challenges;
- ensure pupils know which trusted adults they can approach when they need support;
- identify emotional health and wellbeing needs at the earliest possible stage;
- provide appropriate early intervention and targeted support;
- recognise that behaviour may sometimes communicate an underlying emotional, social or mental health need;
- ensure appropriate support for pupils with SEND, including Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs;
- work collaboratively with parents, carers and external professionals;
- ensure staff understand their role in promoting and supporting pupils' emotional wellbeing;
- promote positive staff wellbeing and recognise its importance in maintaining a supportive school environment; and
- ensure safeguarding remains central to all decisions concerning a pupil's emotional health and wellbeing.

3. Our Whole-School Approach

Thames View Junior School adopts a whole-school approach to emotional health and wellbeing.

Our approach is informed by the Department for Education's principles for promoting mental health and wellbeing in schools. We seek to embed emotional wellbeing throughout school life rather than viewing mental health support solely as an intervention for pupils experiencing difficulties.

Our approach is underpinned by the following principles:

Ethos and environment – creating a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which diversity is valued and positive relationships are promoted.

Leadership and management – ensuring emotional health and wellbeing are recognised as whole-school priorities and are supported by school leaders.

Staff development – providing staff with appropriate information, guidance and training to support pupils' emotional wellbeing and recognise potential concerns.

Curriculum, teaching and learning – explicitly teaching pupils about emotions, relationships, resilience, mental wellbeing and strategies for managing difficulties.

Pupil voice – listening to pupils and ensuring their views contribute to decisions about their wellbeing and the support they receive.

Identifying need and monitoring interventions – identifying concerns early and reviewing whether support is having a positive impact.

Targeted support and appropriate referral – providing additional school-based support where appropriate and involving specialist services when necessary.

Working with parents and carers – recognising parents and carers as important partners in understanding and supporting their child's wellbeing.

Positive emotional health and wellbeing are promoted throughout everyday school life.

We aim to provide pupils with consistent routines, clear expectations, positive relationships with adults and opportunities to experience success.

Staff will promote positive wellbeing through:

- warm, respectful and supportive relationships;
- clear and predictable routines and boundaries;
- recognition and celebration of effort, progress and achievement;
- opportunities for pupils to talk about emotions and experiences;
- modelling appropriate emotional regulation and respectful communication;
- encouraging independence and resilience;
- opportunities for physical activity, play and social interaction;
- creating inclusive classrooms in which pupils feel that they belong; and
- responding sensitively and appropriately when pupils experience difficulties.

The school recognises that emotional wellbeing does not mean that pupils will never experience difficult emotions. Children will experience disappointment, worry, anger, sadness and frustration as a normal part of development. Our role is to help pupils understand these emotions and develop safe and appropriate ways of managing them.

Emotional health and wellbeing are taught through our curriculum, including Relationships Education, Health Education and PSHE.

Teaching is age-appropriate and supports pupils to develop their understanding of:

- emotions and how to communicate them;
- positive and healthy relationships;
- recognising when they or somebody else may need help;
- self-esteem and confidence;
- resilience and managing setbacks;
- coping with change and transition;
- managing worries and difficult feelings;
- healthy lifestyles, including physical activity, sleep and wellbeing;
- online safety and the impact of online experiences on wellbeing;
- bullying and its impact;
- respectful behaviour;
- where and how to seek help; and
- the importance of speaking to a trusted adult.

Teaching will be sensitive to pupils' individual experiences and additional needs. Staff should not encourage pupils to disclose personal or potentially traumatic experiences publicly during lessons.

Where a pupil makes a disclosure or raises a safeguarding concern during teaching, staff must follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

6. Identifying Pupils Who May Need Additional Support

All members of staff have a responsibility to remain alert to changes that may indicate that a pupil requires additional emotional support.

Possible indicators may include:

- significant or sustained changes in behaviour;
- withdrawal or social isolation;
- persistent sadness, worry or anxiety;
- increased emotional dysregulation;
- frequent conflict with peers or adults;
- significant changes in attendance;
- deterioration in engagement or academic progress;
- changes in friendships or social interaction;
- difficulties managing everyday routines;
- repeated physical complaints where there is no identified medical explanation;
- significant changes in presentation or self-care;
- comments indicating low self-worth or hopelessness; or
- a pupil directly asking for help.

These indicators do not necessarily mean that a pupil has a mental health condition. Staff should avoid attempting to diagnose pupils and should instead record, share and respond appropriately to concerns.

7. Responding to Concerns

Where a member of staff is concerned about a pupil's emotional health or wellbeing, they should initially discuss the concern with the appropriate member of staff, which may include the Class Teacher, Year Group Leader, SENDCo, Senior Mental Health Lead, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The response will be proportionate to the level of concern and may include:

- discussion with the pupil;
- communication with parents/carers;
- classroom-based strategies;
- pastoral support;
- reasonable adjustments;
- targeted intervention;
- monitoring over an agreed period;
- SEND assessment or support;
- consultation with external professionals; or
- referral to an appropriate service.

Where concerns indicate that a pupil may be at risk of harm, safeguarding procedures take precedence and the concern must be reported immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Some pupils will require additional support beyond the school's universal provision.

Where appropriate, the school may provide targeted interventions individually or within small groups. Support will be selected according to the pupil's identified needs and may focus on areas including:

- emotional literacy;
- emotional regulation;
- self-esteem and confidence;
- anxiety and worry;
- friendship and social interaction;
- resilience;
- bereavement or loss;
- managing change and transition; and
- behaviour linked to underlying emotional needs.

Interventions should have a clear purpose and, wherever possible, measurable intended outcomes.

The impact of targeted support will be monitored and reviewed. Where an intervention is not having the intended impact, the school will consider whether the approach should be adapted or whether additional professional advice is required.

9. SEND and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

The school recognises Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) as an area of special educational need.

Where emotional or mental health difficulties create a significant or persistent barrier to a pupil's learning, participation or development, the school will consider whether the pupil may have additional needs requiring support through the school's SEND procedures.

The SENDCo will work alongside teachers, parents/carers, pupils and relevant professionals to identify needs and determine appropriate provision.

Where appropriate, support may be recorded through the school's SEND systems, including Pupil Passports and provision mapping.

The school recognises that pupils with other special educational needs or disabilities may also experience difficulties with communication, sensory processing, regulation, social interaction or anxiety. Staff will therefore consider the individual pupil's wider profile when interpreting behaviour or emotional presentation.

10. Behaviour and Emotional Wellbeing

Thames View Junior School maintains high expectations for behaviour while recognising that behaviour can sometimes communicate an unmet emotional, social, developmental or SEND need.

Understanding the possible reason for behaviour does not mean that inappropriate or unsafe behaviour will be ignored. Pupils will continue to be supported to understand expectations, take responsibility for their actions where developmentally appropriate and learn safer and more appropriate ways of responding.

Where behaviour is persistent, significantly different from a pupil's usual presentation or appears to be linked to emotional distress, staff should consider whether additional assessment or support is required.

The school's Behaviour Policy should therefore be implemented alongside, rather than separately from, our responsibilities for SEND, safeguarding and emotional wellbeing.

11. Safeguarding

Mental health and safeguarding are closely connected.

All staff must recognise that mental health difficulties can, in some circumstances, be an indicator that a child has experienced or is at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or another safeguarding concern.

Any member of staff who has a safeguarding concern must follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Staff must never promise confidentiality to a pupil where information relates to their safety or the safety of another person.

Where there is an immediate concern regarding a child's safety, safeguarding procedures will take priority over the processes outlined elsewhere within this policy.

12. Pupil Voice

We believe pupils should have meaningful opportunities to express their views about their emotional wellbeing and the support available to them.

Pupil voice may be gathered through:

- conversations with trusted adults;
- pupil questionnaires or surveys;
- School Council and other pupil leadership opportunities;
- SEND and Pupil Passport reviews;
- intervention reviews;
- wellbeing activities; and
- individual discussions where support is being planned.

Where appropriate, pupils should be involved in identifying strategies that help them to feel safe, regulated and ready to learn.

13. Working with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers have an important role in supporting children's emotional health and wellbeing.

The school aims to develop positive and respectful relationships with families and, where appropriate, will work collaboratively with parents/carers when concerns arise.

This may include:

- sharing concerns at an early stage;
- listening to information from home;
- discussing strategies that may support the pupil;
- reviewing the impact of school-based interventions;
- signposting families to appropriate services; and
- working jointly with external professionals.

There may be circumstances where information cannot immediately be shared with parents or carers because doing so could place a child at increased risk. In these situations, decisions will be made in accordance with safeguarding procedures and advice from appropriate agencies.

14. Working with External Agencies

Where a pupil's needs cannot appropriately be met through school-based provision alone, the school may seek advice or support from external professionals and services.

Depending upon the pupil's needs and local arrangements, these may include:

- Mental Health Support Teams;
- Educational Psychology;
- School Nursing services;
- Children and Young People's Mental Health Services;
- Local Authority SEND services;
- Early Help services;
- Social Care;
- speech and language professionals;
- occupational therapy;
- voluntary or community organisations; and
- other health or education professionals.

The school will follow appropriate referral, consent and information-sharing procedures.

15. Attendance and Emotional Wellbeing

We recognise that emotional and mental health difficulties can affect school attendance.

Where this occurs, the school will work with the pupil and their family to understand the barriers to attendance and identify appropriate support.

Support will be considered on an individual basis and may involve pastoral, SEND, attendance, safeguarding or external professional involvement.

The school will maintain high expectations for attendance while ensuring that responses to absence take account of individual circumstances and identified needs.

16. Transitions

Transitions can have a significant impact on pupils' emotional wellbeing.

We will provide appropriate support for pupils:

- joining Thames View Junior School;
- moving between year groups or classes;
- experiencing significant changes within school;
- returning following extended absence; and
- preparing to move to secondary school.

Additional transition support will be considered for pupils with SEND, emotional health needs, safeguarding vulnerabilities or other identified needs.

Where appropriate, information will be shared with receiving settings to promote continuity of support.

17. Staff Responsibilities and Training

All staff have a role in promoting pupils' emotional health and wellbeing.

Staff should:

- create safe and supportive relationships with pupils;
- model respectful communication and appropriate emotional regulation;
- remain alert to changes in pupils' behaviour or presentation;
- listen appropriately when pupils seek support;
- follow school procedures for recording and reporting concerns;
- understand the distinction between pastoral support and specialist mental health support;
- follow safeguarding procedures where required; and
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

The school will provide appropriate training and professional development to support staff in fulfilling these responsibilities.

Staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions or provide therapeutic support beyond their role and level of training.

18. Staff Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Thames View Junior School recognises that staff wellbeing contributes to a positive school culture and supports staff in providing effective care and education for pupils.

School leaders will seek to promote a culture in which staff feel valued, supported and able to raise concerns.

The school will consider staff workload, professional support, access to appropriate training and opportunities for staff to seek assistance when required.

Responsibility for staff wellbeing is shared across the organisation, while recognising the particular responsibility of leaders to establish supportive systems, expectations and working practices.

19. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information concerning pupils' emotional health and wellbeing will be handled sensitively and in accordance with the school's safeguarding, data protection and information-sharing procedures.

Information will be shared with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis where this is necessary to support or safeguard a pupil.

Staff should make clear to pupils that they cannot promise to keep information secret where there is a concern about the pupil's safety or the safety of somebody else.

Appropriate records will be maintained where concerns, interventions, referrals or safeguarding matters arise.

20. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will provide appropriate oversight and challenge to ensure that the school's approach to emotional health and wellbeing is effective and consistent with its statutory responsibilities.

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that emotional health and wellbeing are appropriately promoted throughout the school and that suitable systems, staffing and resources are in place.

Senior Mental Health Lead

The Senior Mental Health Lead will support the development and implementation of the school's whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, working with senior leaders, the SENDCo, DSL and other relevant staff.

SENDCo

The SENDCo will support the identification and provision for pupils whose social, emotional or mental health needs constitute, or may constitute, a special educational need and will coordinate relevant SEND provision.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will ensure that concerns relating to emotional wellbeing that also constitute safeguarding concerns are responded to in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Class Teachers

Class Teachers are responsible for creating supportive classroom environments, monitoring pupils' wellbeing and raising concerns through the appropriate school procedures.

All Staff

All staff share responsibility for promoting positive emotional wellbeing, identifying concerns and ensuring pupils receive appropriate support.

21. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of the school's approach to emotional health and wellbeing will be monitored through appropriate measures, which may include:

- pupil voice;
- parent/carer feedback;
- staff feedback;
- behaviour information;
- attendance information;
- safeguarding information;
- SEND information;
- intervention records and outcomes;
- referrals to external services; and
- school self-evaluation.

The school will use this information to identify patterns, priorities and areas where provision may need to be strengthened.

22. Equality and Inclusion

Our approach to emotional health and wellbeing applies to all pupils.

We recognise that pupils' experiences and support needs will differ and that some pupils may face additional barriers to accessing support.

The school will have regard to its duties under equality legislation and will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required.

Support will be provided according to individual need and will take account of pupils' age, developmental stage, SEND, communication needs and individual circumstances.

24. Relevant Guidance

This policy has been developed with reference to current Department for Education and statutory guidance, including:

- *Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges – Department for Education;*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;*
- *Mental health and behaviour in schools;*
- *SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;*
- *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance;*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children; and*
- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance.*

The school will review this policy in response to significant changes in legislation, statutory guidance or local arrangements.

25. Policy Review

This policy will normally be reviewed annually or earlier where there are significant changes to statutory guidance, legislation or the school's provision.

Policy adopted: September 2026

Next review: September 2027

Signed – Headteacher: _____

Signed – Chair of Governors: _____

Date: _____