



Mental Health & Well-Being Policy

Motivate • Educate • Achieve

Date of Policy: January 2026

Reviewed: January 2026 in consultation with staff

Ratified by the Full Governing Body: 27 January 2026

Date of Next Review: January 2027

Our School Values: *We are respectful, ambitious, creative, inclusive, independent and we persevere.*

Introduction

“Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and well-being of children by developing whole school approaches tailored to their particular needs, as well as considering the needs of individual pupils.” (Mental Health and behaviour in Schools, DfE, Nov 2018)

Aims

At Woodcock Hill, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and well-being of our pupils and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At Woodcock Hill we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks
- promote the mental health and well-being of pupils across the subjects of the curriculum, taking account of their age and stage
- help children use strategies to help them achieve and thrive
- ensure children feel they belong to the school community.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

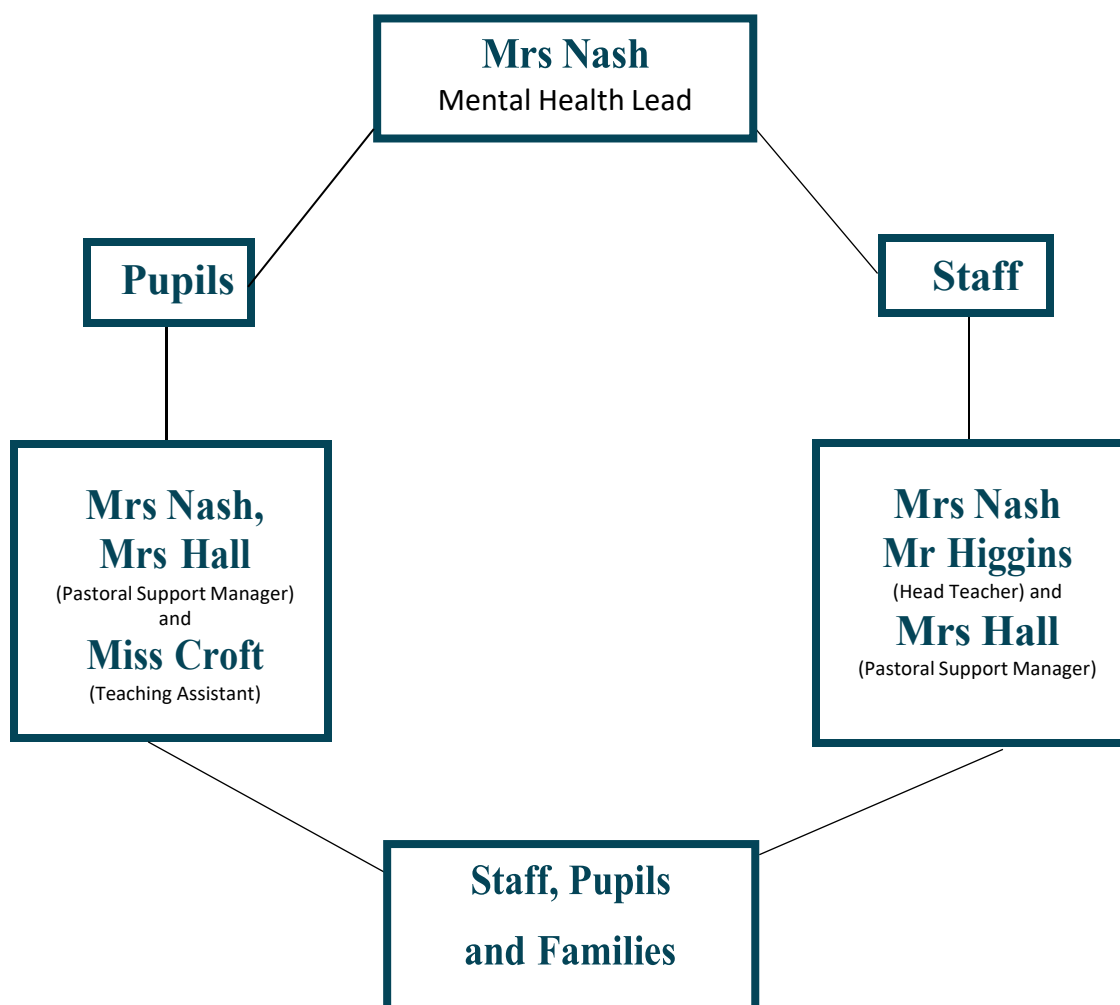
- promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision making (school council)
- celebrating academic and non-academic achievements (celebration assemblies)
- have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed (extra-curricular clubs, signposting to community clubs)
- providing access to appropriate support that meets their needs.

We pursue our aims through:

- universal, whole school approaches
- support for pupils and staff going through recent difficulties including bereavement
- positive classroom management, in line with the school’s behaviour policy, using reasonable adjustments for identified children where relevant.
- provide opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others (residential, trips)
- specialised targeted approaches and social skills interventions aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder
- fostering links between school, home, community and appropriate outside agencies so that all are involved in a collective responsibility for promoting good mental health and well-being
- working with parents / guardians to promote positive well-being at home.

Staff Roles

At Woodcock Hill all staff are committed to ensuring the well-being of pupils and families and other staff. A mental health lead has been appointed, Mrs Nash, who ensures mental health and well-being are prioritised at Woodcock Hill. Supporting Mrs Nash are other staff members who have been appointed to support both pupils and staff



“All schools are under a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their pupils.” (Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools, DfE, Nov 2018).

At Woodcock Hill we recognise that we have a central role to play in enabling our pupils and staff to be resilient, and to support good mental health and well-being. Providing a whole school approach is essential to promoting positive mental health and well-being for pupils and staff. As set out in chapter 6 of the statutory SEND Code of Practice (2015), school needs to be alert to how mental health problems can underpin behaviour issues to support pupils effectively. When staff suspect a pupil may have a well-being problem, they must use the graduated approach to put appropriate support in place. School staff cannot act as mental health experts and must not try to diagnose conditions. However, there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible well-being problems.

Identifying Need and Warning Signs

There may be a range of possible difficulties that may be used to identify needs, including:

- attendance
- punctuality
- relationships
- approach to learning
- physical indicators
- negative behaviour patterns
- family circumstances
- recent bereavement
- health indicators

School may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional well-being issues. These warning signs should be taken seriously and staff observing any of these signs should communicate their concerns to the Mental Health Lead or a DSL.

Possible warning signs include:

- changes in eating / sleeping habits
- becoming socially withdrawn
- changes in activity and mood
- talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- an increase in lateness or absenteeism

At Woodcock Hill we recognise that short term stress and worry is a normal part of life and many issues can be experienced as mild or transitory challenges for some children and their families. Others will experience more serious and longer lasting effects. The same experience can have different effects on different children depending on other factors in their life. For example, it is normal for children to feel nervous or under stress around test times, but other factors can make such stress part of an enduring and persistent mental health problem for some children. When a problem is particularly severe or persistent over time, or when a number of these difficulties are experienced at the same time, children are often described as experiencing mental health problems.

We recognise that certain individuals and groups are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others. These risks can relate to the child themselves, to their family or to their community of life events. In order to promote positive mental health, it is important that schools have an understanding of the protective factors that can enable pupils to be resilient when they encounter problems or challenges.

Risk and Protective Factors

In the Child	
Risk Factors	Protective Factors
• Genetic influences • Low IQ and learning disabilities • Specific development delay or neurodiversity • Communication difficulties • Difficult temperament • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem	• Secure attachment experience • Outgoing temperament as an infant • Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour • A positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith and spirituality • Capacity to reflect

In the family	
Risk Factors	Protective Factors
• Overall parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships • Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs • Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship	• At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long-term relationship or absence of severe discord

In the School	
Risk Factors	Protective Factors
• Bullying – including online • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Deviant peer influences • Peer pressure • Peer on peer abuse • Poor pupil to teacher / school staff relationships	• Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • Staff code of conduct • ‘Open door’ policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Good pupil to teacher / school staff relationships • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences • Positive friendships • Effective safeguarding and Child protection policies • An effective early help process

In the Community	
Risk Factors	Protective Factors
• Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Exploitation, including by criminal gangs, organised crime groups and county lines • Extremist influences / radicalisation • Other significant life events	• Wider supportive network • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport / leisure activities

Early Identification

At Woodcock Hill we know that early intervention is crucial in supporting pupils. The school role in summary is:

Prevention	- At Woodcock Hill we have a safe and calm environment for all pupils, staff and visitors. - Pupils are taught about mental health and well-being through the curriculum and this is reinforced through school teaching and ethos.
Identification	Recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
Early Support	Helping pupils through providing evidence based early support and interventions.
Access to specialist support	Working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.
Safeguarding	If staff have a mental health concern that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action must be taken, in line with the school's safeguarding policy.

Each class have a well-being barometer that the children can place their name card on how they are feeling on entry to the classroom. This is completed by the children every morning and is part of the identification and recognition of emerging issues. If a child places their name on an emotion that may indicate they are not feeling ok, the teaching assistant will take them aside to chat about how they are feeling and why and ensure the right level of support is given to the child to help them feel better. Each class also have a time for well-being on Monday afternoons at the end of the day. This provides opportunities for the children to take part in mindful activities and to learn strategies to help them look after their mental health and well-being. Early support is provided through tailored interventions. These are carried out by TA's, the pastoral manager or the SENCO.

Parents / guardians may also speak to the SENCO, Mrs Nash, who can then help signpost them to specialist services available or make any necessary referrals for other services. This may include:

- Forward Thinking Birmingham (formerly CAMHS) / STICK / Pause Drop In Service,
- Parents / guardians can also access the Pause Drop In Service for emotional, behavioural and mental health concerns. This is at 21 Digbeth, five minutes' walk from the Bull Ring, across the road from the DS1 and DS3 bus stops
- Information is regularly posted on the school website which includes details of services available and online parental webinars - <https://www.woodcockhillprimaryschool.co.uk/>
- Allen's Croft Child Development Centre
- Educational Psychology Service – Philip Connor-Bell
- Information can also be found on the Local Offer website, a link can be found on the school website - <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/localoffer>

Training

- As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their annual child protection training, in order for them to keep students safe.
- Staff have received TIAAS (trauma informed attachment aware schools) training and emotion coaching, by the Educational Psychology Service (update training in Sept 2025).
- The Mental Health Lead has completed training on: A Strategic Approach to Whole School Emotional Health and Well-being, delivered by Thrive.