



Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy

1 Sponsor

Principal

2 Reviewed

February 2025

3 Revised

February 2027

Safeguarding Statement

At Charlton School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at Charlton School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

'Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.'

4 Introduction

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. The policy was written in consultation with staff, students, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing in Telford and Wrekin. This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need. Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. As a school, we use the World Health Organisation's definition of Mental Health.

5 Policy Statement

At Charlton School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our students and staff. Our supportive and caring ethos is part of our culture and we believe that supporting emotional health and wellbeing is the responsibility of every adult working in school.

The Policy Aims to:

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

At Charlton School we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional support with their emotional wellbeing and mental health. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health provision, policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for children/young people affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

At Charlton School we:

- teach and support children/young people's understanding of their emotions and feelings as we grow and change.
- ensure children/young people feel comfortable about sharing concerns or worries about their emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- teach children/young people that it is okay not to be okay.
- educate children/young people about healthy relationships and support them to form and maintain relationships appropriate for their age and stage in life.
- promote the importance of good self-esteem and ensure children know that they have equal value to anyone else.
- encourage children to be confident in themselves and have a sense of pride in being who they are.
- support and develop children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks in their lives.

We promote a positive mental health culture by:

- Talking openly about our emotions and mental health, so that we can begin to remove the stigma associated with it.
- Modelling healthy relationships with colleagues and actively listening to children/young people so they know that they will be supported if requested.
- Promoting our school values and ethos and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting student voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making and democracy.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements in life.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others, including participating in school parliaments, student voice forums and children/young people safeguarding boards.
- Providing opportunities to reflect on the choices they make and the consequences of these.
- Supporting children/young people to access the right support at the right time.

We pursue our aims through:

- A universal, whole school approach to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all children/young people. This includes a taught curriculum for all about mental health, through the statutory health education curriculum.
- Supporting children/young people to ask for help when dealing with a mental health issue and to see this as a sign of strength.
- Teaching through health education the need to live a healthy lifestyle to keep our minds balanced.
- Spreading awareness about mental health to reduce stigma.
- Offering additional high quality in school support for students who are experiencing issues in their own lives that affect their wellbeing, including bereavement.
- Ensuring access to specialised, targeted approaches aimed at students with more complex or long-term mental health needs.

6 Scope of this Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents and linked policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- SEND policy and T&W local offer
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- PSHEE and RSE Policies
- Domestic Abuse policy and Bereavement policy in cases where children/young people's mental health needs overlap with these.

7 Emotional Health and Wellbeing Lead Members of Staff

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

- Safeguarding Lead (Angela Bithell)
- Deputy Safeguarding Leads (Paul Wakelin, Anna Vickers)
- Safeguarding officers (Katie Cunningham and Ceri Kinsey)
- Emotional health wellbeing lead (Abbie Wills)
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant -ELSA (Claire Skelding)
- SENCo (Alison Prosser)

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children/young people to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons is determined by the needs of the students within the year group and school. The teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing is linked directly to the statutory guidance for Health Education (September 2020).

8 Raising Concerns about Mental Ill Health

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the Emotional Health Lead in the first instance and log this on CPOMS. If there is a concern that the student is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection/safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated safeguarding lead. 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.

The referral route for BEE-U (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) is via a GP or the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Panel within Charlton. This is held every Wednesday after school and is attended by members of SLT and the pastoral team. Each week a specific year group is reviewed in terms of the progress of Early Help cases, and then all students who have been identified on CPOMS as struggling with their mental health and wellbeing are discussed. Through this pathway the support that individual students require is identified and actioned.

9 Targeted Support

At Charlton School we offer support through approached and systems which are based on a graduated response. Approaches for individual students or groups of students, which may include:

Universal offer (Wave 1)

Personal development curriculum: Relationship and Sex Education, Celebrating Diversity and Equality, Health and Wellbeing.

Wave 2 Support

- Peer coaching and mentoring
- KOOTH
- Signposting to school website with external links
- 3 weeks of coaching with a designated Mental Health Champion
- Talkabout groups
- Counselling with External Specialists
- Referral for the Healthy Child NHS programme
- Healthy Child NHS referral
- Allocated Adult card for support from the pastoral team primarily
- Bridge card to allow our SEN students access to our nurture area to deregulate during lessons
- Alternative provision through either internal or external agencies – this could be Forest Schools, Fordhall Farm, Brightstar Boxing, Brightstar Education, St Giles Trust, Lucy Faithless Foundation, Safer Schools and Right Path Intervention

Wave 3 Support

- Play therapy
- ELSA support groups
- Strengthening Families referral
- Family Connect referral
- Axis referral
- BEE U referral
- CATE Referral
- SEND Support for SEMH
- LCT Mentor Programme
- Bereavement support
- Sleep Champion intervention
- Healios

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- RCAD's Assessment
- SDQ Assessment

10 Individual Support Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual support plan for students causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the student, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a student's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

Individual support plans are based on the cyclical structure of Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

11 Teaching about Mental Health

We are committed to promoting an environment where our students can support not only their own emotional health and wellbeing, but also that of those around them. This is done in many ways across the whole school through PSHE lessons, form times discussions, wellbeing week and pastoral support. Students learn that it is good to talk about how they are feeling and how they can respond if someone talks to them about something they are worried about. This encompasses teaching students how to support their own emotional health and wellbeing through being active and eating healthily and provides guidance of how to seek help, if necessary.

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 personal development, PSHE and RSE curriculum. Our universal approach is to support wellbeing by promoting self-regulation and strategies to support healthy minds through the PSHEE and Character Development, alongside form tutor mentoring.

12 Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further appropriate support. There is a lot of information on the school website to signpost students to websites and apps to support them. Students are also signposted through this to use Tootoot, our in-school webchat service to support EHWB.

We display relevant sources of support and will regularly highlight sources of support to children/young people within relevant parts of the curriculum, in particular in PSHE lessons. This information will also be shared on the student bulletin and in correspondence with parents.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of child/young person help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

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

If families have a concern regarding their child's mental health, they can contact school by email through their son or daughter's Pastoral Manager or Head of Year.

Families can also access external agencies which are signposted through the school website on the emotional health and wellbeing page: <https://www.charlton.uk.com/parent-student-information/wellbeing-ehwb>

Kooth: A free mental health and wellbeing community available to young people from 11-19 years across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. Kooth.com allows young people to access free online advice, support and guidance 365 days a year through the online magazine, peer to peer forums, self-help activity hub or through chat and messaging with qualified practitioners. You can find out more by watching the attached video Kooth Overview Vimeo or by signing up at www.kooth.com

13 Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

When assessing children/young people's mental health we should take into account:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships between peers
- Approaches to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

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
- Children/young people making comments about wanting to die, wishing they were dead
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Refusal to take part in 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

14 Managing Disclosures

A child/young person 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 child/young person 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 should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the child/young person's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be documented on CPOMS/usual school procedures. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation in the child's words as much as possible
- Who the information has been shared with?
- Agreed next steps – this will usually be the fact that this is being passed on and that this will be followed up by relevant staff
- All CPOMS logs are recorded in the CAS – concern, action and 'so what'

This information should be shared with the EHWP and designated safeguarding lead, who will store the record appropriately, contact Family Connect and/or other professional services if necessary, and offer support and advice about next steps.

15 Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a child/young person on, then we should discuss with the student:

- Who are we going to talk to?
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and/or a parent if they are in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health Lead. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence; and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the student should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the Safeguarding Lead office must be informed immediately.

16 Working with other Agencies and Partners

As part of our targeted provision, Charlton School works with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing, including:

- Emotional Health and Wellbeing Public Health School Nurse
- Educational Psychology Services in the Hadley Locality
- Behaviour Support Advisory Team – Darren Lennon
- Paediatricians – if the child is registered
- BEE-U (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Future in Mind Telford
- Counselling services
- Early Help and Support
- Social Care
- KOOTH
- House 1
- Crossbar
- Landau Limited
- Nova Alternative Provision
- AFC Telford
- Crossfit
- Renu Training
- Edclass

17 Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, 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? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the child/young person, other members of staff
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We are accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

It may be necessary to highlight further sources of information and signpost parents to where further information can be found. It is possible that parents may find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news about their child. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We will always provide clear means of contacting the school with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away, as parents often have many questions as they process the information. We aim to finish each meeting with an agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Parents 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
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go 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 through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

18 Supporting 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. 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 child/young person who is experiencing mental ill health 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 see and therefore help by seeking support from trusted adult's help

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

19 Training and Support

We acknowledge that staff who are working closely with distressed students can themselves be placed under emotional strain.

Charlton aims to increase the level of awareness and understanding among staff of issues involving the mental health of young people and will provide a range of opportunities for staff to access training in dealing with students with mental health problems, including opportunities to talk during supervision with other specialist professionals working with students with recognised mental health issues.

Staff receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep students safe. Pastoral staff and the members of the Access and Inclusion team are trained in how to respond to and support Mental Health, all staff have the option of completing this training through the National College online CPD platform. In addition, the MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Training opportunities for specialist staff are facilitated through the Anna Freud Centre. Charlton has taken part in the Trailblazer scheme to pilot their work in the West Midlands. We also have established links with the Shropshire based initiative 'Respect Yourself' which is attended routinely by the Mental Health Lead.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health and our local context.

Linked Policies

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding and Supervision Policy
- RSE Policy

20 Policy Review

This Emotional Health and Wellbeing policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. It is next due for review in March 2027.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate when the need arises. The monitoring and evaluation of this policy will be carried out by the Vice Principal for Behaviour and Safeguarding and Assistant Vice Principal with responsibility for Personal Development, Culture and Ethos and the Mental Health Lead and reported as requested by Governors.

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect any personnel changes.