

# Holly Grove School



## Positive Mental Health Policy

(Supporting pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental  
Health Difficulties SEMH)

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## Statement of intent

This policy outlines the framework for **Holly Grove School** to meet its duty in providing and ensuring a high quality of education to all of its pupils, including pupils with mental health difficulties, and to do everything it can to meet the needs of pupils with mental health difficulties.

Through the successful implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Promote a positive outlook regarding pupils with SEMH difficulties.
- Eliminate prejudice towards pupils with SEMH difficulties.
- Promote equal opportunities for pupils with SEMH difficulties.
- Ensure all pupils with SEMH difficulties are identified and appropriately supported – minimising the risk of SEMH difficulties escalating into physical harm.

We will work with the LA with regards to the following:

- The involvement of pupils and their parents in decision-making
- The early identification of pupils' needs
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support when required
- Greater choice and control for pupils and their parents over their support

## **1. Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989

This policy has been created with regard to the following DfE guidance:

- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2016) 'Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice: 0 to 25'

This policy also has due regard to the school's policies including, but not limited to, the following:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Administering Medication Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

The school's leadership as a whole is responsible for:

- Using a preventative approach to create a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely to occur, in order to improve the mental health and wellbeing of the school community and instil resilience in pupils. A preventative approach includes teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing these messages in our activities and ethos.
- Ensuring that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of how potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences (ACE), including abuse and neglect, can impact on a pupil's mental health, behaviour and education.
- Equipping staff with the knowledge required to identify pupils whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Raising awareness and employing efficient referral processes (via CPOMS) in order to help pupils access evidence-based early support and interventions.

- Working effectively with external agencies to ensure the school can provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.
- Identifying where wellbeing concerns represent safeguarding concerns, and ensuring that appropriate safeguarding referrals are made in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The governing board is responsible for:

- Fully engaging pupils with SEMH difficulties and their parents when drawing up policies that affect them.
- Designating an appropriate member of staff to coordinate provisions for pupils with SEMH difficulties.
- Taking all necessary steps to ensure that pupils with SEMH difficulties are not discriminated against, harassed or victimised.
- Ensuring arrangements are in place to support pupils with SEMH difficulties.
- Ensuring there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible SEMH problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Identifying an appropriate staff member to act as the senior mental health lead, with sufficient authority to develop and oversee the school's approach to mental health and wellbeing.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that those teaching or working with pupils with SEMH difficulties are aware of their needs and have arrangements in place to meet them.
- Ensuring that teachers monitor and review pupils' academic and emotional progress during the course of the academic year.
- Ensuring that staff members understand the strategies used to identify and support pupils with SEMH difficulties.
- Ensuring that procedures and policies for the day-to-day running of the school do not directly or indirectly discriminate against pupils with SEMH difficulties.
- Establishing and maintaining a culture of high expectations and including pupils with SEMH difficulties in all opportunities that are available to other pupils.
- Consulting health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure the needs of pupils with SEMH difficulties are effectively supported.
- Keeping parents and relevant staff up-to-date with any changes or concerns involving pupils with SEMH difficulties.
- Ensuring staff members have a good understanding of the mental health support services that are available in their local area, both through the NHS and voluntary sector organisations.

The senior mental health lead is responsible for:

- Overseeing the whole-school approach to mental health, including how this is reflected in policies, the curriculum and nurture support, how staff are supported with their own mental health, and how the school engages pupils and parents with regards to pupils' mental health and awareness.
- Collaborating with the headteacher and governing board, to outline and strategically develop SEMH policies and provisions for the school.

- Coordinating with mental health support teams to provide a high standard of care to pupils who have SEMH difficulties.
- Advising on the deployment of the school's budget and other resources in order to effectively meet the needs of pupils with SEMH difficulties.
- Being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the mental health support services, the LA, LA support services and mental health support teams.
- Providing professional guidance to colleagues about mental health and working closely with staff members, parents and other agencies, including SEMH charities.
- Referring pupils with SEMH difficulties to external services, e.g. specialist children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS), to receive additional support where required.
- Overseeing the outcomes of interventions on pupils' education and wellbeing.
- Liaising with parents of pupils with SEMH difficulties, where appropriate.
- Liaising with educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Liaising with the potential future providers of education, such as **secondary school** teachers, to ensure that pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Leading mental health CPD.
- Undertaking senior mental health lead training.

All staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of the signs of SEMH difficulties.
- Being aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Understanding how potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences can impact a pupil's mental health, behaviour and education.
- Being aware of the needs, outcomes sought and support provided to any pupils with SEMH difficulties.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Planning and reviewing support for their pupils with SEMH difficulties in collaboration with parents, the nurture team and, where appropriate, the pupils themselves.
- Setting high expectations for every pupil and aiming to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment.
- Planning lessons to address potential areas of difficulty to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving their full potential, and that every pupil with SEMH difficulties will be able to study the full curriculum.
- Being responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Acting as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Liaising with staff on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare.

- Liaising with the senior mental health lead where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.

### **3. Creating a supportive whole-school culture**

Senior leaders will clearly communicate their vision for good mental health and wellbeing with the whole school community.

The whole school community, have contributed and shared their views on what they value the most about Holly Grove school. Parents, governors, staff and children shared why Holly Grove is special to them. As a result, we have five core values to support our vision towards a whole school positive mental health approach. Our five core values caring, fun, valued, respect and accepted reflect who we are as a school and the importance of mental well-being.

The school utilises various strategies to support pupils who are experiencing high levels of psychological stress, or who are at risk of developing SEMH problems, including:

- Teaching about mental health and wellbeing through:
  - PSHE
- Positive classroom management
- Developing pupils' social skills
- Working with parents
- Peer support
- Nurture sessions

The school's Behaviour Policy includes measures to prevent and tackle bullying, and contains an individualised, graduated response when behaviour may be the result of mental health needs or other vulnerabilities.

The SLT will ensure that there are clear policies and processes in place to reduce stigma and make pupils feel comfortable enough to discuss mental health concerns where appropriate.

Pupils know where to go for further information and support should they wish to talk about their mental health needs or concerns over a peer's or family member's mental health or wellbeing. Key workers and the Nurture Team will support any pupils identified as having SEMH needs. The Family Support Team and School Nurses alongside the Mental Health Leads will monitor and support families identified with mental health difficulties.

### **4. Staff training**

The SLT will ensure that all teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with SEMH needs.

The SLT will promote CPD to ensure that staff can recognise common symptoms of mental health problems, understand what represents a concern, and know what to do if they believe they have spotted a developing problem.

Clear processes are in place to help staff who identify SEMH problems in pupils escalate issues through CPOMS.

Staff receive training to ensure they:

- Promote good mental health and wellbeing throughout the school.
- Can quickly identify individual pupils who need support with their mental health.
- Know what support is available for pupils and how to refer pupils to such support where needed.
- Are aware of how abuse, neglect, and/or other traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact on a pupil's mental health, behaviour and education.

## **5. Identifying signs of SEMH difficulties**

The school is committed to identifying pupils with SEMH difficulties at the earliest stage possible.

Staff are trained to know how to identify possible mental health problems and understand what to do if they spot signs of emerging difficulties.

Staff members are aware of the signs that may indicate if a pupil is struggling with their SEMH. The signs of SEMH difficulties may include, but are not limited to, the following list:

- Anxiety
- Low mood
- Being withdrawn
- Avoiding risks
- Unable to make choices
- Low self-worth
- Isolating themselves
- Refusing to accept praise
- Failure to engage
- Poor personal presentation
- Lethargy/apathy
- Daydreaming
- Unable to make and maintain friendships
- Speech anxiety/reluctance to speak
- Task avoidance
- Challenging behaviour
- Restlessness/over-activity
- Non-compliance
- Mood swings
- Impulsivity
- Physical aggression
- Verbal aggression
- Perceived injustices
- Disproportionate reactions to situations
- Difficulties with change/transitions



- Absconding
- Eating issues
- Lack of empathy
- Lack of personal boundaries
- Poor awareness of personal space

When the school suspects that a pupil is experiencing mental health difficulties, the following graduated response is employed:

- An assessment is undertaken to establish a clear analysis of the pupil's needs
- A plan is set out to determine how the pupil will be supported
- Action is taken to provide that support
- Regular reviews are undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the provision, and changes are made as necessary through the nurture team with the help of school nurses if necessary.

Where possible, the school is aware of any support programmes GPs are offering to pupils who are diagnosed with SEMH difficulties, especially when these may impact the pupil's behaviour and attainment at school.

Staff members discuss concerns regarding SEMH difficulties with the parents of pupils who have SEMH difficulties, and take any concerns expressed by parents, other pupils, colleagues and the pupil in question seriously. Staff consider all previous assessments and progress over time, and then refer the pupil to the appropriate services.

Staff members are aware of the following:

- Factors that put pupils at risk of SEMH difficulties, such as low self-esteem, physical illnesses, academic difficulties and family problems
- The fact that risks are cumulative and that exposure to multiple risk factors can increase the risk of SEMH difficulties

Staff members understand the following:

- Familial loss or separation, significant changes in a pupil's life or traumatic events are likely to cause SEMH difficulties
- What indicators they should be aware of that may point to SEMH difficulties, such as behavioural problems, pupils distancing themselves from other pupils or changes in attitude

The school will promote resilience to help encourage positive SEMH.

Poor behaviour is managed in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Staff members will observe, identify and monitor the behaviour of pupils potentially displaying signs of SEMH difficulties; however, **only medical professionals** will make a diagnosis of a mental health condition.

An effective nurture system is in place so that every pupil is well known by at least **one** member of staff, for example, **their key worker / favoured adult for nurture**, who can spot where disruptive or unusual behaviour may need investigating and addressing.

Staff members are mindful that some groups of pupils are more vulnerable to mental health difficulties than others; these include LAC pupils and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## **6. Vulnerable groups**

Some pupils are particularly vulnerable to SEMH difficulties. These 'vulnerable groups' are more likely to experience a range of adverse circumstances that increase the risk of mental health problems.

Staff are aware of the increased likelihood of SEMH difficulties in pupils in vulnerable groups and remain vigilant to early signs of difficulties.

Vulnerable groups include the following:

- Pupils who have experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse contextual circumstances
- Children in need
- LAC
- PLAC
- Socio-economically disadvantaged pupils, including those in receipt of, or previously in receipt of, free school meals and the pupil premium

These circumstances can have a far-reaching impact on behaviour and emotional states. These factors will be considered when discussing the possible exclusion of vulnerable pupils.

## **7. Children in need, LAC and PLAC**

Children in need, LAC and PLAC are more likely to experience mental health difficulties than their peers.

Children in need, LAC and PLAC are more likely to struggle with executive functioning skills, forming trusting relationships, social skills, managing strong feelings, sensory processing difficulties, foetal alcohol syndrome and coping with change.

Children in need may also be living in chaotic circumstances and be suffering, or at risk of, abuse, neglect and exploitation. They are also likely to have less support available outside of school than most pupils.

The impact of these pupils' experiences is reflected in the design and application of the school's Behaviour Policy, including through individualised graduated responses.

The school uses multi-agency working as an effective way to inform assessment procedures.

Where a pupil is being supported by LA children's social care services (CSCS), the school works with their allocated social worker to better understand the pupil's wider needs and contextual circumstances. This collaborative working informs assessment of needs and enables prompt responses to safeguarding concerns.

When the school has concerns about a looked-after child's behaviour, the designated teacher and virtual school head (VSH) are informed at the earliest opportunity so they can help to determine the best way to support the pupil.

When the school has concerns about a previously looked-after child's behaviour, the pupil's parents/carers or the designated teacher seeks advice from the VSH to determine the best way to support the pupil.

## **8. Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and other events that impact pupils' SEMH**

The balance between risk and protective factors is disrupted when traumatic events happen in pupils' lives, such as the following:

- **Loss or separation:** This may include a death in the family, parental separation, divorce, hospitalisation, loss of friendships, family conflict, a family breakdown that displaces the pupil, being taken into care or adopted, or parents being deployed in the armed forces.
- **Life changes:** This may include the birth of a sibling, moving house, changing schools or transitioning between schools.
- **Traumatic experiences:** This may include abuse, neglect, domestic violence, bullying, violence, accidents or injuries.
- **Other traumatic incidents:** This may include natural disasters or terrorist attacks.

Some pupils may be susceptible to such incidents, even if they are not directly affected. For example, pupils with parents in the armed forces may find global disasters or terrorist incidents particularly traumatic.

The school supports pupils when they have been through ACEs, even if they are not presenting any obvious signs of distress – early help is likely to prevent further problems.

Support may come from the school's existing support systems or via specialist staff and support services.

## **9. SEND and SEMH**

All pupils at Holly Grove have SEND and an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Where pupils have certain types of SEND, there is an increased likelihood of mental health problems. For example, children with autism or learning difficulties are significantly more likely to experience anxiety.

Early intervention to address the underlying causes of disruptive behaviour includes the nurture team completing a profile to identify appropriate support and ensure it is in place to address the pupil's mental health needs.

The headteacher considers the use of a multi-agency assessment for pupils demonstrating persistently disruptive behaviour. These assessments are designed to identify unidentified mental health problems, and to discover whether there are housing or family problems that may be having an adverse effect on the pupil.

## **10. Risk factors and protective factors**

There are a number of risk factors beyond being part of a vulnerable group that are associated with an increased likelihood of SEMH difficulties, these are known as risk factors. There are also factors associated with a decreased likelihood of SEMH difficulties, these are known as protective factors.

The table below displays common risk factors for SEMH difficulties (as outlined by the DfE) that staff remain vigilant of, and the protective factors that staff look for and notice when missing from a pupil:

	Risk factors	Protective factors
In the pupil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genetic influences</li> <li>• Low IQ and learning disabilities</li> <li>• Specific development delay or neuro-diversity</li> <li>• Communication difficulties</li> <li>• Difficult temperament</li> <li>• Physical illness</li> <li>• Academic failure</li> <li>• Low self-esteem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure attachment experience</li> <li>• Outgoing temperament as an infant</li> <li>• Good communication skills and sociability</li> <li>• Being a planner and having a belief in control</li> <li>• Humour</li> <li>• A positive attitude</li> <li>• Experiences of success and achievement</li> <li>• Faith or spirituality</li> <li>• Capacity to reflect</li> </ul>
In the pupil's family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overt parental conflict including domestic violence</li> <li>• Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted)</li> <li>• Inconsistent or unclear discipline</li> <li>• Hostile and rejecting relationships</li> <li>• Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs</li> <li>• Physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect</li> <li>• Parental psychiatric illness</li> <li>• Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder</li> <li>• Death and loss – including loss of friendship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult)</li> <li>• Affection</li> <li>• Clear, consistent discipline</li> <li>• Support for education</li> <li>• Supportive long-term relationships or the absence of severe discord</li> </ul>
In the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying including online (cyber bullying)</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships</li> <li>• Deviant peer influences</li> <li>• Peer pressure</li> <li>• Child-on-child abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear policies on behaviour and bullying</li> <li>• Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct)</li> <li>• 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems</li> <li>• A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health</li> <li>• Good pupil-to-teacher/school staff relationships</li> <li>• Positive classroom management</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor pupil-to-teacher/school staff relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sense of belonging</li> <li>• Positive peer influences</li> <li>• Positive friendships</li> <li>• Effective safeguarding and child protection policies.</li> <li>• An effective early help process</li> <li>• Understand their role in, and are part of, effective multi-agency working</li> <li>• Appropriate procedures in place to ensure staff are confident enough to raise concerns about policies and processes and know they will be dealt with fairly and effectively</li> </ul>
In the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-economic disadvantage</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Exploitation, including by criminal gangs and organised crime groups, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation</li> <li>• Other significant life events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wider supportive network</li> <li>• Good housing</li> <li>• High standard of living</li> <li>• High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying</li> <li>• Opportunities for valued social roles</li> <li>• Range of sport/leisure activities</li> </ul>

## 11. Stress and mental health

The school recognises that short-term stress and worry is a normal part of life and that most pupils will face mild or transitory changes that induce short-term mental health effects. Staff are taught to differentiate between 'normal' stress and more persistent mental health problems.

## 12. SEMH intervention and support

The curriculum for PSHE focusses on promoting pupils' resilience, confidence and ability to learn.

Positive classroom management and working in small groups is utilised to promote positive behaviour, social development and high self-esteem.

School-based nurture is offered to pupils who require it, and the relevant external services are utilised where appropriate. A child psychologist is made available where a pupil requires such services.

The school develops and maintains pupils' social skills, for example, through one-to-one social skills training.

Where appropriate, parents have a direct involvement in any intervention regarding their child. The school supports parents in the management and development of their child.

A key worker is used to encourage and support pupils suffering with SEMH difficulties. They act as confidants, with the aim of easing the worries of the child.

The key worker supports the child around social anxieties, academic concerns, future aspirations and anything else that is appropriate.

When in-school intervention is not appropriate, referrals and commissioning support will take the place of in-school interventions. The school will continue to support the pupil as much as possible throughout the process.

Serious cases of SEMH difficulties are referred to the Paediatric Learning Disability Team

To ensure referring pupils is effective, staff follow the process below:

- Use a clear, approved process for identifying pupils in need of further support
- Document evidence of their SEMH difficulties
- Encourage the pupil and their parents to speak to the pupil's GP
- Work with local specialist CYPMHS to make the referral process as quick and efficient as possible
- Understand the criteria that are used by specialist CYPMHS in determining whether a pupil needs their services
- Have a close working relationship with the local CYPMHS specialist
- Consult CYPMHS about the most effective things the school can do to support pupils whose needs aren't so severe that they require specialist CYPMHS

The school commissions individual health and support services directly for pupils who require additional help.

The services commissioned are suitably accredited and are able to demonstrate that they will improve outcomes for pupils.

The school implements the following approach to interventions:

- In addition to talking therapy, support is provided through non-directive play therapy
- Interventions are structured in a way that addresses behavioural issues through education and training programmes
- Individual pupil-orientated interventions are less effective than ones that involve parents, and so parents are involved in interventions where appropriate
- Parental training programmes are combined with the pupil's intervention to promote problem-solving skills and positive social behaviours
- Small group sessions will take place and focus on developing cognitive skills and positive social behaviour
- Well-established nurture groups are in place to address any emerging SEMH difficulties in pupils

- Play-based approaches are in place to develop more positive relationships between pupils and their parents
- Specific classroom management techniques for supporting pupils are in place. These techniques may include, for example, using a token system for rewards or changing seating arrangements
- 'Self-instruction' programmes may be implemented in combination with parental support

### **13. Suicide concern intervention and support**

Where a pupil discloses suicidal thoughts or a teacher has a concern about a pupil, teachers will:

- Listen carefully, remembering it can be difficult for the pupil to talk about their thoughts and feelings.
- Respect confidentiality, only disclosing information on a need-to-know basis.
- Be non-judgemental, making sure the pupil knows they are being taken seriously.
- Be open, providing the pupil a chance to be honest about their true intentions.
- Supervise the pupil closely whilst referring the pupil to the DSL for support.
- Record details of their observations or discussions and share them with the DSL.

Once suicide concerns have been referred to the DSL, local safeguarding procedures are followed and the pupil's parents are contacted.

Medical professionals, such as the pupil's GP, are notified as needed.

The DSL and any other relevant staff members, alongside the pupil and their parents, work together to create a safety plan outlining how the pupil is kept safe and the support available.

Safety plans:

- Are always created in accordance with advice from external services and the pupil themselves.
- Are reviewed regularly by the DSL.
- Can include reduced timetables or dedicated sessions with counsellors.

### **14. Working with other schools**

The school works with local schools to share resources and expertise regarding SEMH.

### **15. Commissioning local services**

The school commissions appropriately trained, supported, supervised and insured external providers who work within agreed policy frameworks and standards and are accountable to a professional body with a clear complaints procedure.

The school does not take self-reported claims of adherence to these requirements on face value and always obtains evidence to support such claims before commissioning services.

The school commissions support from school nurses and their teams to:

- Build trusting relationships with pupils.
- Support the interaction between health professionals and schools – they work with mental health teams to identify vulnerable pupils and provide tailored support.
- Engage with pupils in their own homes – enabling early identification and intervention to prevent problems from escalating.

The LA has a multi-agency Local Transformation Plan setting out how children's mental health services are being improved. The school feeds into this to improve local provision.

## **16. Working with parents**

The school works with parents wherever possible to ensure that a collaborative approach is utilised which combines in-school support with at-home support.

The school ensures that pupils and parents are aware of the mental health support services available from the school.

Parents and pupils are expected to seek and receive support elsewhere, including from their GP, NHS services, trained professionals working in CYPMHS, voluntary organisations and other sources.

## **17. Working with alternative provision (AP) settings**

The school works with AP settings to develop plans for reintegration back into the school where appropriate.

The school shares information with AP settings that enables clear plans to be developed to measure pupils' progress towards reintegration into mainstream schooling, further education or employment. These plans link to EHC plans for pupils with SEND.

## **18. Administering medication**

The full arrangements in place to support pupils with medical conditions requiring medication can be found in the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and the Administering Medication Policy.

The governing board will ensure that medication is included in a pupil's care plan where recommended by health professionals.

Staff know what medication pupils are taking, and how it should be stored and administered.

## **19. Misbehaviour, suspensions and exclusions**

When suspension or exclusion is a possibility, the school considers contributing factors, which could include mental health difficulties. All decisions to suspend or exclude a pupil will be taken in line with the Suspension and Exclusion Policy.

Where there are concerns over behaviour, the school carries out an assessment to determine whether the behaviour is a result of underlying factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, child protection concerns or mental health problems, in line with the Behaviour Policy.



Where underlying factors are likely to have contributed to the pupil's behaviour, the school considers whether action can be taken to address the underlying causes of the disruptive behaviour, rather than issue a suspension or exclusion. If a pupil has SEND or is a looked-after child, exclusion will only be used as a last resort.

In all cases, the school balances the interests of the pupil against the mental and physical health of the whole school community.

## **20. Safeguarding**

If a staff member has a SEMH concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they take immediate action in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and speak to the DSL or deputy DSL.

## **21. Monitoring and review**

The policy is reviewed on an **annual** basis by the headteacher in conjunction with the governing board – any changes made to this policy are communicated to all members of staff.

This policy is reviewed in light of any serious SEMH-related incidents.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2023**