



Learning Together, Learning for Life

Reed First School
Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Agreed by FGB: March 2025

Date of Review: March 2026

Headteacher: Vicky Wittich Date: 18.03.2025

Chair of Governors: Charlotte Eeles Date: 04.04.2025

Policy Statement

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.

(World Health Organization)

Emotional health and wellbeing is the emotional resilience that enables us to enjoy life and to survive pain, suffering and disappointment. It is a positive sense of wellbeing and an underlying belief in our own worth and of others. Emotional health and wellbeing is embedded in social relations built upon social skills that are developed from birth.

(Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer - Author)

Our Aims

Reed First School an inclusive place where families are welcomed and involved as part of our community. Our children's experiences are memorable and take into account their individual needs, interests and aspirations. Staff encourage and model growing minds and celebrate those who independently seek challenge and show resilience as part of the learning journey. Pupils will become confident life-long learners who leave us ready for the next stage of their learning for life and with a respect for everyone's future.

We aim to protect, promote and enhance the wellbeing and mental health of everyone in our school community. The wellbeing of staff is given equal priority to that of our pupils.

We achieve this through:

- A happy, welcoming and safe environment
- Engaging indoor and outdoor spaces
- Active and inspiring learning
- Teaching a skills based curriculum
- Opportunities which are rich and varied
- Recognising each member of our school as an individual
- High aspirations for pupils with therapeutic support
- Demonstrating pro-social behaviours
- Working in partnership with parents, governors and the wider community

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

We hope to have a positive wellbeing culture for the whole school community and use our vision and values to take a preventative approach, rather than simply reacting to problems when they arise.

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 policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

Scope

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. 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 offer where a student has an identified special educational need.

This Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- 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/carers

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Vicky Wittich – Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Person, PSHE, Mental Health, CPD Lead.
- Amy Wilson – Deputy DSP
- Janet Cottenden - SENCO
- Elaine Kell and Sally Arnott Deputy Mental health lead
- Charlotte Eeles – Wellbeing governor

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Person or the head teacher. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including contacting the emergency services if necessary. Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Headteacher, as Mental Health Lead or the SENCO.

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. Such provision may form part of an EHCP or wider plan for an individual.

This can include:

- Details of a pupil'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

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum using our JIGSAW scheme. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching 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.

What is 'good' emotional health and wellbeing in our school?

- A culture of increasing the emotional literacy of every child
- The ability for our members to recognise, acknowledge and manage their feelings
- The ability to develop caring and concerns for others
- The ability to develop meaningful, positive and long lasting relationships
- The ability to take responsibility for themselves and make practical decisions

We want our children to:

- Be effective and successful learners
- Demonstrate pro-social behaviours
- Make and sustain friendships
- Deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly
- Solve problems with others for themselves
- Manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety through self-regulation
- Be able to promote calm, optimistic states that support the achievement of goals
- Recover from setbacks and persist in the face of the difficulties
- Work and play cooperatively

- Compete fairly and win and lose with dignity and respect for other competitors
- Recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others
- Understand and value the differences and commonalities between people, respecting the rights of others to have beliefs and values different from their own

What we do to support our children

All children have the right to feel safe, healthy, heard, and informed and as secondary caregivers it is our responsibility to ensure the best environment for these rights to be fulfilled. Above all we will need to be clear and consistent in our support.

It is important that we show how to deal appropriately with situations in a calm, clear and consistent way.

To support our children, we use:

- Protective Behaviours; network hand, safer people, safer places
- Restorative approaches to supporting behaviour (see our behaviour policy)
- Being Me in my World nurture sessions
- NSPCC 'Speak out, stay safe' programme
- Colour Monster displays
- Regulation Stations
- Emotions word walls
- Clear links between PSHE and assemblies
- Jigsaw PSHE lessons weekly
- Transition objects, books, pictures
- Building healthy relationships
- Establish clubs that all pupils can attend
- Tap into good influences: speakers, role models, visitors (when social-distancing measures allow)
- Consistency amongst staff
- An increased awareness of the importance of play and physical exercise: daily mile
- Yoga for all children
- Planned outdoor learning opportunities
- A skills or knowledge based curriculum accessible for all in our setting
- Promoting a Growth mindset

- Mindful minutes
- Art therapy
- Music therapy
- Anxiety mapping
- Wishes and Feelings sessions

The school places emphasis on problem-solving, positive self-assessment, time for reflection, quality feedback and encouragement to participate in school and community events.

The delivery of personal, social and health education is fundamental to our promotion of emotional health. Through the planned programmes and informal curriculum, opportunities exist to explore issues appropriate to children's ages and stages of development. Staff deal sensitively with these issues and differentiate according to the varying needs of the children in their care.

Children are grouped in a variety of ways to promote the achievement of their best. In the classroom, there are opportunities for children to work in both friendship, ability and mixed groups. Regular review of seating arrangements and learning partners helps to ensure that children gain maximum benefit.

In Reception, we use the Boxall Profile to assess wellbeing and involvement as well as a readiness to learn right at the start of the year. This informs future planning and practice for individuals.

We see parental involvement as a vital part of emotional well-health. Regular opportunities exist to promote partnership with parents, including:

- Welcome meetings– a chance to meet the staff, find out about the organisation and routines and curriculum in each class
- One to one parent / teacher meetings in the Autumn and Spring Term
- Parental Forums – where parents are invited to discuss school issues and areas of development
- Annual parental questionnaires sent out by Governors, to help us build on what we do best and identify areas for improvement
- Sessions in each class for parents/carers to come and work with the class
- Involvement in pupil profile plans and reviews for children with special educational needs
- Inviting parents to our weekly celebration assembly and termly class assemblies
- Inviting parents to plays, celebrations, workshops, curriculum information meetings

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community.

Support is available via all school staff, Headteacher and Mental health leads. Any concerns raised by families or other staff members can then be directed to the most appropriate person/organisation.

We subscribe to Aspects Home and School Partnership which is a local organisation that provide a wide range of support for pupils and their families, including in the area of mental health. Families are able to self-refer or request help via school.
<http://www.aspects.org.uk/>

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as shared rooms and our website and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of families help-seeking by ensuring they understand:

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

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Headteacher.

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 – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather

- Secretive behaviour
- Not wanting to change for PE or participate in PE lessons
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Managing disclosures

A pupil 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 pupil 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 pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' All disclosures should be recorded on the Record of Concern Form and given to a DSP. The DSP will then decide the most appropriate course of action. Once the DSP has established the next steps this should be communicated to the reporting person.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil we seek parental consent, unless there is a child protection reason not to do so.

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

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 pupil, 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 should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect. We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing.

Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g., parent helplines and forums. We should 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 often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record

of the meeting on the child's confidential record. These records will be kept securely in the Head teacher's office.

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
- 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.

Staff Wellbeing

We work hard to ensure staff workload is considered carefully and reviewed regularly in consultation with the staff team. There is a culture of care and compassion and our staff should always feel there is flexibility in approach from the leadership of the school, including governors. As a staff discussions take place regularly around well-being and whether the school could do more to support them. Staff are all asked annually to identify strategies and initiatives which they would like to engage with. These strategies will remain in place for the academic year they are agreed and will be approved by the Full Governing Body. Mental health and wellbeing for staff is a standing agenda item for discussion at teaching staff and support staff meetings. Staff are kept up to date with services available to them including Wellbeing Support groups facilitated by the East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group. All staff have access to the Optima Health portal. We also have a designated governor for wellbeing: Charlotte Eeles who all staff can contact for support. c.eeles@reed.herts.sch.uk

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe using the Safeguarding Network. We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal² provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupil.

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

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the head teacher who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

The Headteacher has completed training courses as Mental Health Lead, including 'Leading a Mentally Healthy School' and 'The Wellbeing Toolkit'. The Headteacher as Mental Health Lead is trained by East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group at Level 2. The Mental Health Lead has also received training at advance level for Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead by: YMCA Trinity Group: SMHL Advanced.

The role of the Governors in supporting wellbeing:

Governors will be clear on their strategic role. Unlike how the chair of governors supports the wellbeing of the Headteacher in regular meetings, the way that governors support wider staff wellbeing needs will be met by ensuring:

- Relevant policies and processes are in place which facilitate a healthy work/life balance among your staff and don't put undue pressure on workload.
- The school adheres to the working time limits set out in the Working Time Regulations 1998.
- The governing board doesn't make unreasonable demands on the time of staff, the Headteacher and other governors.
- The governors themselves are supported through clear and precise induction and clear role descriptors to enable them to support the school effectively while working strategically to improve the school.
- The governing board supports the Headteacher and teachers to achieve a satisfactory work/life balance. This is a requirement for maintained schools.
- The governing board provides appropriate challenge and support to the Headteacher including asking probing questions, setting targets for improvement where feedback shows there are staff wellbeing issues, and working together with the Headteacher on the school vision.

Wellbeing concerns in adults, and how to spot them:

Adults may be struggling with the following wellbeing issues at any time:

- Stress
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Personal issues, such as bereavement, relationship troubles and family matters

- Financial worries

What to look out for

You may have:

- Noticed a change of behaviour in a member of staff beyond what you'd expect, for example:
 - Taking more sick leave
 - Taking less care with appearance
 - Sudden weight gains or loss
 - Working too many hours or taking on too much work
 - Arriving late to work and missing deadlines
 - Changes in behaviour when socialising, e.g. erratic or unacceptable behaviour, drinking or smoking more
 - Being angrier, irritable or argumentative
 - Being more withdrawn than usual, or losing confidence
 - Being over-excited or euphoric (this might happen if they're worried they'll be seen as depressed and try to make up for it)
 - Struggling to concentrate, making errors in their work
 - Problems with memory or organisation
 - Overreacting to problems that come up
- Been approached by a member of staff to say they're struggling with their wellbeing
- Received feedback from staff wellbeing questionnaires that raise concerns

As Headteacher and Governing Body, it's our responsibility to listen non-judgementally to any concerns staff or other adults such as parent association groups have and take them seriously.

Nevertheless, as everyone will experience and be impacted by these problems differently, we will need to tailor our response depending on the individual's:

- Circumstances
- Need for support
- Wishes on how you should go about addressing the issue

How to approach a concern:

Informal conversations:

- The Headteacher or appointed governor will arrange to discuss the issue with the member of the school - choose a place where they'll feel comfortable
- Encourage them to voice the problem in their own words

- Avoid making suggestions or decisions on their behalf, as this could cause more stress and anxiety.
- Ask them how you can support them - this could include helping them prioritise tasks or cut down on internal meetings to reduce workload

If the school member doesn't need or want support: We will arrange to check in with them in a week or two to make sure the concern doesn't get worse. If it does, there will be further support offered.

If they come back and say they want support: We will ask them how we can help. Be flexible and offer some options.

We need to make sure school members understand that we cannot diagnose or give clinical advice, however, we can seek further support if the changes we can make ourselves are not sufficient.

We cannot always promise full confidentiality, as we have a responsibility to report concerns if there's risk of harm or if you believe the school member really shouldn't be in school.

If the staff member is worried about you reporting their concern, or if you need to break confidentiality because you think there's risk of harm:

- Approach the topic sensitively and explain that it's necessary for us to share the concern so we can get support in place to help them
- Make it clear we'll only share the concern with those who need to know, e.g. HR, Occupational Health
- Reassure the staff member that we won't share any details of their concern

Resources to support members of the school include:

[Education Support](https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/) (https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/) - a UK charity supporting health and wellbeing in the education sector

[Wellbeing First](https://educationtraining.hays.co.uk/wellbeing-first/) (https://educationtraining.hays.co.uk/wellbeing-first/) - staff training courses and resources from Hays

[Iris Connect](https://discover.irisconnect.com/teacher-happiness-and-wellbeing) (https://discover.irisconnect.com/teacher-happiness-and-wellbeing) - resources to reduce teacher stress and workload

[Ten steps towards school staff wellbeing](https://bit.ly/3p0L1Gh) (https://bit.ly/3p0L1Gh) - a guide from the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

[Supporting staff wellbeing](https://bit.ly/3bWhqdC) (https://bit.ly/3bWhqdC) - further resources from Anna Freud

[DfE Teacher Blog – Reducing workload](https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/category/workload-challenge/) (https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/category/workload-challenge/) – articles written by teaching professionals about different ways to reduce workload

[DfE Teacher Blog – Teacher wellbeing](https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/category/teacher-wellbeing/) (https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/category/teacher-wellbeing/) – DfE blogs on teachers' experiences and wellbeing

[School staff - mental health and emotional wellbeing](https://bit.ly/38YxCsM) (https://bit.ly/38YxCsM) - from Partnership for Children

Useful sources of further support

- Aspects School Partnership to support families and individuals with a wide range of needs, including in the area of mental health. This partnership is accessed via school of parent self-referral and school subscribe annually to the service.
- Anxiety UK work to relieve and support those living with anxiety and anxiety-based depression by providing information, support and understanding via an extensive range of services, including 1:1 therapy. www.anxietyuk.org.uk/
- Charlie Waller Memorial Trust offers free resources, including guidance and policy templates for use by schools and colleges. www.cwmt.org.uk/
- Child Bereavement UK supports families and educates professionals when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, or when a child is facing bereavement. Every year they train more than 8,000 professionals, helping them to better understand and meet the needs of grieving families. <https://childbereavementuk.org/>
- Childline is a free, private and confidential service for children and young people available online, on the phone, anytime facilitated by trained counsellors. The website is easy to navigate and has many interactive resources, advice and sources of support for children and young people. www.childline.org.uk/
- Education Support Partnership is the UK's only charity providing mental health and wellbeing support services to all education staff and organisations. www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/
- HeadMeds: about mental health medicines HeadMeds is a website for young people about mental health medication, launched in March 2014 and is owned and managed by the national charity YoungMinds. www.headmeds.org.uk/
- Mind provides trusted advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding. www.mind.org.uk/
- MindEd: MindEd is a free educational resource on children and young people's mental health for all adults. www.minded.org.uk/
- NHS Live Well Youth Mental Health offers resources and signposting for support from external links www.nhs.uk/Livewell/youth-mental-health/Pages/Youth-mental-health-help.aspx
- The Children's Society is a national charity that works with the country's most vulnerable children and young people. We listen. We support. We act. Because no child should feel alone. They work directly with children, develop resources and publications and lobby on behalf of children annually, surveying them as part of their Good Childhood reports. www.childrensociety.org.uk/ ©
- Winston's Wish provide specialist child bereavement support services across the UK, including in-depth therapeutic help in individual, group and residential settings. www.winstonswish.org/
- YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity championing the wellbeing and mental health of young people. They offer resources and bespoke training for schools and support for parents and young people. In addition, they have a dedicated section on caring for the wellbeing of teachers and school staff. <https://youngminds.org.uk>

Recommended School Reference Books

Anger

- Taming the dragon in your child: solutions for breaking the cycle of family anger, Meg Eastman and Sydney Rozen (John Wiley & Sons Inc.). Gives parents realistic, healthy and positive ways to understand and diffuse situations that trigger children's tantrum, flare-ups, sulks and arguments.
- When anger hurts - quieting the storm within, Matthew McKay, Judith McKay and Peter Rogers (New Harbinger Publications). Clears up misconceptions about anger, explains how to control it and discusses spouse and child abuse.

Anxiety

- The "Which?" guide to managing stress, Mark Greener (Which? Books). Looks at the causes and consequences of stress and offers advice on devising an effective strategy for stress management.
- The worry cure: seven steps to stop worry from worrying you, Dr Robert Leahy (Piatkus Books). Worry is a central issue in many people's lives; 38 per cent of people say they worry every day. In this ground-breaking book, Dr Robert Leahy offers new insight, advice and practical techniques for everyone who has ever had a sleepless night.

Behaviour

- Understanding children's behaviour, Dr Dinah Jayson and the British Medical Association (Family Doctor Publications Ltd.). If a child is difficult to manage, if parenting doesn't come easily or if you want to improve your relationship with a child as a parent, teacher or carer, this book offers some strategies that you can try. It will also help you decide whether you need expert help and, if so, where to find it.

Bereavement

- The Death of a Child, Tessa Wilkinson (Jonathan Cape). Aims to help both adults and children to cope with the death of a child.

Childhood Depression

- So Young, So Sad, So Listen, Philip Graham and Carol Hughes (Gaskell). Examines the nature and treatment of childhood depression.
- Coping with an anxious or depressed child, Samantha Cartwright-Hatton (OneWorld Publications). This book provides an up-to-date approach to helping parents of anxious children. Often, both parents and child can learn to cope better with anxiety by learning how to face very simple childhood anxieties.

Depression

- Depression - the way out of your prison, Dorothy Rowe (Brunner-Routledge). Depression is an experience of terrible isolation, of being in a prison. By understanding how we build this prison, we can dismantle it.
- Depression and how to survive It, Spike Milligan and Anthony Clare (Arrow). Spike Milligan reveals the dark side of his life in this book, which is co-written with his psychiatrist, Professor Anthony Clare.

Eating Disorders

- Getting Better Bit(e) by Bit(e): survival kit for sufferers of bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorders, Ulrike Schmidt, Janet Treasure and Tom Tresaure (Psychology Press). A self-help book which empowers sufferers to take control of their own lives and tackle their eating difficulties.
- Eating problems in children: Information for parents, Claudine Fox and Carol Joughin (Gaskell). Tackles issues such as different types of eating disorders children can suffer from, how common they are, what causes them, types of treatment available and long-term outlook for children with eating problems such as selective eating and food refusal.
- Eating Disorders: The Facts, Suzanne Abraham & Derek Llewellyn-Jones (Oxford University Press). Comprehensive guide to anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and obesity.

Life Stages and Problems

- New passages - mapping your life across time, Gail Sheehy (Ballantine Books) About the changes which take place in the adult life cycle.

Parenting

- It takes two to talk: a parent's guide to helping children communicate, Ayala Manolson (The Hanen Centre). Guide for parents to learn how to encourage their child to communicate. It explains different ways to establish a special bond between parent and child. Wonderful book for parents, teachers and caregivers.
- Toddler taming: a parent's guide to the first four years, Dr Christopher Green (Vermillion). Book for parents of children aged between 1 and 4 years with practical advice on how to deal with difficult behaviour.
- From birth to five years: children's developmental progress, Mary Sheridan, Marion Frost and Ajay Sharma (Routledge). Sets out each stage of normal development in young children.

Post-divorce Parenting

- Parenting Threads, Erica De'Ath and Dee Slater (National Stepfamily Association). This book provides practical advice for those who are separating or starting again with a new partner. It looks at ways to negotiate visits, the needs of children and when to introduce a new partner, the legal position and how to establish stability for your children.

Sexuality

- Keeping safe: a practical guide to talking with children, Michele Elliott (Hodder and Staughton). A guide on talking with children on a whole range of issues from sexual abuse to bullying and teenage drug-taking.

Self-Esteem

- The Self-Esteem Workbook, Lynda Field (Vermillion). This book gives a practical framework of techniques and activities to enable reader to experience high esteem in all aspects of their lives.

Schools and Families Advice Line

(SFAL)

The 'Schools and Families Advice Line' (SFAL) is a new service established to provide emotional wellbeing advice and early help to children and young people, families and schools.

It can be really worrying when you or someone you know is going through a difficult time. If you feel this service could help, please call our Single Point of Access (SPA) who will take your details before passing them onto our call back service.

This service is open to self-referrals from families and young people, and education, health and other professionals involved in supporting young people and their families.

Contact Details:

Telephone: 0300 777 0707

Email: hpft.spa@nhs.net

You will get a call back from a mental health practitioner between 8am-5pm, Monday-Friday.
Support will be offered in a one-off, up to 1 hour phone call

How can the service help?

Supporting children, young people, their families and schools by providing early advice around:

- General concerns around mental well-being, coping strategies and self-care.
- How to support children and young people in relation to the Covid-19 outbreak (e.g. understanding, frustration, anxiety etc). Supporting mental well-being during the transition back to school and the anxiety around this uncertainty.
- Support for education staff around their own mental well-being and advice around how they can care for themselves.
- 'Whole school approaches' to supporting mental well-being.

- Specific anxieties (around COVID-19/self-isolating measures, transition between year groups, developing and maintaining relationships, fear of failure, low self-esteem or aspirations, trust issues, social anxiety, etc.)
- Phobias (animals/insects, specific food stuffs, specific objects, modes of transport etc.)
- Low mood
- Emotional regulation difficulties.

- Mild obsessive compulsive difficulties that are starting to impact day to day activities.
- Low-level behavioural concerns
- Sleep difficulties
- Signposting to services and resources that may be helpful for supporting mental wellbeing.

Supporting children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing– information for professionals



UPDATED

Service	Status summary
Specialist CAMHS	As Above – more detail available on request. The Mental Health Support Teams in Schools are running a School and Families Advice Line via SPA
Step 2	As Above - more detail available on request. Currently accepting self-referrals via SPA.
PALMS	Please note new number: 01727 582122. PALMS continue to provide priority intervention to prevent CYP presenting at A&E and using emergency resources - more detail available on request
Wellbeing Service (16+)	As Above https://www.northessexiapt.nhs.uk/hertfordshire
Kooth.com	Capacity good, additional magazine content on coronavirus related issues
School Nursing	Referrals for mental health and wellbeing support are still being accepted and one-to-one sessions are taking place by telephone or video calls. The ChatHealth text messaging service for secondary school aged young people is currently continuing and the duty School Nurse line is also available Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
Educational Psychology	The Educational Psychology service is continuing to provide support and are offering a daily contact line

Safe Space (school counselling)	Safe Space continue to deliver using telephone and WhatsApp video calls. safespacemailbox@hertfordshire.gov.uk
YCT (community counselling East and North Herts)	YCT continue to deliver using telephone and video based calls http://www.yctsupport.com/
Rephael House (community counselling WelHat)	Rephael House continue to deliver using telephone and video based calls https://www.rephaelhouse.org.uk/
Youth Talk (community counselling St Albans)	Youth Talk continue to deliver using telephone and video based calls http://youthtalk.org.uk/
Signpost (Community Counselling SW Herts)	Signpost continue to deliver using telephone and video based calls http://signpostcounselling.co.uk/
Herts Mind Network	Have launched an early intervention helpline for young people. Continue to provide moderated chat rooms for young people and have introduced age appropriate wellbeing through learning online courses https://www.hertsmindnetwork.org/Pages/Category/young-people
YC Hertfordshire	Although face-to-face work is currently suspended, young people can still contact a Youth Worker or Personal Adviser for one to one and project groupwork support

Crisis

Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust have enhanced their mental health crisis service. A CAMHS specialist is now available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to provide specialist advice and support to families and professionals about children/young people experiencing a mental health crisis and/or to arrange a face to face assessment if required.

The service is available through the Single Point of Access (SPA) Tel: **0300 777 0707**
Should you be concerned that a young person is at risk due to a mental health crisis, we would ask that your teams call us immediately, or advise the family/young person to do so in the first instance, unless they have a medical/physical emergency, in which case, they will need to attend A&E.

SPA

Referrals can be made in the normal way via the Single Point of Access (SPA).

HPFT have also enhanced the SPA service with increased psychological therapies now available directly through SPA.

The number is **0300 777 0707 and is operational 24/7. Email: hpft.spa@nhs.net**

Please note the out of Hours Helpline number is still in operation (01438 843322) and will divert to the 24/7 SPA service.

(Non-urgent treatment will not start for the next few weeks so please help to manage expectations around this.)

Information for professionals

Healthy Young Minds in Herts has a helpful section for professionals which is regularly updated in relation to the coronavirus situation:

<https://www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk/schools/how-look-after-your-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing-during-covid-19-outbreak>

The Strategic Leads for mental health in schools are providing regular updates to Mental Health Leads in Schools.

The Just Talk website has become a central repository for new resources and information as they emerge: <https://www.justtalkherts.org/news/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus.aspx> If you find a new resource that you would like to add to the site, please email jen.beer@hertfordshire.gov.uk

A reliable source for updates relating to Coronavirus for adults is <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>

Training for professionals

Child Bereavement UK are delivering free webinars which have been designed for and by those working within the education sector, providing an introduction to supporting a bereaved student. There are specific webinars targeted towards nursery; primary; and secondary settings. Children's understanding and responses tend to vary according to their age and level of understanding, and the training reflects this. There are five sessions between the 21st and 28th May. To book please visit:

<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/bereavement-awareness-training-for-education-providers>

A number of training offers are moving online. Herts Mind Network are delivering several workshops online over the next few months. You can view the calendar and booking information for Eventbrite here: <https://www.hertsmindnetwork.org/spot-the-signs-and-emotional-wellbeing> There are a range of sessions for professionals, parents and carers on wellbeing related themes.

[The Strategic Leads for Mental Health in Schools have amended their Whole School and College Approaches to Mental Health speed dating session to a 2 hours webinar aiming to introduce and familiarise participants with the Healthy Young Minds in Herts Self review and Kite Mark including key resources and materials. The webinar is practical and interactive providing opportunities to share good practice across educational settings with colleagues countywide and to consider next steps for your school/setting. For further information please contact SchoolMHTTraining@hertfordshire.gov.uk](#)

The OLLIE Foundation are also delivering workshops online. You can view the schedule at the top of this page: <https://theolliefoundation.org/training/dates/#hbb> [Check the Just Talk website and Health Young Minds in Herts website for updates on training for professionals.](#)

Support for school professionals

The Integrated Services for Learning Contactline (01992 588574) is available Mon-Fri term time providing a range of support/advice and guidance for parents and schools. The line is manned by Educational Psychologists and Advisory Teachers. The Educational Psychology Service is continuing to respond to school crisis/bereavement events and can be contacted using the numbers on the local offer.

Headteachers and senior leaders are busy supporting their staff and their families while being under significant stress themselves. We recognise that many of them may feel unable to offload on colleagues. Telephone support is available from the Herts for Learning Wellbeing team for SLT colleagues who would welcome the space and time to talk through any worries, stresses or concerns. Nothing is too small to be offloaded and conversations could make all the difference. All conversations are confidential. This is not an advice or guidance help-line. Contact wellbeing@hertsforlearning.co.uk with your name and contact details requesting a wellbeing call with one of the team.

In recognition of the priority of Staff Wellbeing and peer support at this difficult time, the Strategic Leads for Mental Health in schools are offering a 90 minute remote group session on a twice weekly basis starting from Tuesday 21st April 2020. The aim is to provide the opportunity for up to eight school professionals to access a peer Staff Wellbeing group facilitated by the Strategic Leads for Mental Health in Schools - Yael Leinman and Breda O'Neill. To book onto the group, please visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/staff-wellbeing-group-session-registration-102349223282>

For more information, please email SchoolMHTraining@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Education Support, a national charity, provides free counselling to all staff in education 24/7 365 days a year via text or phone: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling>

Support for front line health and social care professionals

MindEd has launched an information hub for all frontline professionals to manage their own mental health and wellbeing, whilst looking after others during the Covid-19 crisis. They have drawn together the best advice and tips, from a large panel of international experts. Created on behalf of Health Education England in partnership with NHS England-Improvement and supported by Skills For Care, this Hub is for everyone on the front line health and care services. <http://covid.minded.org.uk/>

A team of dedicated psychologists from Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust will be providing telephone support in confidence, to help staff from health and social care organisations in Hertfordshire with emotional issues related to the current Covid19 pandemic <https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/information-and-resources/coronavirus/support-for-health-and-social-care-workers/>

Mind in Mid Herts are running Mindfulness mornings and afternoons in Hertfordshire every Monday to Friday at 8:30am and 4.30pm each day. These live sessions are open to all health and social care professionals in Hertfordshire including volunteers. Please enrol on these sessions via the Mind in Mid Herts website: www.mindinmidherts.org.uk; click on the Health and Social Care workers tab at the top of the home page and then the 'Register your interest for digital mindfulness' button to register your interest.

The national helpline launched by NHS England for nurses and other frontline staff who need support with their mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic can vbe contacted by phone 0300 131 7000, or text FRONTLINE to 85258. The helpline is open to all health and care workers in England.

Signposting information for children and young people

The following information has been circulated to schools and can support you to signpost children and young people to key information and support