# Millais School

# Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

**Policy Status:** Draft

**Policy Owner:** Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL) – Mike Sutton

**Responsible Governor:** Bridget Quint

**Approved by Governors:** TBA

**Date Approved:** _____

**Review Date:** _____

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# 1. Vision and Ethos

## Our Vision

At Millais School, we believe that positive mental health and wellbeing (henceforth referred to as MHWB) underpin successful learning, healthy relationships and lifelong achievement. We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where every member of our community feels valued, respected and supported.

Our whole-school approach recognises that MHWB is everyone's responsibility. We aim to develop a culture in which wellbeing is promoted proactively, concerns are identified early, and appropriate support is available when needed.

# 2. Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health for all pupils and staff and reduce stigma surrounding mental health.
- Set out the roles and responsibilities for MHWB at Millais, including the role of family.
- Provide guidance to all staff members around the complex issues of MHWB

- Embed systems to ensure early identification of need
- Communicate Millais' graduated support
- Meet statutory safeguarding responsibilities
- Set out how the school will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of provision.

# 3. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy should be read alongside:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest edition)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- SEND Code of Practice
- DfE Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools and Colleges
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Statutory Guidance
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Medical Needs Policy

# 4. Definition of Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental Health exists on a continuum and may fluctuate throughout life. We all have 'mental health' just as we all have 'physical health'. We aim to remove stigma attached to poor mental health and embed an understanding that change is always possible with support.

- **Positive mental health** is a state of wellbeing in which children and young people feel safe, valued, and able to recognise and manage their emotions, build positive relationships, cope with everyday challenges, and participate fully in learning and school life. It enables individuals to realise their potential, develop resilience, make positive choices, and contribute to their school community.
- **Emotional wellbeing** is the ability to understand, express, and manage emotions in healthy and appropriate ways. It enables children and young people to develop self-awareness, confidence, resilience, and positive relationships, helping them to cope with everyday experiences, adapt to change, and engage positively in learning and school life.
- **Mental illness** is a diagnosable condition that affects a person's thoughts, feelings, mood, or behaviour and has a significant impact on their daily life and functioning. Mental illnesses vary

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in severity and duration and can often be effectively managed with appropriate support and treatment.

- **Protective factors** are the relationships, skills, environments, and experiences that promote resilience and support positive mental health.
- **Risk factors** are the circumstances or experiences that increase the likelihood of mental health difficulties. The school will work to strengthen protective factors for all pupils and identify and respond early where risk factors are present

# 5. Roles and Responsibilities

## Governing Body

Responsibilities include:

- To ensure that this policy is regular reviewed
- To support the SMHL in their role.
- To help promote a positive culture of well-being within the school.

## Headteacher

Responsibilities include:

- Promoting a positive culture in the school.
- Allocating adequate resources to support this policy.
- Supporting staff wellbeing through careful planning and consideration

## Senior Leadership Team

- Consider staff wellbeing when implementing new policies and practice
- Model healthy behaviours such as taking a lunch break and scheduling emails within working hours
- Collecting and responding to the views of the staff team to inform policy and practice
- Making explicit reference to MHWB in the school develop planning

## Senior Mental Health Lead

Responsibilities include:

- Strategic leadership and quality assurance of the school's MHWB provision including universal and targeted support

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- Development and oversight of the MHWB policy
- Co-ordination of external agencies working with the school to provide MHWB support
- Ensuring staff can access and receive appropriate training
- Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of all provision
- Engagement with SMHL network events to ensure contextual information and updates to policy/practice are disseminated to the school community

## Pastoral Leaders

Each year group is led by a dedicated teaching Director of Year (DoY) and is supported by a non-teaching Student Support Leader (SSL). DoYs take a strategic overview of their year group and work closely with their SSL to create a positive learning environment and Year Group identity. Mental Health and Wellbeing is promoted through assemblies and tutor time activities.

DoYs and SSLs support students and parents in making referrals through SPoA and manage referrals to Thoughtful and Dialogue Counselling services.

## Tutors

Each student is a member of a tutor group and, where possible, remains with the same tutor for their time at Millais. Tutors build rapport with their tutees and know them best. They act as a first point of contact and are in the best position to identify early concerns and changes in demeanour. If a tutor becomes concerned about one of their tutees, they will offer guidance and support as well as signposting to other teams within the school.

## Teaching Staff

- All teaching staff are expected to create positive learning environments in which students feel comfortable, safe and valued.
- Teachers receive training on common mental health difficulties for young people and how these present, as well as the specific referral process for Millais should concerns arise. They understand their duty to safeguard children and seek the guidance of their staff team in a timely way.
- All teachers have access to the West Sussex Ordinarily Inclusive Practice document (OAIP) which sets out the universal provision that should be available for Social Emotional and Mental Health difficulties.
- All teachers have access to the West Sussex Guidance on Eating difficulties, Self Harm, Managing unexpected Deaths and safety plans

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## Students

Students are expected to show respect and kindness to others, and this is reinforced through our Behaviour Curriculum.

Wellbeing Ambassadors in years 9 and 11 will actively support and develop the school's MHWB agenda.

All students are invited to engage in Student Voice activities and surveys – their voice will drive policy.

## Parents and Carers

The school recognises that parents and carers are children's first and most influential educators and play a crucial role in promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. We are committed to working in partnership with families through open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making. By building strong relationships with parents and carers, sharing information, providing guidance and support, and responding promptly to concerns, we aim to create a consistent and nurturing environment in which all children can thrive both emotionally and academically.
If parents have concerns about the MHWB of their children, they must first discuss this with a member of their child's pastoral team (DoY or SSL),
Throughout the year parents are invited to engage with the school through engagement events and parents evenings, and these are further opportunities to discuss MHWB issues. The school website provides information about the referral criteria for different services; this can support parents to understand the scope and limitations of the support that is available.

# 6. Our Whole School Approach

## Culture and Ethos

### Belonging

The school is committed to creating a culture where every pupil feels welcomed, valued, respected, and connected. A strong sense of belonging promotes positive mental health, self-esteem, and engagement in learning. We foster positive relationships through nurturing classrooms, strong pastoral support, inclusive practices, and opportunities for pupils to participate fully in school life, through leadership opportunities and extra curricular events.

### Inclusion

We are committed to providing an inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated and every pupil has equitable access to learning, support, and opportunities. We recognise and respect individual

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differences, including culture, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, family circumstances, and additional needs. Reasonable adjustments and targeted support are provided to ensure that all pupils can achieve their full potential and experience positive mental health and wellbeing.

### Student Voice

We believe that listening to pupils and involving them in decisions that affect them promotes confidence, resilience, and wellbeing. Pupils are encouraged to share their views through school councils, pupil surveys, focus groups, mentoring, and everyday interactions with staff. Their feedback informs school improvement and helps create a learning environment where children feel heard, respected, and empowered.

### Celebration

Recognising and celebrating pupils' achievements, effort, progress, strengths, and personal qualities helps to build self-esteem, motivation, and a positive sense of identity. Celebration extends beyond academic success to include acts of kindness, resilience, creativity, leadership, attendance, personal development, and contributions to the school community. We ensure that recognition is inclusive and accessible to all pupils.

### Behaviour Expectations

The school promotes clear, consistent, and restorative behaviour expectations that support positive relationships and emotional wellbeing. We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and seek to understand the underlying needs that may influence behaviour. Staff respond with empathy, fairness, and consistency, teaching pupils the skills they need to regulate emotions, resolve conflict, take responsibility for their actions, and make positive choices. Behaviour management is underpinned by respect, dignity, and a commitment to helping every pupil succeed.

Together, these principles create a positive, inclusive school culture that promotes mental health and wellbeing, supports resilience, and enables all pupils to feel safe, valued, and ready to learn.

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## Curriculum

- All students have Personal Development lesson each week.
- The spiral curriculum map has been created around the PSHE three themes: Health & wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the wider world.

| Core Theme 1: Health and Wellbeing | Core Theme 2: Relationships | Core Theme 3: Living in the Wider World |
|---|---|---|
| **Topic areas:**<br>Personal identity<br>Healthy lifestyles<br>Keeping safe | **Topic areas:**<br>Healthy Relationships<br>Relationships and sex education<br>Relationship safety<br>Valuing difference | **Topic areas:**<br>Rights and responsibilities<br>Economic wellbeing<br>Employability and enterprise<br>Career progression |

Embedded within the three themes is a commitment to deliver the nine overarching concepts below:

1. Identity (their personal qualities, attitudes, skills, attributes and achievements and what influences these; understanding and maintaining boundaries around their personal privacy, including online)

2. Relationships (including different types and in different settings, including online)

3. A healthy (including physically, emotionally and socially), balanced lifestyle (including within relationships, work-life, exercise and rest, spending and saving and lifestyle choices)

4. Risk (identification, assessment and how to manage risk, rather than simply the avoidance of risk for self and others) and safety (including behaviour and strategies to employ in different settings, including online in an increasingly connected world

5. Diversity and equality (in all its forms, with due regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010)

6. Rights (including the notion of universal human rights), responsibilities (including fairness and justice) and consent (in different contexts)

7. Change (as something to be managed) and resilience (the skills, strategies and 'inner resources' we can draw on when faced with challenging change or circumstance)

8. Power (how it is used and encountered in a variety of contexts including online; how it manifests through behaviours including bullying, persuasion, coercion and how it can be challenged or managed through negotiation and 'win-win' outcomes)

## Enrichment

The school offers a broad offer of enrichment activities ranging from daily after school clubs, day trips and residential activities. Support is provided for students in receipt of Pupil Premium funding. For example, PP students can access free music lessons or receive a significant discount on selected residential visits. We believe that the sense of belonging, community and shared interest that comes from engagement in enrichment activities makes a valuable contribution to a young person's wellbeing.

# Physical Environment

The school prides itself on its facilities and this supports wellbeing.

- Two dining halls allow all those who wish to sit and eat meals inside can do so
- Compass – a room that is staffed all day that students can access for sensory regulation
- Outdoor spaces – seated areas outside, grassy and woody areas for shade and more privacy. Students have access to a large portion of the school site during break and lunchtimes.
- Quiet rooms – dedicated rooms at lunch and break where students who wish to have a quieter reflective space can go and have check ins with SSLs.
- Staff work area – a quiet area for staff to work where they can access a computer
- Staff room – a comfortable space with tea and coffee making facilities, microwave ovens and a fridge
- Staff Resource Rooms – each department has its own staff space

# Healthy Lifestyle Promotion

**Healthy Eating**

The school operates its own catering, and all food is prepared on site. Control over menus enables us to maintain a healthy selection of foods, restricted offer of less healthy foods (chips once per week). Food Technology is taught across Key Stage three and students learn about and prepare healthy meals. There is a large take up of Food Technology at GCSE.

**Healthy relationships**

Education around healthy relationships is covered through our PD programme and all students in year 8 follow the Real Love Rocks programme around consent.

**Physical Activity**

All students receive two x 50-minute lessons of PE each week. A range of game, athletic, dance and gymnastic activities are taught providing a range of competitive and non-competitive experiences. Fitness and Team Building also form part of the broad offer. In addition, the school provides a range of after school sporting enrichment activities. Opportunities for more adventurous activities are provided through residentials such as Big School Camp (at school), Outdoor Pursuits (Wales) and skiing (Austria/Italy)

**Mobile Phones and Student Wellbeing**

Millais School is committed to creating a learning environment that supports the mental health and wellbeing of all students. As part of this commitment, the school operates a phone-free school day through the use of Yondr pouches. This approach aims to reduce distraction, minimise the pressures associated with social media and constant digital connectivity, and encourage positive face-to-face interactions between students. By limiting access to personal devices during the school day, we seek to promote concentration, strengthen relationships, support emotional wellbeing and create a calmer school environment where students can fully engage in learning and school life. Appropriate arrangements remain in place for students with agreed medical or safeguarding needs, and communication between home and school continues to be facilitated through the school office.

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# 7. Pupil Voice

- **Wellbeing Ambassadors**

Our Well Being Ambassadors have all completed a two-day training programme led by Thoughtful practitioners and will become involved in aspects of school life, including;

- Running a designated space in the school at break times where students can come for an informal chat
- Updating displays on the school's offer and other signposting
- Running assemblies
- Offering activities where children can connect with each other at lunchtimes

- **Student Voice**

Student voice is central to the development of our school community and wellbeing provision. Scheduled half-termly student voice opportunities, led by the Prefect Leadership Team, alongside whole-school and classroom surveys, provide students with regular opportunities to share their views, experiences and ideas. Feedback is valued and used to inform decision-making, ensuring students feel listened to, empowered and actively involved in shaping their school experience.

- **School Leadership Roles**

School Leadership Roles provide students with meaningful opportunities to contribute to school improvement and represent the views of their peers. Through a range of leadership roles across the school community, students are encouraged to develop confidence, responsibility and a sense of belonging. These opportunities promote active participation, strengthen relationships and support an inclusive school culture where every voice is valued.

- **Prefect Leadership Team**

Our Year 10 and Year 11 Prefect Leadership Team plays an important role in supporting the wider school community. As positive role models, prefects contribute to school events, lead student voice initiatives and help foster a welcoming and inclusive environment. These leadership opportunities promote confidence, responsibility, teamwork and personal growth, while helping to strengthen the sense of community and wellbeing across the school.

# 8. Early Identification

Staff at Millais are curious, we use a variety of approaches to identify concerns early and put in place support as appropriate.

- Attendance – e.g. chronic absence, sudden drops in attendance, patterns of absence, unexplained absence. These are flagged early through registers and weekly reports. We will make home visits where appropriate and look at the EBSA toolkit to support children in attending school.
- Behaviour – e.g. accumulation of behaviour points, out of character behaviour, risk taking behaviours. These can be an early indication that a young person is struggling.
- Academic progress – we analyse termly assessment points and identify drops in performance or downward trends. We feed back to students and parents to understand causes and put in place intervention.
- Safeguarding – we request support from Children's Social Care via the IFD for all safeguarding concerns, including poor mental health
- Parent concerns – we work closely with parents to offer support and signposting as appropriate.

# 9. Graduated Response

## Universal Support

All young people are supported at school to be happy and healthy thorough our Universal Offer of;

- Quality first teaching
- Tutor support
- Assemblies
- PD curriculum

## Targeted Support

For those young people who may, at times, need a helping hand to pull them up we will target in house support as necessary;

- Pastoral interventions
- Small group work
- Mentoring
- Wellbeing check-ins

## Specialist Support

If the needs of a child cannot be fully met by school staff, we will seek support from specialist services, and these may include;

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- Thought-Full – our in house MHST, offering 1:1 CBT
- SPoA – The Single Point of Access, a referral system that triages suitable services to support mental health.
- i-Rock – a drop-in centre in Horsham available to all 14-21 year olds.
- Juno Project – specialist tailored work that can be commissioned for individuals or small groups

Further information and instructions on referral processes are found on our website.

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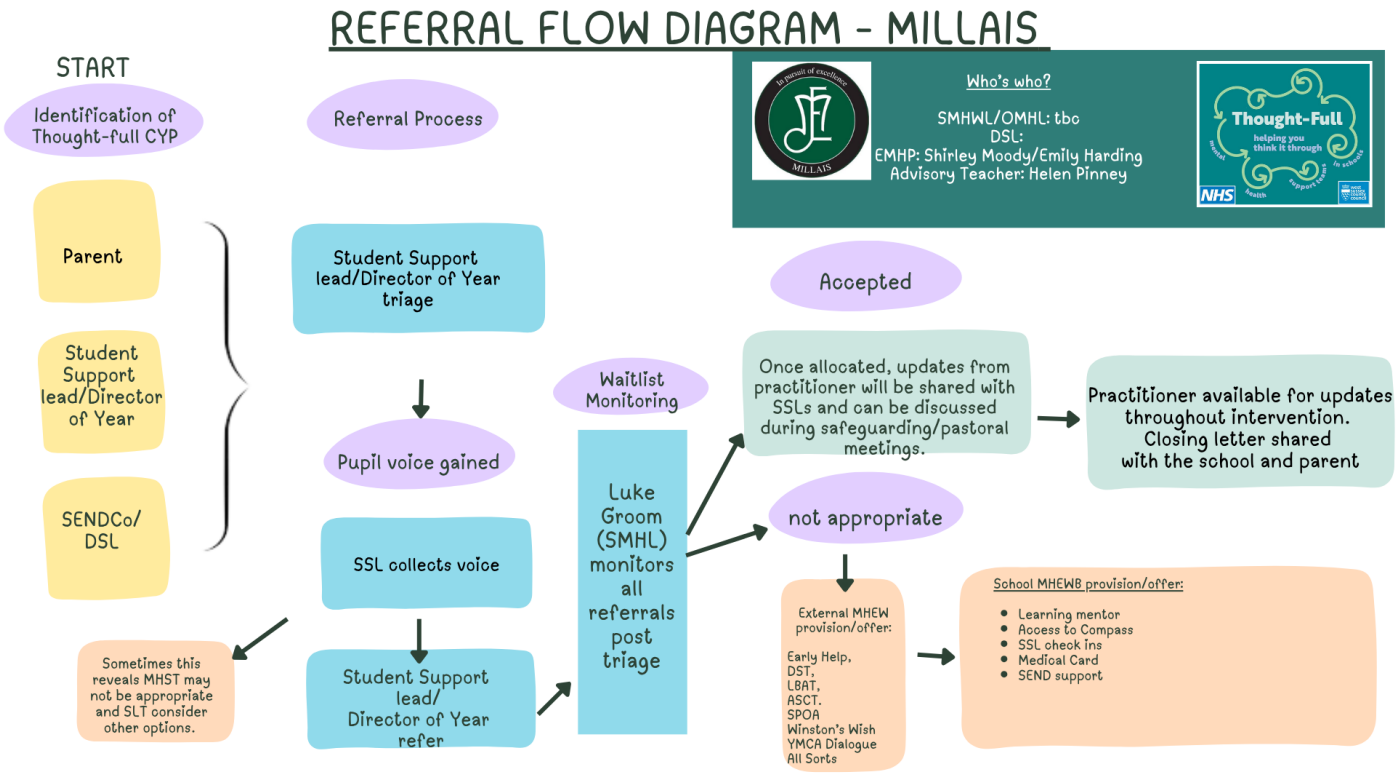
# Appendix A – Referral Pathway




# Appendix B – Local Support Directory

| Service | Purpose | Who Can Access? | Referral Route / Contact |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Thought-Full (Mental Health Support Team - MHST)** | Early intervention for mild to moderate mental health and emotional wellbeing needs. Provides individual support, group work, parent support and staff consultation. | Children and young people attending participating West Sussex schools. | Referrals are usually made through the school's Senior Mental Health Lead, DSL or pastoral team where the service operates. |
| **Single Point of Access (SPoA)** | Central referral point for specialist emotional wellbeing and mental health services. Assesses | Children and young people aged 4–17 registered with a West Sussex GP. | **Telephone:** 0300 304 0462<br>**Email:** SPFT.WestSussexSPoA@nhs.net |

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| | referrals and directs young people to the most appropriate support, including CAMHS. | Parents, carers, young people and professionals can refer. | |
| **i-Rock** | Drop-in support for young people with emotional wellbeing, mental health, education, employment, housing, financial or relationship concerns. | Young people aged 14–25 living in West Sussex. Self-referral available. | **Horsham i-Rock:** Horsham Youth Centre, Hurst Road, Horsham RH12 2DN<br>**Telephone:** 01403 885333 |
| **CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)** | Specialist assessment and treatment for moderate to severe mental health difficulties including depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, OCD, psychosis and self-harm. | Children and young people whose needs meet specialist thresholds. | Usually accessed through SPoA following assessment and triage. |
| **The Juno Project** | Specialist therapeutic support for children and young people affected by domestic abuse. Works with families to reduce the impact of domestic abuse and improve emotional wellbeing. | Children, young people and families affected by domestic abuse. | Professional referrals through local safeguarding arrangements or partner agencies. |
| **School Nursing** | Health advice and support including emotional wellbeing, sleep, healthy | Children and young people aged 5–19, parents/carers and schools. | **Duty Line:** 0300 303 1137<br>Schools, parents and young |

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|---|---|---|---|
| **Service (Healthy Child Programme 5–19)** | lifestyles, continence, sexual health, attendance linked to health and safeguarding. | | people can refer directly where appropriate. |
| **Early Help** | Provides coordinated support for families experiencing emerging needs to prevent problems escalating. Uses a whole-family approach. | Children, young people and families requiring additional support. | **Telephone:** 01243 777807 Professional referrals via Early Help or the Integrated Front Door (IFD). |
| **Family Support Services** | Parenting support, family keyworkers, parenting programmes, Family Hubs and practical support to improve family resilience and wellbeing. | Children, young people and families across West Sussex. | Access through Early Help, Family Hubs or Children's Services. |
| **West Sussex County Council Children's Services** | Provides safeguarding, children's social care, SEND services, Early Help, Family Support, Family Information Service and Local Offer. | Children, young people, families and professionals. | **Integrated Front Door (Safeguarding):** 01403 229900 (Monday–Friday, 9.00am–5.00pm) **Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team:** 0330 222 6664 |

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# Appendix C – National Support

**YoungMinds**

Parents Helpline: 0808 802 5544Text support (via Shout): Text SHOUT to 85258Website: www.youngminds.org.uk

**Childlin**

Freephone: 0800 1111 (24/7)Online chat and email support availableWebsite: www.childline.org.uk

**Samaritans**

Freephone: 116 123 (24/7)Email: jo@samaritans.orgWebsite: www.samaritans.org

**Shout**

24/7 text support: Text SHOUT to 85258Website: www.giveusashout.org

**Papyrus (HOPELINEUK)**

For young people struggling with suicidal thoughts, and those worried about themCall: 0800 068 4141Text: 07860 039967Email: pat@papyrus-uk.orgWebsite: www.papyrus-uk.org

**Kooth**

Free online mental health support and counselling for young peopleWebsite: www.kooth.comAccess via self-referral online

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