# The Blue Tangerine Federation

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS SCHOOLS

### POLICIES, GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES

# St. Luke's School Pupil Wellbeing Policy

**Date Established:** September 2021

**Last Reviewed:** April 2024

**Staff Responsibility:** Mental Health Lead

**Review Date:** August 2025

# Contents

# 1.    Policy Statement

At St Luke's School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers and  staff, and recognise how important mental health and emotional well-being is to our lives in just the same way as physical health.

We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age.

This policy was written in consultation with Mental Health First Aider, DSL, Headteacher and Executive Headteacher. It is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining The St Luke's School's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read alongside:

- BTF Behaviour for Learning Policy,
- BTF Child protection and Safeguarding Policy,
- St Luke's Teaching and Learning Policy.

# 2.    Legislation and guidance

This policy was written with regard to:

- The Equality Act 2010 ,
- The Data Protection Act 2018,
- Articles 3 and 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child .
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

# 3.      Definition of Mental Health and Well-Being

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing:

> … a state of well-being in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.

Mental health and well-being is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- feel confident in themselves,
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately,
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others,
- cope with the stresses of everyday life,
- manage times of stress and be able to deal with change,
- learn and achieve.

# 4.      Policy Aims

This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and wellbeing. It aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school.
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about and reflect on their experiences of mental health.
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues.
- Inform pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources.

# 5.     A Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses seven aspects:

1.  Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands.
2.  Helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to.
3.  Helping pupils to be resilient learners.
4.  Teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5.  Early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6.  Effectively working with parents and carers.
7.  Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience .

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues. We aim to be a 'talking school' with an 'Open Door Policy'.

# 6.     Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding protective and risk factors. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), deputy safeguarding leads (DDSL's) or lead mental health lead.
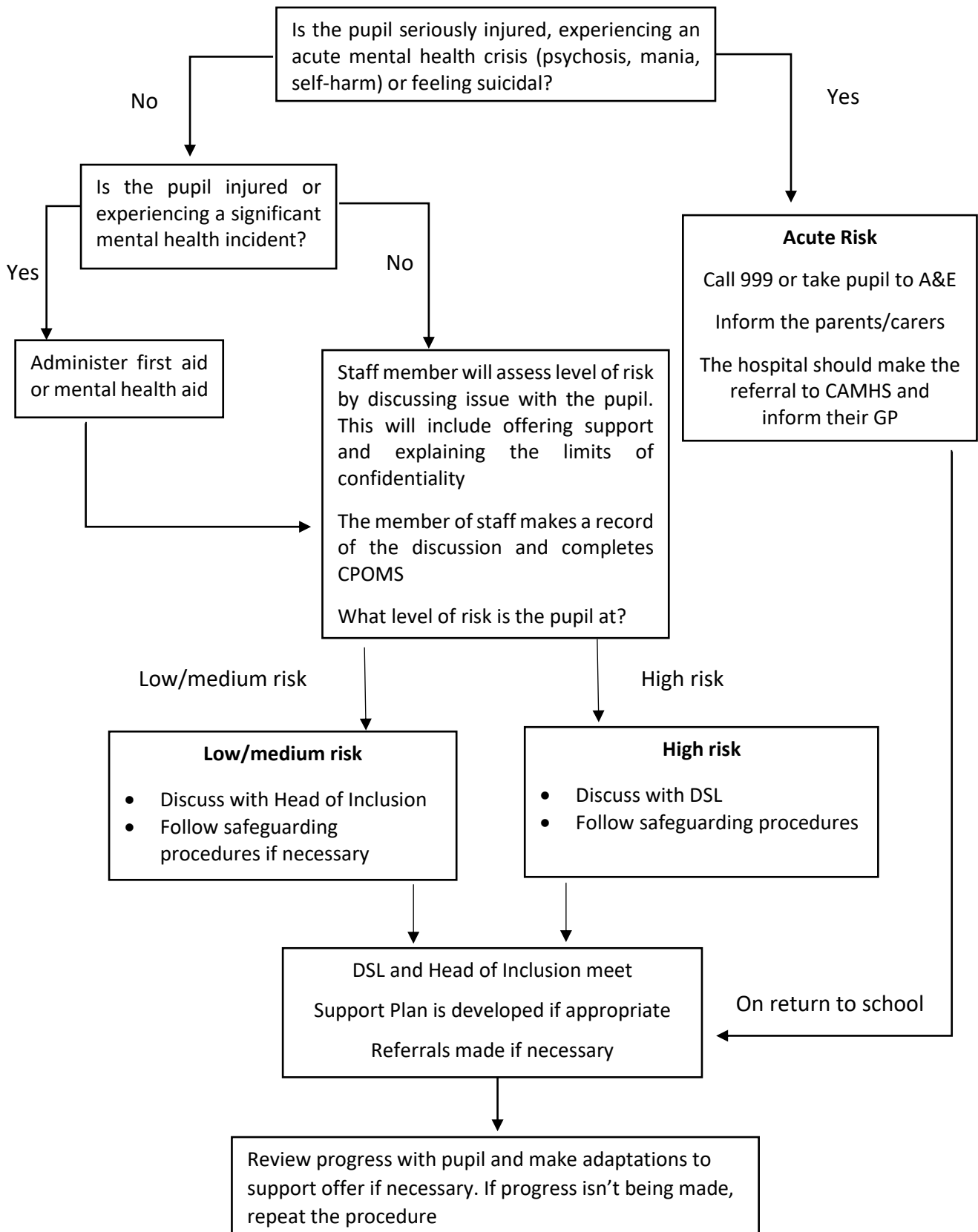
All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems. These can include a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health difficulties, death, and loss such as the loss of friendships, a family breakdown and bullying. The

staff also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, positive communication, developing problem-solving skills, a sense of worth or belonging and emotional literacy.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Executive Headteacher: Stephen Hoult-Allen
- Deputy Headteacher: Max Guiney
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Phillip Macbeth
- Head of Inclusion:  Rachel Andrew
- Mental Health First Aid Champion (Staff): Nikki Dowsell
- Pastoral TA: Leah Humberstone

# 7. Procedure to Follow for Concerns re: Mental Health

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │ Is the pupil seriously injured,       │
                    │ experiencing an acute mental health   │
                    │ crisis (psychosis, mania, self-harm)  │
                    │ or feeling suicidal?                  │
                    └─────────────────────────────────────┘
           No                                          Yes
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**Is the pupil injured or experiencing a significant mental health incident?**

Yes — No

**Administer first aid or mental health aid**

**Staff member will assess level of risk by discussing issue with the pupil. This will include offering support and explaining the limits of confidentiality**

The member of staff makes a record of the discussion and completes CPOMS

What level of risk is the pupil at?

**Acute Risk**

Call 999 or take pupil to A&E

Inform the parents/carers

The hospital should make the referral to CAMHS and inform their GP

Low/medium risk — High risk

**Low/medium risk**
- Discuss with Head of Inclusion
- Follow safeguarding procedures if necessary

**High risk**
- Discuss with DSL
- Follow safeguarding procedures

**DSL and Head of Inclusion meet**

Support Plan is developed if appropriate

Referrals made if necessary

On return to school

Review progress with pupil and make adaptations to support offer if necessary. If progress isn't being made, repeat the procedure

## 8.    Warning signs

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that indicate if 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 alert DSL or Head of Inclusion.

These sign and symptoms may be harder to recognise in young people with SEND, but it is better to express concerns rather than attribute it to another factor. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in:
    - Mood or energy level
    - Eating or sleeping patterns
    - Attitude in lessons or academic attainment
    - Level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Irritability
- Challenging behaviour
- Sudden lack of hygiene and appearance
- Crying
- Somatic complaints
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Rapid weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

# 9.  Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and supportive. Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

All staff will apply the first aid acronym:

> **ASSESS** risk of suicide or harm
>
> **LISTEN** non-judgmentally
>
> **GIVE** reassurance and information
>
> **ENCOURAGE** the person to get appropriate professional help
>
> **ENCOURAGE** other supports (e.g. self-help and other support strategies).

Staff will always follow our school's safeguarding policy and all disclosures are to be recorded on CPOMS. When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

- The full name of the member of staff who is making the record
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

# 10.  Confidentiality

Staff will not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret – instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing.
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

Staff should always share disclosures following our the Safeguarding policy: all disclosures made that are of a safeguarding nature will be shared with the DSL, Head of School. If a CYP makes a disclosure they will be made aware that the information will need to be passed to the DSL. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the BTF Child protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

## 10.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with DSL
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who the information will be shared with and why
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the chosen elected member of staff
6. The DSL will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

# 11. Supporting pupils

## 11.1 Baseline support for all pupils

As part of our school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, our school offers support to all pupils by:

- **Whole School:**
    - Threading a Mental Health Wellbeing focus throughout the school ethos and PSD curriculum
    - Offering pastoral support, via the pastoral team
    - Encouraging positives relationships so children can be aware of Trusted Adults around them and where to find support
    - Including Mental Health and Wellbeing themes in assembly and class time
    - Offering Lunch clubs e.g. choir, gaming, various sports, Pride, quiet space
    - Following the Therapeutic Thinking approach to behaviour.
    - Focusing on 'Zones of Regulation' to help young people understand and manage emotions.
    - Offering sensory diets/programmes to pupils
    - Providing designated calming and safe spaces across the school for pupils to access
    - Providing regular wellbeing check-ins with pupils
    - Encourage pupils to identify their network of people they trust (Protective Behaviours)
    - Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
    - Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.
    - Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
    - Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making – Student council
    - Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
    - Enabling access to appropriate support that meets their needs
    - Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
    - Facilitating animal presence in the classroom, in addition to with stroking, grooming, cleaning feeding
    - Providing access to a Nature Based curriculum

- **Transition Support:**
    - Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST) Transition Workshops across transition years in the Summer Term and other opportunities for relevant mental health workshops for pupils throughout the year
    - Transition meetings with parent/carers, pupils and relevant staff
    - Pupil profile will be in place for all pupils in school

- o Key adults from previous school support new pupils on their transition visit
- o Key adults from St Luke's will support college visits with upper school pupils
- o Bespoke visits will be organised if identified as needed/as required

- **Classrooms:**
  - o Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
  - o Worry boxes
  - o Mindfulness activities
  - o Circle time
  - o Sporting activities
  - o Kindness/compliment boards

## 11.2 Targeted support

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the Senco/Head of Inclusion in collaboration with the DSL will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above in section 8.1.

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach. The support offered at our school includes:

- Pastoral Support
- Drawing And Talking
- Therapeutic plan
- Support plan
- Reduced timetable

Some pupils will need support from professionals with greater expertise. The support offered by external visiting professionals includes:

- Music Therapy
- Counselling
- Mental Health Support Team (individual, group and family level)

## 11.3 External referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer our school provides, our school will make, or encourage parents/carers to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- Their GP or a paediatrician
- CAMHS/PALMS/Step 2
- Mental health charities (e.g. Samaritans, Mind, Young Minds, Kooth)
- Local counselling services

## 12. Supporting and Collaborating with Parents/Carers

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support.
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child.
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy.
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child.
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent/carer forums).
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child, if deemed appropriate.

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents/carer of mental health concerns there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place?
- Who should be present – students, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

The DSL or Head of School will decide this.

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for, and time allowed for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation. Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. These discussions can be difficult, so our school will ensure that parents/carers are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting, should the parents have further questions or concerns.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

## 13.    Supporting Peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be very challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

## 14.    Signposting

Sources of support and services are shared on our school weekly newsletter and linked on our school website. This enables pupils and parents/carers to be aware what of is available and how they can get help.

In Hertfordshire, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support:

- [Add-vance](#): a voluntary organisation providing support for children, adults, and families on issues relating to Autism and ADHD. They offer courses and workshops designed to help parents and carers build on existing skills to support their children. They provide a monthly support group, a Facebook support group and a telephone helpline
- [PACT for Autism](#) (Parents and Children Together): Provides services including a Parent Helpline, monthly meetings with guest speakers, online forum and signposting. Also offer access to regular sport and leisure activities for children and their siblings, including trampolining and swimming.
- [Families in Focus](#) provides free parenting courses in Hertfordshire. They also offer parent and carer groups where they are able to discuss the impact of disability on siblings and explore strategies to help siblings understand and manage behaviours that challenge.
- [SPACE](#): Support group for parents/carers of children with ASD, ADHD and related conditions. Groups are held in Buntingford, Cheshunt, Hatfield, Hertford, Hoddesdon, Ware and Welwyn. Groups have regular professional speakers, workshops, seminars and social events. SPACE has a library of books available for lending.
- [Kooth](#): A free, safe and anonymous online counselling service for young people aged 10-16. It provides support from qualified counsellors via mobile, tablet and desktop computer. Young people can access support directly without needing a referral.
- [Young Minds](#): Information about emotional wellbeing and the mental health support available to young people in Hertfordshire.
- [Carers in Hertfordshire:](#) you can register to be your CYP's carer and you will receive a Carers passport that you can use in the community to obtain discounts and free entry to some places. Young people can also register if they are carers.
- [Kids Hub](#): is a signposting service and can support you to access support locally. Please use the link below to access their website
- [SEND local offer](#): Information on the services and activities available for children with additional needs in Hertfordshire:
- [Families First](#): work together to help families with any problems before things might get worse. Most of the Families First teams are not social workers – they work in 'early help'.
- [Hub of Hope](#) is the UK's leading mental health support database. It brings local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support and services together in one place. Support and services can be searched by entering a postcode.
- [The Sandbox](#) . A local to Hertfordshire online, digital mental health and wellbeing service which links to their support app LumiNova.
- [SHOUT](#) . A free to text service for young people facing difficulties that may prefer to message rather than speak.

## 15.   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 to enable them to keep students safe.

A nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be raised through HoDs so sources of training and support for individuals can be highlighted as needed.

## 16.   Support for Staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. Refer to staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy. We will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment
- Offer an employee assistance programme through Education Mutual Healthcare

## 17.   Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum.

In between reviews, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes.