



Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

RECONNECT LEARNING

VERSION 1.0 · SEPTEMBER 2026

A fully compliant, KCSIE 2026-aligned policy for Alternative Provision, Home Tuition, Outreach, EOTAS and Online Learning.

Policy Overview

Policy Title

Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Version

1.0

Policy Owner

Ellen Kerr

Date Approved

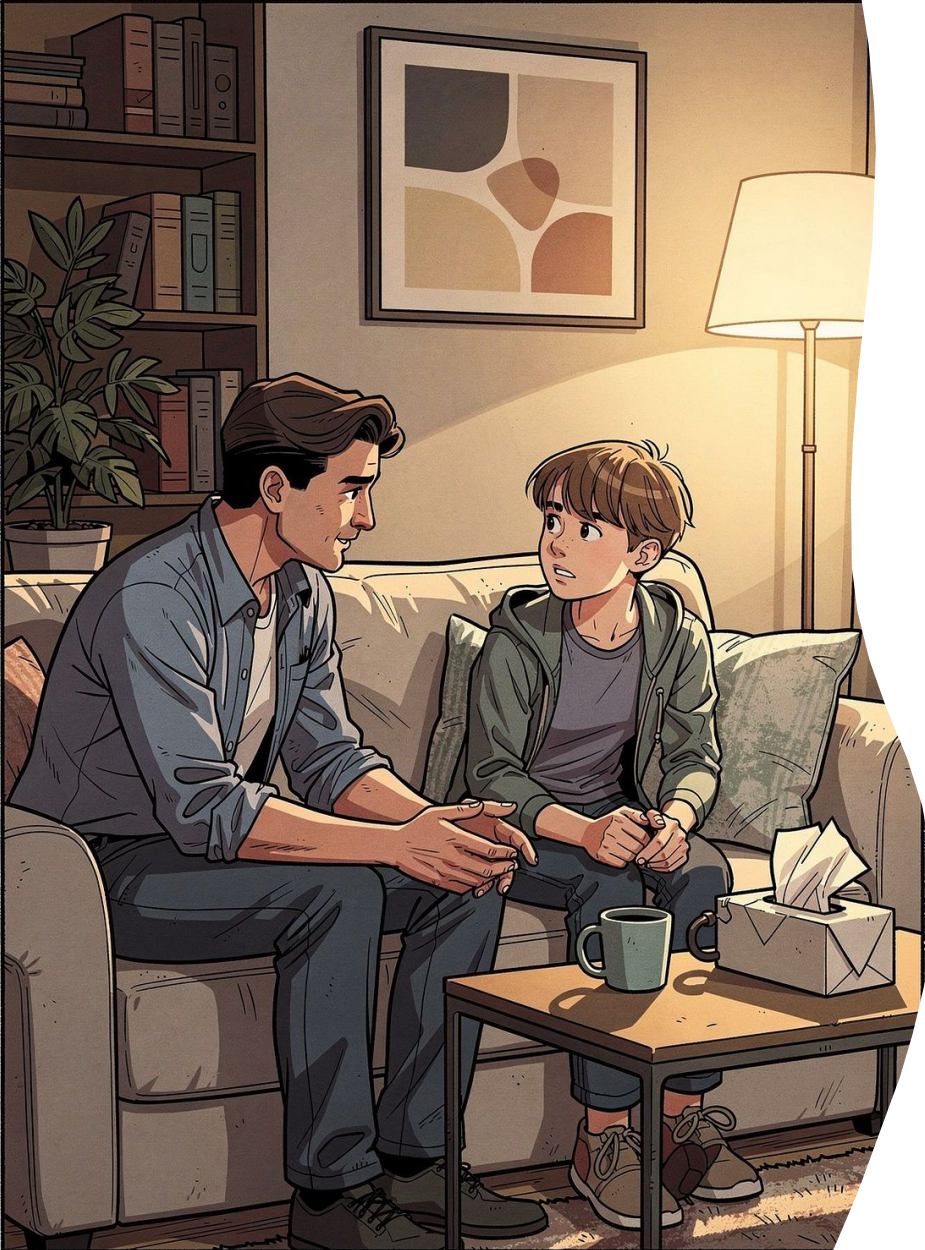
September 2026

Review Date

September 2027



This policy has been designed to meet the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and all relevant legislation and statutory guidance applicable to alternative and flexible provision settings as at the date of approval.



1. Policy Statement

Reconnect Learning is committed to promoting positive mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience for all learners, staff, tutors, volunteers and visitors.

We recognise that mental health is just as important as physical health and that emotional wellbeing has a significant impact on learning, attendance, relationships, behaviour and overall quality of life.

Reconnect Learning is committed to creating a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where individuals feel respected, supported and empowered to seek help when needed. We believe that early intervention, positive relationships and a child-centred approach are essential in supporting good mental health and preventing escalation of difficulties.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and comprehensive framework for mental health and wellbeing across all provision types.

- 1

Promote Wellbeing

Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all.
- 2

Reduce Stigma

Reduce stigma surrounding mental health across the organisation.
- 3

Early Identification

Support early identification of concerns before they escalate.
- 4

Clear Guidance

Provide clear guidance for responding to mental health concerns.
- 5

Appropriate Support

Ensure appropriate support and intervention is in place.
- 6

Staff Wellbeing

Promote the wellbeing of all staff and tutors.
- 7

Legal Compliance

Meet safeguarding and legal responsibilities.
- 8

Open Culture

Create a culture of openness, inclusion and support.

3. Scope

Who This Policy Applies To

- Learners
- Staff
- Tutors
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Visitors

Provision Types Covered

- Alternative Provision
- Home Tuition
- EOTAS Provision
- Outreach Services
- Online Learning
- Educational Visits
- Community-Based Learning

4. Legal Framework

This policy has regard to the following legislation and statutory guidance:

Children's Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002

Equality & Health

- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR

Statutory Guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)

DfE Guidance

- Public Sector Equality Duty
- DfE Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Guidance

This policy should be read alongside Reconnect Learning's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which is the organisation's overarching safeguarding policy.

5. Definition of Mental Health

Mental health refers to our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act, and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices.



Cope with Challenges

Manage everyday difficulties and stressors effectively.



Build Relationships

Form and maintain positive, healthy relationships.



Learn Effectively

Engage with learning and reach potential.



Make Decisions

Think clearly and make informed choices.



Contribute to Society

Participate positively in community and society.



Mental health exists on a continuum and can fluctuate over time. Everyone has mental health, just as everyone has physical health.

6. Core Principles

Reconnect Learning's approach to mental health and wellbeing is underpinned by the following core principles:



Child-Centred Practice

Ensuring learners' wishes, feelings and experiences are central to all decision-making processes.



Early Intervention

Identifying and responding to concerns at the earliest opportunity to prevent escalation.



Inclusion

Ensuring support is accessible to all learners regardless of background or need.



Respect and Dignity

Treating everyone with compassion, understanding and unconditional positive regard.



Partnership Working

Working collaboratively with families, carers and external professionals.



Safeguarding

Recognising that mental health concerns may be linked to safeguarding risks.

7. Promoting Positive Mental Health

Mental health promotion forms part of everyday practice at Reconnect Learning. We promote wellbeing through a range of approaches embedded across all provision types.

→ Positive Relationships

Building trusted, consistent relationships between learners and staff.

→ Safe Learning Environments

Creating physically and emotionally safe spaces for all learners.

→ Trauma-Informed Practice

Understanding and responding to the impact of adverse experiences on learning and behaviour.

→ Restorative Approaches

Using restorative conversations and approaches to repair relationships and resolve conflict.

→ Emotional Literacy Development

Supporting learners to identify, understand and express their emotions effectively.

→ PSHE and Personal Development

Embedding wellbeing, resilience and online safety within personal development curricula.

8. Recognising Mental Health Concerns

Staff should be alert to signs that a learner may be experiencing emotional or mental health difficulties. Indicators may present across several domains.

EMOTIONAL



BEHAVIOURAL



PHYSICAL



EDUCATIONAL



 No single indicator is conclusive. Staff should consider patterns of behaviour and changes from a learner's baseline. Always record and report concerns promptly.

9. Learners at Increased Risk

Some learners may be more vulnerable to mental health difficulties and may require additional support. Staff should be particularly attentive to learners with the following characteristics or experiences.

SEND & Neurodiversity

- SEND
- Autism
- ADHD
- SEMH needs

Attendance & Anxiety

- EBSNA
- Persistent absence
- School avoidance

Adverse Experiences

- Trauma histories
- Bereavement
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

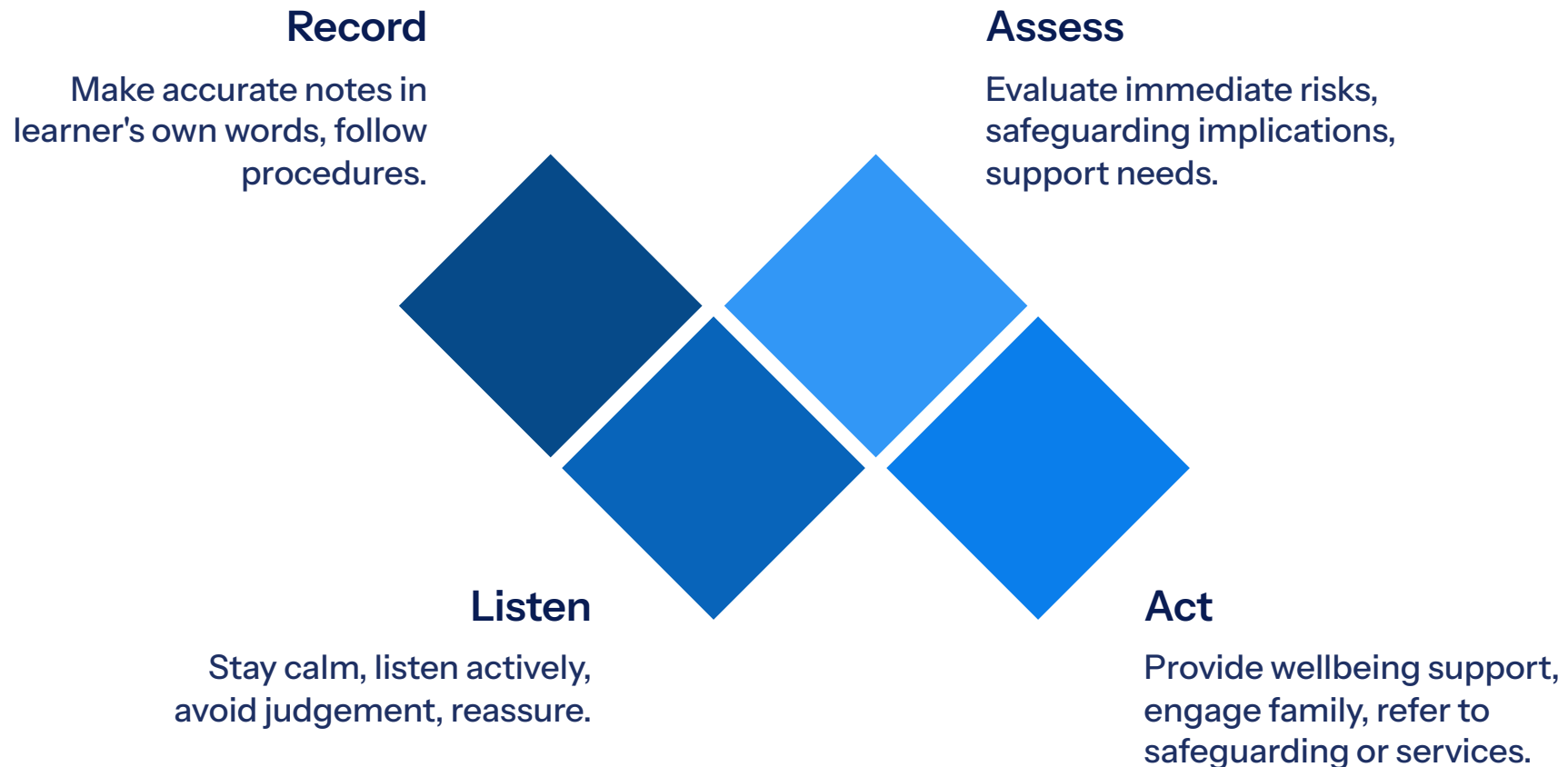
Wider Vulnerabilities

- Social Care involvement
- Young Carer responsibilities

 Additional support may be required for learners in these groups. Support should always be personalised and proportionate to individual need.

10. Responding to Concerns

When concerns arise about a learner's mental health or emotional wellbeing, staff should follow a structured and compassionate response.



This four-step process ensures that every concern is handled with care, consistency and in line with safeguarding responsibilities. No concern should be dismissed or left unrecorded.

11. Mental Health and Safeguarding

Mental health concerns can sometimes indicate safeguarding risks. Safeguarding procedures must always take precedence where a learner is at risk.

Particular consideration should be given where concerns involve any of the following:

Self-Harm & Suicidal Ideation

Any indication of self-harm or suicidal thoughts must be treated as an immediate safeguarding concern.

Exploitation & Abuse

Concerns relating to exploitation, abuse or neglect must be referred through safeguarding channels without delay.

Substance Misuse

Substance misuse may indicate wider vulnerability and must be considered within a safeguarding context.

Criminal & Online Exploitation

Criminal exploitation, radicalisation and online harm all carry significant mental health and safeguarding implications.

⊗ Where there is any doubt about whether a concern constitutes a safeguarding risk, staff must always err on the side of caution and report immediately.

12. Self-Harm

Reconnect Learning recognises that self-harm is often a sign of emotional distress rather than an attempt to end life. It must always be taken seriously and responded to with compassion and without judgement.

01

Report Immediately

Concerns about self-harm must be reported to the designated safeguarding lead without delay.

03

Provide Appropriate Support

Ensure the learner receives compassionate, appropriate support from a trusted adult.

02

Follow Safeguarding Procedures

All safeguarding procedures must be followed in full, including accurate recording.

04

Seek Professional Advice

Professional advice should be sought from CAMHS, GPs or other relevant services where necessary.

All incidents of self-harm will be taken seriously. No incident will be minimised or dismissed.

13. Suicide and Serious Risk Concerns

- ⊗ Any indication of suicidal ideation, suicide plans, suicide attempts or serious risk of harm must be treated as an immediate safeguarding concern requiring urgent action.

Staff must take the following actions without delay:



Stay with the Learner

Remain with the learner where it is safe to do so. Do not leave them alone.



Seek Immediate Support

Contact the designated safeguarding lead or a senior member of staff immediately.



Follow Safeguarding Procedures

Follow all safeguarding procedures, including accurate and timely recording.



Contact Emergency Services

Contact emergency services where there is immediate risk to life.

Confidentiality must never prevent action being taken to protect life.

14. Supporting Learners

Support for learners experiencing mental health difficulties will always be personalised, proportionate and responsive to individual need.

Emotional Support

Regular supportive conversations with trusted adults who know the learner well.

Wellbeing Interventions

Targeted wellbeing activities designed to build resilience, confidence and emotional regulation.

Safety Planning

Individual support and safety plans developed collaboratively with the learner and their family.

Flexible Provision

Reasonable adjustments to learning arrangements to reduce pressure and support engagement.

External Referrals

Referral to specialist services where the level of need exceeds what can be provided internally.

15. Working with Parents and Carers

Reconnect Learning values the important role that families play in supporting learners' mental health and wellbeing. We recognise that parents and carers are often the first to notice changes in their child's wellbeing.

Share Concerns

Share concerns with families in a timely, sensitive and transparent manner.



Seek Information

Seek information from families to build a fuller picture of the learner's needs.

Work Collaboratively

Work in partnership with families to develop and review support plans.



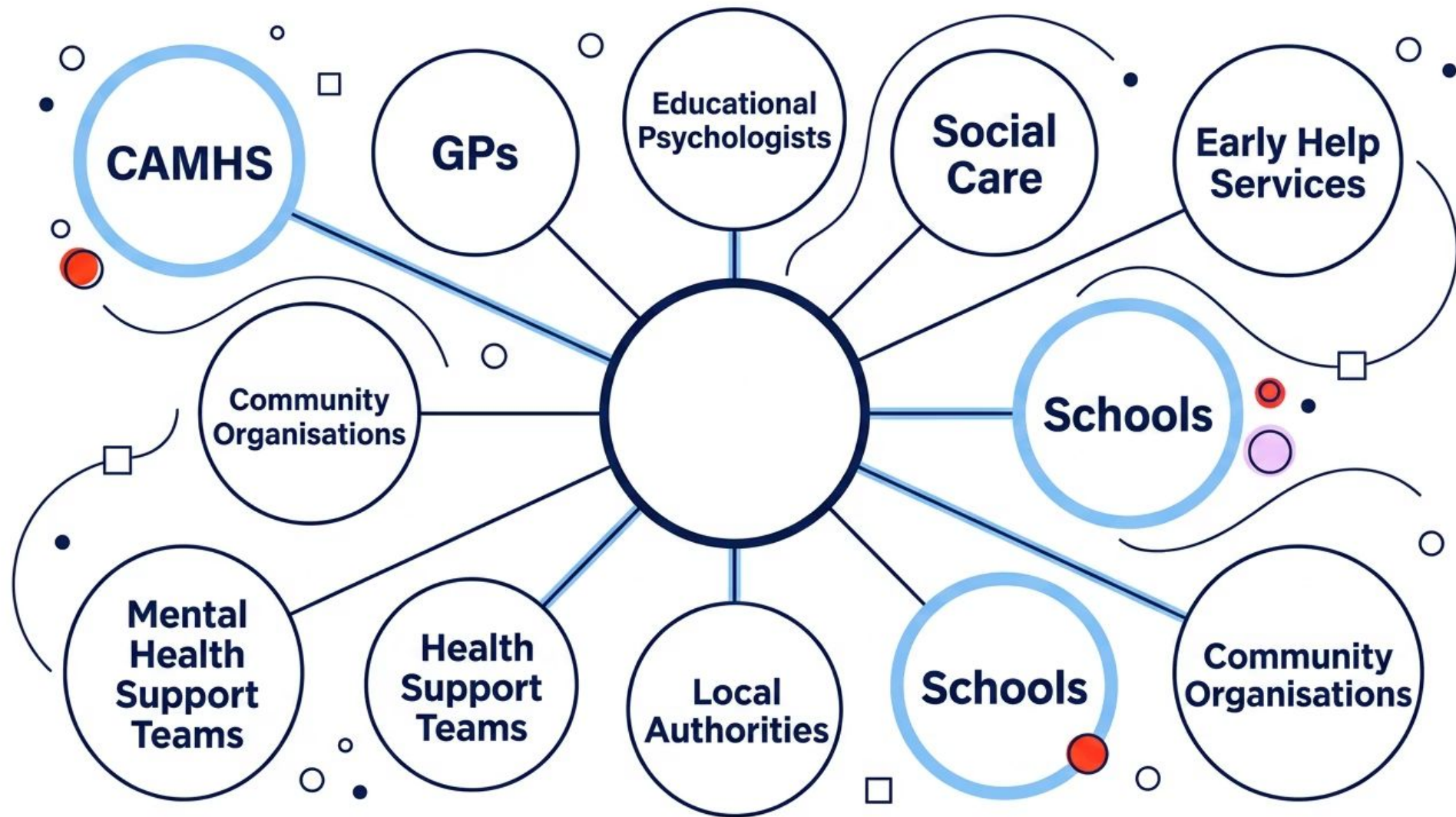
Signpost Services

Signpost families to relevant support services and community resources.

 There may be occasions where it is not appropriate to share information with parents or carers. In such cases, safeguarding guidance must be followed.

16. Working with External Agencies

Reconnect Learning may work alongside a range of external agencies to ensure learners receive the most appropriate support. Information sharing will comply with safeguarding and GDPR requirements at all times.



Effective multi-agency working is essential to ensuring holistic, joined-up support for learners with complex mental health and wellbeing needs.

17. Staff Wellbeing

Reconnect Learning recognises that staff wellbeing is essential to the effective delivery of high-quality provision. Staff who are well-supported are better placed to support the learners in their care.

Positive Working Culture

Promoting a culture of openness, mutual respect and psychological safety across the organisation.

Work-Life Balance

Encouraging healthy boundaries and sustainable working practices for all staff.

Supervision and Support

Providing regular supervision, reflective practice and access to pastoral support.

Professional Development

Encouraging ongoing professional development including mental health and trauma-informed training.

Wellbeing Access

Promoting access to wellbeing support and encouraging staff to seek help when needed.

Staff are encouraged to seek support when needed. There is no expectation that staff should manage difficulties alone.

18. Mental Health First Aid

Reconnect Learning will seek to ensure that staff receive appropriate training to recognise signs of mental ill-health and know how to respond appropriately. Where possible, designated staff may undertake Mental Health First Aid training to strengthen organisational support.

01

Awareness Training

All staff receive baseline awareness of mental health signs and appropriate responses.

02

Designated MHFA

Where possible, designated staff undertake accredited Mental Health First Aid training.

03

Ongoing Development

MHFA-trained staff are supported to keep their skills current through refresher training and supervision.



Mental Health First Aid England (MHFA England) provides nationally recognised training. This is an optional enhancement and not a statutory requirement, but strengthens the organisation's overall wellbeing provision.

19. Online Learning and Wellbeing

Where learning takes place online, the same duty of care applies as in face-to-face settings. Online concerns will be treated as seriously as any other concern.

Staff Responsibilities Online

- Monitor learner wellbeing during sessions
- Promote respectful communication
- Identify signs of distress or disengagement
- Follow safeguarding procedures without delay
- Encourage help-seeking behaviours

Key Considerations

Online learning can present unique challenges for learners' mental health, including isolation, screen fatigue and reduced access to in-person support. Staff must be particularly vigilant in virtual environments where non-verbal cues may be harder to detect.



Any safeguarding concern identified during online learning must be reported immediately using the same procedures as face-to-face provision.

20. Child-Centred Approach

Reconnect Learning is committed to ensuring that the voice of the child is heard and respected in all matters relating to their mental health and wellbeing. This reflects the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.



Children's Voices Are Heard

Learners are given meaningful opportunities to express their views, feelings and wishes.



Wishes and Feelings Are Considered

The wishes and feelings of learners are given due weight in all decisions affecting them.



Learners Participate in Decisions

Learners are actively involved in decisions about their own support and provision.



Support Is Tailored to Individual Needs

Support is personalised and responsive to each learner's unique circumstances and preferences.



Welfare of the Child Is Paramount

The welfare of the child remains the overriding consideration in all decisions and actions.

21. Record Keeping

Accurate and confidential record keeping is essential to effective mental health support and safeguarding. All records will be maintained in accordance with GDPR and organisational data protection procedures.

What Will Be Recorded

- Mental health concerns
- Support provided
- Safeguarding referrals
- External agency involvement
- Risk assessments
- Wellbeing plans

Standards for Records

Accurate

Factual and objective

Confidential

Shared on a need-to-know basis

Secure

Stored safely and securely

GDPR Compliant

Managed in accordance with data protection law

22. Training and Awareness

All staff will receive appropriate training and awareness to equip them to identify, respond to and support learners experiencing mental health difficulties. Training records will be maintained and reviewed regularly.



Mental Health Awareness



Emotional Wellbeing



Trauma-Informed Practice



Self-Harm Awareness



Suicide Awareness



Safeguarding



SEND and Mental Health

23. Monitoring and Review

The Managing Director will monitor a range of indicators to ensure this policy is effective and that learners and staff are receiving appropriate support. Data will be reviewed termly.



Mental Health Concerns

Tracking the nature and frequency of concerns raised.



Attendance Patterns

Monitoring attendance data for indicators of wellbeing difficulties.



Safeguarding Trends

Reviewing safeguarding referrals and outcomes.



Learner Feedback

Gathering and acting on feedback from learners about their wellbeing.



Staff Wellbeing

Monitoring staff wellbeing and the effectiveness of support provided.



Training Completion

Ensuring all staff have completed required training within agreed timescales.

This policy will be reviewed annually and without unnecessary delay following changes to legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding practice, organisational arrangements or learning from safeguarding incidents.

24. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following organisational policies to ensure a comprehensive and consistent approach to learner welfare and safeguarding.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The primary policy governing safeguarding responsibilities across all provision.

SEND Policy

Guidance on supporting learners with special educational needs and disabilities.

Behaviour Policy

Approaches to behaviour management that recognise the link between behaviour and mental health.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Procedures for preventing and responding to bullying, including online bullying.

Online Safety Policy

Guidance on keeping learners safe online, including mental health implications of online harm.

Data Protection & GDPR Policy

Procedures for the secure and lawful handling of sensitive personal data including mental health records.

Additional related policies include: Prevent Duty and Radicalisation Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Low-Level Concerns Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, First Aid Policy, Attendance Policy and Risk Assessment Policy.

25. Contact Information

Policy Lead

Name: Ellen Kerr

Position: Managing Director

Organisation: Reconnect Learning

Email: info@reconnectlearning.co.uk

Reporting Concerns

Mental health concerns should be reported promptly to a member of staff. Immediate safeguarding concerns must be reported without delay.



If a learner is in immediate danger, contact emergency services by calling 999 without delay. Do not wait for internal procedures to be completed before acting.

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Changes
1.0	September 2026	Ellen Kerr	Initial Issue

Approved By: Ellen Kerr · **Position:** Managing Director, Reconnect Learning · **Date Approved:** September 2026 · **Review Date:** September 2027 · **Version:** 1.0

Compliance Status

This policy has been developed with regard to the relevant statutory guidance and legislation applicable at the date of approval and reflects current safeguarding expectations for Alternative Provision, Home Tuition and Online Learning.

 KCSIE 2026 Keeping Children Safe in Education	 Working Together 2026 Working Together to Safeguard Children	 Children Acts Children Act 1989 & 2004
 Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty	 SEND Code of Practice SEND Code of Practice 2015	 DfE Guidance DfE Mental Health and Behaviour Guidance
 Ofsted AP Ofsted Alternative Provision Expectations	 LA Standards Local Authority Provider Standards	 Trauma-Informed Trauma-Informed Practice Principles

 This policy has been developed with regard to all applicable statutory guidance and legislation as at September 2026. It will be reviewed annually or without unnecessary delay following any changes to legislation, statutory guidance or safeguarding practice.