

Castletown Primary School



Student Mental Health and Wellbeing at CPS

*A Whole-School Commitment to Care,
Connection and Support*



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Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing at Castletown Primary School

Our Commitment

At Castletown PS, wellbeing is everyone's business. We work in partnership with families to build students' social-emotional skills, resilience and belonging so that every child can learn well and feel well. (Aligned to our PBS values and whole-school practices.)

What do we mean by "mental health"

Mental health refers to children's thinking, feelings and behaviours, and their capacity to cope with everyday stresses, learn, play and contribute at home and school. Children can move along a spectrum from "doing well" to "struggling"; with the right support, most bounce back.

Key idea for families: all feelings are OK; some are just more comfortable than others. We teach children to notice feelings and use strategies to get back to "calm and ready to learn" (see *Zones of Regulation* below).

How we support wellbeing at Castletown Primary School

We take a layered approach: whole-school prevention, targeted supports, and partnerships with families and services.

Whole-school prevention (every class, every day)

- **Positive Behaviour Support (PBS):** explicit teaching of our values and expected behaviours across settings; regular acknowledgement systems; consistent language from K–6.
- **Cultural safety as a core protective factor:** We acknowledge that a student's cultural identity is part of their wellbeing. We build culturally responsive relationships and address racism promptly to protect student wellbeing.
- **Emotional regulation:** routines for "check in-check out", calm corners, movement/brain breaks, breathing techniques; curriculum time to talk about feelings using colour zones. (Based on *Zones of Regulation*.)
- **Friendship & conflict skills:** explicit teaching and practice (e.g., "How to say it kindly", "repairing after conflict"), with reminders in assemblies and buddy activities.
- **Restorative Practice:** using restorative language and conversations to address harm, build accountability and repair relationships, with a focus on learning and reconnection
- **Attendance & engagement:** proactive follow-up on patterns (late arrivals, school avoidance), using gentle re-entry plans and parent partnership.

What CPS uses (programs and practices)

- **SEL Framework**
- **Zones of Regulation** language and tools in classrooms K–6.
- **PBS** (explicit teaching of expectations; acknowledgment systems).
- **Social-emotional mini-lessons** (friendship skills, repair, kindness).
- **Calm spaces & movement breaks** built into class routines.
- **Restorative Conversations**

SEL (Social Emotional Learning Framework)

At Castletown Primary School, we prioritise the development of students' social and emotional skills to support their overall well-being and success by developing emotional intelligence, resilience, and positive interpersonal skills that will benefit them in all school settings and the wider community. We have implemented a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) framework that is grounded in the CASEL Framework (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), which outlines the five core competencies of SEL: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making.

Zones of Regulation (our shared language for feelings)

What it is

Zones of Regulation® is a widely used framework that helps children notice and name feelings (blue/green/yellow/red), match strategies, and return to “calm and ready to learn.” It’s grounded in cognitive-behavioural approaches and used internationally across schools and clinics.

Why we recommend it

- Creates a common language between home and school.
- Supports neurodivergent and neurotypical learners with practical regulation tools.
- Reinforces consistency across classrooms.

How CPS uses Zones

- Daily check-ins; calm corners; movement breaks; co-regulation.
- Visuals in rooms; teacher prompts to pick a strategy (breathing, water, brief break).

BLUE	GREEN	YELLOW	RED
			
How you might feel	How you might feel	How you might feel	How you might feel
Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving slowly	Happy Calm Feeling OK Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of some control	Mad/ Angry Mean Yelling/ Hitting Disgusted Out of Control
What might help you	What might help you	What might help you	What might help you
Talk to someone Stretch Take a brain break Stand Take a walk Close my eyes	Listen Learn Share your ideas with confidence Show kindness to others Be a good friend Show resilience	Talk to someone Count to 20 Take deep breaths Squeeze a stress ball Draw a picture Take a brain break Carry out a mindful activity	Stop what I am doing Take deep breaths Find and name 5 things (see, hear, touch) Ask for a break Find a safe space Ask for help Make sensible choices

How families can use Zones at home

- Ask: “Which zone are you in?” then “What’s one tool that helps?”
- Keep a small toolkit (breathing card, water, sensory item, outside time).
- Celebrate effort: “Nice job choosing a yellow-zone tool to settle for homework.”

Learn more about the approach and its evidence base at the official site

Friendship Skills at CPS

What it is

We use URSTRONG Friendology to give students practical language for making and keeping friends, and for repairing after conflict (e.g., "Friendship Fires®", "kind but clear" talk).

Why we use it

- A whole-school approach builds a common language among students, staff and parents—shown to reduce confusion about what is normal conflict vs. ongoing meanness.
- Programs like Friendology are recognised in national directories (Be You, ACER) and can be implemented in flexible ways alongside school values.

How CPS teaches these skills

- Mini-lessons (naming feelings, assertive "I-statements", repair steps).
- Assembly reminders and buddy activities to practise friendship scripts.
- Teacher coaching on the spot: "Say it kindly", "Check the Friend-o-Meter" (our equivalent prompts).



Relationships are the HEART of wellbeing...and friendships are the most important relationships to kids at school!

How families can help at home

- Use the same phrases: "Is this a Friendship Fire (normal conflict) or mean-on-purpose (pattern)?"
- Practise a short script before school: "I feel..., I need..., next time can we...?"

Smiling Mind

What it is

Smiling Mind is an Australian not-for-profit offering a free app and school program with short, age-appropriate mindfulness activities and classroom-ready resources. Independent evaluations and evidence-informed guidelines support its use in schools.

Why we recommend it

- Quick, child-friendly practices that fit into busy family routines (bedtime, before school).
- Evidence and program evaluations indicate benefits for regulation, attention and classroom readiness; Smiling Mind summarises research and impact on its site.

Getting started at home

- Download the Smiling Mind app and try a 3–5 minute activity after dinner or before bed, then let your child choose a favourite for school mornings.

Share which tracks work for your child so we can weave them into the classroom calm toolbox. (Smiling Mind's primary program is mapped to the Australian Curriculum and designed for school-home alignment.)

Protective Behaviours

Protective Behaviours is a personal safety program taught in Western Australian schools to help children understand their right to feel safe and what to do if they ever feel unsafe. The program is built on two key themes:

1. "We all have the right to be safe and feel safe at all times."
2. "We can talk with someone about anything, no matter what it is."

The learning focuses on giving children practical, lifelong skills to:

- Recognise unsafe situations and listen to their early warning signs (e.g., worry, discomfort).
- Use assertive language and understand they have the right to say *no*, even to known adults.
- Identify trusted adults they can talk to and build a personal "safety network".
- Seek help early, knowing nothing is too small or too big to tell someone about.

Protective Behaviours lessons are age-appropriate and taught in safe, supportive classroom environments. The WA Department of Education integrates this program into health and wellbeing learning to promote confidence, empowerment, and help-seeking—critical skills that protect children from harm and support healthy relationships.

Targeted Supports (as needed)

- **Student Services Team** (Admin, School Psychologists, Learning Support): short check-ins, regulation plans, social skills groups, simple return-to-learn plans after illness/absence. Individual plans for students with disability or additional needs, including reasonable adjustments in line with the Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Standards for Education (already embedded at CPS).
- **Chaplain:** Providing wellbeing check ins and support for students
- **Buddies/leadership:** older students support younger buddies (Kindy/PP–Year 6) to build connection and confidence.
- **Cultural responsiveness & inclusion:** acknowledging and celebrating the cultures and languages of our families; working with local community groups to strengthen belonging.

Student Services– How we support your child

Our Student Services Team work together to make sure every child feels safe, supported and ready to learn.

What we do

- Early support: We help identify concerns with learning, behaviour, friendships, attendance or emotional regulation so we can put help in place early.
- Partner with families: We listen, problem-solve with you, and share simple strategies that match what teachers are using in class. This aligns with recommended school-home collaboration practices in WA parent mental-health guidance.
- Create support plans: We develop short, practical plans (e.g., regulation plans, re-entry plans for school avoidance, attendance supports).
- Coordinate specialist help: We connect with our School Psychologist for consultation or screening and help families access external services such as GPs or CAMHS when more specialised support is needed.

How to access support

Start by speaking with your class teacher. If more help is needed, they will link you with a Deputy Principal or Student Services so we can work together on the best next steps.

School Psychology Service

What the School Psychologist can offer

- Consultation with parents/teachers about learning, behaviour and wellbeing.
- Short-term school-based support (screening, check-ins, classroom strategies).
- Guidance on reasonable adjustments and referrals to external services where appropriate (e.g., GP → care plan, CAMHS or private clinicians).

What to expect

- Access is via the Deputy/Student Services Team; support is prioritised based on need and impact on schooling.
- We aim to work as a team with families, teachers and (with consent) external health providers.
- Information is treated confidentially and shared on a need-to-know basis to keep your child safe and supported; CAMHS outlines similar rights in mental health care.

When external help is recommended

- Persistent or severe symptoms (e.g., panic, OCD traits, depression), complex family stressors, or when treatment (not just school support) is needed. We'll help you plan next steps.

Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer

Our AIEO makes a significant difference to the wellbeing and sense of belonging of our students.

- Building culturally safe, trusting relationships with students.
- Conducting informal check-ins and providing calm support when students are unsettled.
- Runs our 5 day a week Breakfast Club
- Strengthening connections between school, families, and community.
- Assisting with attendance, engagement, and smooth transitions into class.
- Supporting cultural activities and learning that build identity and belonging.
- Providing cultural advice to staff to ensure respectful and responsive practice.

School Chaplaincy

Our chaplain provides wellbeing support to students (friendship issues, grief/loss, worries about school), small group programs, and connection to community supports, working under school leadership and within Department guidelines.

How to access

- Speak with your class teacher or Deputy to arrange a time or to ask whether chaplaincy is the right fit.
- We will always ask for parent consent for ongoing support and keep you informed.

Year 6 Wellbeing Leaders

Our Year 6 Wellbeing Leaders play an important part in helping younger students feel safe, included and connected at school.

What they do

- Model our PBS values by showing kindness, respect and positive behaviour across the school.
- Support younger students during break times, transitions and buddy activities, helping them solve small problems and feel confident in the playground.
- Promote belonging, especially for students who may be shy, new to the school or finding friendships tricky.
- Assist with wellbeing events, such as assemblies, positive-behaviour celebrations and activities that build a strong school culture.
- Act as student leaders, bringing a child's perspective to initiatives that support wellbeing.

Why their role matters

Student-led support aligns with wellbeing approaches used in many WA schools, where peer connection and positive role-modelling help build safe, inclusive environments

A 'Sense of Space'

Castletown PS provides a variety of welcoming spaces that help students feel safe, calm and ready to learn, reflecting WA wellbeing and protective behaviours principles that highlight the importance of safe, supportive environments for children.

- Shared areas: Open play spaces and active zones that build connection and confidence.
- Quiet areas: Calm spots for students to reset, regulate and notice their early warning signs, an important part of protective behaviours.
- Library: A peaceful indoor space for reading, creativity and quiet focus.
- Sustainability area: Gardens and natural learning spaces that promote responsibility, exploration and wellbeing.
- Sensory room: A dedicated low-stimulus environment supporting emotional regulation and safety.
- Green spaces across the school: Shaded trees, lawns and natural pockets that offer breathing room, movement, fresh air and a sense of calm.

Together, these spaces help students feel grounded, supported and connected throughout the school day.

Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club provides a welcoming, calm start to the day for students who need it. With the support of our AIEO and staff, students can enjoy a healthy breakfast, connect with trusted adults, and ease into the school morning feeling settled and ready to learn. It strengthens wellbeing, attendance, and a sense of belonging across our school community.

A 'Sense of Belonging for all'

Belonging sits at the heart of wellbeing, and at Castletown PS we intentionally create a school culture where every child feels connected, valued and included, a principle supported by WA protective-behaviours frameworks that emphasise children's rights to feel safe and supported within their communities.

We build this sense of belonging through:

- Cultural celebrations such as NAIDOC Week and Harmony Day, which recognise diversity and help students understand that safe, respectful relationships exist across all cultures. (Protective behaviours programs highlight the value of respectful, inclusive environments in promoting children's safety and confidence.)
- An active Parent Committee (P&C) who run much-loved events including Colour Fun Runs, raffles, Mother's Day and Father's Day stalls, bringing families together and strengthening the wrap-around community that supports our students.
- Shared school experiences that make students feel part of something bigger than their class, whole-school activities, celebrations, and community days that reinforce connection and joy.

Together, these traditions and partnerships help every child feel they truly belong at Castletown Primary School, known, welcomed and supported by a strong, caring community.

When should I be concerned about my child's mental health?

Trust your instincts if changes persist for 2 weeks or more or are getting worse, such as:

- Frequent tummy aches/headaches with no clear cause; fatigue; sleep changes.
- Ongoing worry, tearfulness, irritability or anger outbursts.
- Withdrawing from friends/activities; school refusal; drop in school engagement.
- Difficulties concentrating; increased negativity or hopeless comments.

These signs are commonly listed in parent guides on anxiety and depression for young people.

If safety is an immediate concern (e.g., your child talks about wanting to harm themselves or others), seek urgent help (see emergency contacts below).

Practical things that help at home

Talk, listen, normalise

- Name the feeling ("sounds like you're worried") and validate ("that makes sense").
- Keep it brief, calm and curious; problem-solve together when they're regulated.

These approaches mirror evidence-informed guidance for parents.

Routines & healthy habits

- Regular sleep-wake times; device off at least an hour before bed.
 - Predictable morning routines reduce school-day stress.
 - Daily movement; simple breathing or mindfulness before homework/bed.
- Parent resources from WA agencies emphasise sleep, activity, connection and routines.

Coaching "small brave steps" for anxiety

- Agree on a graded plan (e.g., walk to classroom door → in for 10 mins → stay to recess).
 - Celebrate effort, not just outcome.
- Graduated exposure is a core element in anxiety support.

Working Together

Our joint plan for school avoidance / morning worries

If mornings are hard:

1. Let the teacher/Deputy know early.
2. We'll create a brief return plan (entry routine, helper, first activity the child enjoys).
3. Consistent handover (short goodbye; staff meet the child at gate/door).
4. Check-in at 9:30am; adjust as needed.

Who to talk to at CPS (in this order)

1. **Class Teacher** – first point of contact for emerging concerns.
2. **Deputy Principal / Student Services** – for patterns (attendance, behaviour, peer issues).
3. **School Psychologist** – via Deputy (for consultation, screening and external referral advice).

Getting help outside of school

- **Your GP** – first stop for assessment, care plans and referrals.
- **CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services)** – community and specialist services for under-18s; urgent advice via CAMHS Crisis Connect.
- **Think Mental Health WA – Parents' Guide** – practical, plain-English guidance and links to supports.
- **Beyond Blue (Parents)** – comprehensive guides on anxiety and depression (including the parent booklet Kinross links to).
- **WAAMH (resources for schools and families)** – tips, posters and practical wellbeing ideas.

Emergency / urgent help

- **000** – immediate danger.
- **CAMHS Crisis Connect (WA)** – urgent child/youth mental health support.
- **Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800** (24/7).
- **Lifeline 13 11 14** (24/7).

Triple P- Positive Parenting Program

What it is

Triple P is a well-established parenting program with a strong evidence base. Modules are short, practical and designed to help parents set routines, respond calmly to behaviour, and build children's emotional skills. It is available online and free in Australia.

Why we recommend it

- Gives families clear, step-by-step strategies that complement classroom routines and our PBS language.
- Flexible: short modules you can complete at your own pace, at home.
- Research-backed with broad uptake across Australian families.

How to use it at home

- Pick one focus (e.g., calmer bedtimes) and complete the matching module.
- Practise one small strategy for a week; share what worked with your child's teacher so we can mirror language at school.

Access

Search "Triple P Online Australia" (the Kinross guide also points families to Triple P's online registration).

Supporting Parents in the Online Space

What's changed?

From 10 December 2025, Australian law requires most social media platforms to prevent under-16s from creating or keeping accounts. The eSafety Commissioner provides the official parent guide, FAQs, and an 8-step action plan to help families transition.

What this means for families

- Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, X, YouTube and Twitch are considered age-restricted—check the eSafety list for updates. Some non-social apps (e.g., messaging or gaming) may not be restricted, but still need supervision.
- Under-16s can still view public content without an account and access online health and education services.

CPS tips for online wellbeing

- **Family plan:** Agree device bedtimes, shared spaces for screens, and what to do if children see upsetting content (pause → talk → report). (The Student Wellbeing Hub also links to current resources and webinars on digital wellbeing.)
- **Help your child “get ready”:** Back up photos/contacts; choose alternative ways to stay connected (non-restricted channels); practise “kind but clear” refusal scripts if peers pressure them to join. Use eSafety’s step-by-step parent guide.
- **If harm occurs online:** save evidence, report, seek support (Kids Helpline/Lifeline), and let school know if it affects learning/peer relationships.
- **Support for families:** ‘Raisingchildren.net.au’ and ‘esafety.gov.au’

Respecting privacy and working together

We treat student and family information confidentially and share on a need-to-know basis to keep your child safe and supported, consistent with WA education and health privacy expectations. (CAMHS also outlines rights and confidentiality in service use.)

“This guide was informed by resources publicly shared by Kinross Primary School and WA mental health agencies.”

Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

AIEO – *Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer*

CAMHS – *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services*

CPFS – *Child Protection and Family Support*

DP – *Deputy Principal*

EA – *Education Assistant*

GP – *General Practitioner*

IEP – *Individual Education Plan*

K-6 – *Kindergarten to Year 6*

PBS – *Positive Behaviour Support*

SEL – *Social and Emotional Learning*

SS Team – *Student Services Team*

URSTRONG – *URSTRONG Friendology Program*

WAAMH – *Western Australian Association for Mental Health*

Appendices for CPS

A. Conversation starters (child-friendly prompts)

B. CPS PBS expectations (home version) – language families can use that matches school.

C. Daily calm toolkit (breathing cards; short scripts; “what helps me” poster).

D. Quick reference: common school–home strategies

E. Local & online supports

F: Child Safety

Appendix A — Conversation Starters

When your child is upset or overwhelmed

- “It looks like something feels a bit tricky right now — what’s the feeling inside your body telling you?”
- “If your feeling had a colour (green/blue/yellow/red), which one would it be?”
- “Is this a small problem, medium problem, or big problem for you?”
- “Do you want me to listen, help you solve it, or just sit with you?”
- “What happened *before* the feeling showed up?”
- “What would help your body feel calmer — a drink, a break, a walk, or a cuddle?”

For worries/anxiety

- “What’s the worry saying to you right now?”
- “If the worry was a character, what would it look or sound like?”
- “What’s one small brave step we could try together?”
- “Has there been a time you handled a similar worry?”

For friendship problems

- “What happened from your point of view?”
- “What would you like the other person to know?”
- “What’s a kind-but-clear sentence you could use next time?”
- “Is this something you can solve on your own, or would help from an adult feel better?”

For after-school meltdowns

- “I can see you’re done for the day — what do you need first: food, quiet, or a reset?”
- “Do you want to talk now or later?”

Appendix B — CPS PBS Expectations: Home Version

These match the school language, so children hear the same expectations everywhere.

Be a Learner

- Try your best, even when things feel hard.
- Ask questions when you're not sure.
- Have a go before asking for help.

Be Respectful

- Speak kindly, even during disagreements.
- Listen when someone is talking.
- Use helpful words to solve problems.

Be Responsible

- Use calm bodies and safe hands.
- Stay where an adult knows you are.
- Make choices that keep you and others safe.

Be Friendly

- Notice when someone needs help or a friend.
- Include others in games and activities.
- Repair when things go wrong: "I'm sorry — can I make it better?"

How families can reinforce PBS at home

- Use "specific praise":
"I noticed how you stayed calm when your game froze — that was being safe and resilient."
- Have a short end-of-day check-in: *"What PBS value did you show today?"*
- When conflict happens, model repair and calm communication.

Appendix C — Daily Calm Toolkit for Families

A simple set of tools children learn at school and can also use at home.

1. Breathing tools

- **4–6 Breathing:** breathe in for 4, out for 6 (longer out-breath = calmer body).
- **Hot Chocolate Breathing:** imagine smelling hot choccie (inhale), then blowing to cool it (exhale).
- **Star Breathing:** trace a star — breathe in on each line up, breathe out on each line down.

2. Grounding tools

- **5–4–3–2–1:** name 5 things you see, 4 you hear, 3 you feel, 2 you smell, 1 you taste.
- **Press & Release:** gently squeeze fists or shoulders for 3 seconds, then release.

3. Regulation resets

- Quick drink of water
- Cool facecloth
- Stretch, wall push-ups, or 10 slow “heavy steps”
- Step outside for fresh air
- Quiet corner with colouring, Lego, or a calming toy

4. “What Helps Me” Personal Plan

Parents can complete this with their child:

My early signs	What helps me calm	What adults can say	What I can say
Tight tummy, quiet voice, fussing	Slow breathing, cuddle, quiet spot	“You’re safe — I’m here.”	“I need a break.”

Appendix D - Quick reference: common school-home strategies

Concern	Try at Home	What we'll do at School
Worry/Anxiety	Name/validate feeling; brief breathing (4–6), small brave steps with rewards for effort.	Pre-warn for changes, predictable entry routine, calm corner, Zones language.
Friendship conflict	Coach “kind but clear” scripts; role-play; praise repair attempts.	Supervised play options; remind of “say it kindly/repair steps”; teacher check-in.
Big feelings after school	Snack, quiet time, then chat; keep nights simple on tough days.	Movement/brain breaks; emotion coaching; adjust workload/transition supports.
School avoidance	Consistent morning routine; short goodbye; graded re-entry.	Meet-and-greet; buddy/activity first; check-in call at agreed time; attendance plan.

Appendix E — Local & Online Support Contacts (WA-Friendly List)

Emergency / urgent help

- **000** — immediate danger.
- **CAMHS Crisis Connect (WA)** — urgent mental health advice for children & young people.
- **Lifeline 13 11 14** — 24/7 counselling.
- **Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800**

Esperance / Goldfields region

- **GP Clinics (local)** — first step for assessment, Mental Health Care Plans, and referrals.
- **Private psychologists / OTs / counsellors**
- **School Psychologist (via CPS)** — appointment through Deputy Principal.

WA-wide child & youth mental health support

- **CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)** — assessment and treatment for significant concerns.
- **Think Mental Health WA – Parents' Guides** — practical information and next steps.
- **Beyond Blue (Parents & Carers)** — resources on anxiety, depression, and resilience.
- **Headspace (for older siblings/teens)** — mental health and wellbeing support.
- **Raising Children Network** — evidence-based wellbeing advice for all ages.

Appendix F – Child Safety

Child Protection and Family Support Crisis Helpline (Crisis Care)

Crisis care is a telephone information and counselling service for people in crisis needing urgent help.

Call crisis care when:

- You are concerned about the wellbeing of a child
- You are escaping domestic violence and need help
- Arguments are causing unhappiness and problems in your family
- You are alone or afraid and urgently need to talk to someone
- You are homeless
- You would like counselling, information or other support.

Phone: 08 9223 1111

1800RESPECT National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service:

A national telephone and online counselling and referral service.

Phone: 1800 737 732.

Women's Domestic Violence Helpline:

Provides support for women, with or without children, who are experiencing family and domestic violence in Western Australia (including referrals to women's refuges).

Phone: 1800 007 339.

Men's Domestic Violence Helpline:

Provides telephone information and referrals for men who are concerned about their violent and abusive behaviours, and for male victims of family and domestic violence in Western Australia.

Phone: 1800 000 599.