

PUPIL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

Reviewed: October 2023

Next Review Date: October 2025

Statutory Policy: No

Required on Website: No

Approved By: Headteacher

Related Documents: Anti-Bullying & Cyber Bullying, Behaviour Policy, PSHE & SMSC, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, SEND & Inclusion Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions



1. Policy Statement

We are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

We endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to access help when they need it.

We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

2. Aims

At our school we:

- Help children to understand their emotions and feelings better.
- Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries.
- Help children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- Promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count.
- Encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs.

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches.
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder.

3. Lead Members of Staff

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

- Mrs Cunningham: Deputy Headteacher
- Mrs Knox: SENCO and Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a worry or concern that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated safeguarding

lead. If the child presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary. Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Mrs Knox.

4. A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing. We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise. This encompasses seven aspects:

We believe the school has a key role in promoting children positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

Pupil-led activities:

- Campaigns to raise awareness of mental health lead by the school council.
- Tell me tree – an area for children to go to for support at break and supported by children and staff,
- Playtime buddies – a lunchtime group supporting younger children at lunchtime.

Transition programmes:

- Transition Programme to secondary schools to support a smooth transition
- Transition Programme for children new to school, including visits, open afternoons, chatting to their new staff and appropriate materials to support.

Class activities:

- Newsletters: a mechanism where children can be praised for effort applied, tasks achieved, and a collaborative attitude are given freely and work towards public praise.
- Class blogs to share their efforts with the school community.
- Worry boxes - where children can anonymously share worries or concerns in class and select the adult they wish to talk to.
- Circle time opportunities.

Whole school:

- Displays and information around the School about positive mental health and where to go for help and support
- A range of bespoke mental health links
- Growth Mindset Small group activities
- Nurture group
- Resilience Training
- Smart Thinking – a small group intervention to improve children's communication skills around turn taking, dealing with issues, resolving conflict
- Zones of regulation and tool box for small groups
- Lego Therapy
- Through RSHE/PHSE: the 10:10 programme we teach

EYFS & Key Stage 1 children learn:

- To recognise, name and describe feelings including good and not so good feelings.
- Simple strategies for managing feelings.
- How their behaviour affects other people.
- About empathy and understanding other people's feelings.
- To cooperate and problem solve.
- To motivate themselves and persevere.
- How to calm down.
- Who to go to if they are worried.
- About different types of teasing and bullying, that these are wrong and unacceptable.

Lower Key Stage 2 children learn:

- That emotions change as they grow up (including hormonal effects)
- A deeper understanding of the range and intensity of their feelings; that 'feelings' alone are not good guides for action
- What emotional well-being means
- That positive actions help emotional well-being (beauty, art, etc. lift the spirit)
- That talking to trusted people helps emotional well-being (eg parents/carer/teacher/parish priest)
- That images in the media do not always reflect reality and can affect how people feel about themselves
- That some behaviour is wrong, unacceptable, unhealthy and risky
- That thankfulness builds resilience against feelings of envy, inadequacy and insecurity, and against pressure from peers and the media
- Ways to maintain and develop good, positive, trusting relationships; strategies to use when relationships go wrong
- That there are different types of relationships including those between acquaintances, friends, relatives and family
- That good friendship is when both persons enjoy each other's company and also want what is truly best for the other
- The difference between a group of friends and a 'clique'
- Their awareness of bullying (including cyber-bullying), that all bullying is wrong, and how to respond to bullying
- Harassment and exploitation in relationships, including physical and emotional abuse and how to respond.

Upper Key Stage 2 children will learn:

- That images in the media do not always reflect reality and can affect how people feel about themselves
- That thankfulness builds resilience against feelings of envy, inadequacy, etc. and against pressure from peers or media
- A deeper understanding of the range and intensity of their feelings; that 'feelings' are not the only good guides for action
- That some behaviour is wrong, unacceptable, unhealthy or risky
- That emotions change as they grow up (including hormonal effects)
- About emotional well-being: that beauty, art, etc. can lift the spirit; and that also openness with trusted parents/carers/teachers when worried ensures healthy well-being
- The difference between harmful and harmless videos and images
- The impact that harmful videos and images can have on young minds
- Ways to combat and deal with viewing harmful videos and images

We recognise that some children will need ongoing support, the SENCo will plan for their needs to be met.

5. Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Elsa activities around social, emotional and mental health issues.
- Managing feelings resources e.g., Zones of regulation
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Poppy O'Neil books.

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate.

6. Working with Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website.
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents. • Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.

7. Useful links from our areas

Below, we have sign-posted information and guidance about the issues most commonly seen in school-aged children. The links will take you through to the most relevant page of the listed website. Some pages are aimed primarily at parents but they are listed here because we think they are useful for school staff too.

- www.youngminds.org.uk
- www.mind.org.uk
- www.minded.org.uk

In Gateshead:

[PowerPoint Presentation \(gateshead.gov.uk\)](http://gateshead.gov.uk)

In Durham:

[Mental Health & Emotional Support for Adults in County Durham](http://www.durham.gov.uk)

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed by Mrs L Knox and Miss M Cunningham. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher

8.1. Measuring impact

This policy offers opportunities to measure the impact in a variety of ways, e.g. school's ethos, staff well-being, feedback from the whole school community, number of external referrals, improved relationships, children and young people.

The promotion of positive mental health for children and young people is everybody's business.