

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Firfield Primary School

Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.
(World Health Organization)

At our school, we have a supporting and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. We aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for every member of our staff and for all of our pupils. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical Policy in cases where a pupil's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue, the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need as well as the Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and PSHE policies.

The Policy Aims to:

- ❖ Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- ❖ Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- ❖ Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- ❖ Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- ❖ Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers
- ❖ Support staff and pupil's general wellbeing in the school environment

Lead Members of Staff

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

- ❖ Mr Yellop, Headteacher - Designated Safeguarding Lead
- ❖ Mrs Fletcher and Miss Tittershill, Assistant Headteachers - Deputy Safeguarding Leads and whole school Pastoral Support
- ❖ Miss Tittershill, Mental Health Lead
- ❖ Mrs Byard, SENCO
- ❖ Mrs Tyler, Nurture Lead, Mental Health First Aider
- ❖ Miss Tomlinson, Mental Health First Aider and Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator

- ❖ Miss Lemon, PSHE Coordinator
- ❖ Miss Fox, Mental Health First Aider

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Assistant Headteacher(s). If the pupil 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 Single Point of Access (SPoA) or South Derbyshire Access Point (SDAP) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Miss Tittershill in liaison with the range of professional support teams as appropriate. (CAMHs Consultation, School Health, Educational Psychologist, Behaviour Support)

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals.

This can include:

- ❖ Details of a pupil's condition
- ❖ Special requirements and precautions
- ❖ Medication and any side effects
- ❖ What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- ❖ The role the school can play

A whole school approach to Mental Health

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. All staff aim to make the school environment a positive and safe space and strive to embed positive mental health values into all aspects of school life and the curriculum.

Alongside this, we also aim to teach pupils the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe, which we include as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on developing the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. (PHSE, SRE and Anti Bullying work.)

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and signpost relevant professional agencies for additional support and guidance.

We will display relevant sources of support in the main reception area. This will assist families in knowing;

- ❖ What help is available
- ❖ Who it is aimed at

- ❖ How to access it
- ❖ Why to access it
- ❖ What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate 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 communicate their concerns with Miss Tittershill our mental health lead as well as logging the information on My Concern. It may be appropriate to share these concerns with other members of the Mental Health Team, including; Miss Tomlinson, Miss Fox and Mrs Tyler.

Possible warning signs include:

- ❖ Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- ❖ Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- ❖ Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- ❖ Changes in activity and mood
- ❖ Lowering of academic achievement
- ❖ Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- ❖ Abusing drugs or alcohol
- ❖ Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- ❖ Changes in clothing - e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- ❖ Secretive behaviour
- ❖ Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- ❖ Lateness to or absence from school
- ❖ Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- ❖ An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- ❖ Bereavement
- ❖ Changes or difficulties in family circumstances

Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen, rather than advise.

All disclosures should be recorded on My Concern. Relevant staff will be added to the My Concern Team by one of the school's DSL's.

Records on My Concern must include:

- ❖ Date
- ❖ The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- ❖ Main points from the conversation
- ❖ Agreed next steps - this may be follow up with members of the Mental Health Team.

This information must be shared with the mental health lead, Miss Tittershill, who will offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss with the pupil that we cannot keep this a secret and explain:

- ❖ Who we are going to talk to
- ❖ What we are going to tell them
- ❖ Why we need to tell them

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a Designated Safeguarding Lead as this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, and the school's Safeguarding policy and procedures will be adhered to in line with DCC guidance.

Supporting children with mental health and wellbeing

Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches to support children with their mental health and wellbeing which may include:

Pupil-led activities

- ❖ Wellbeing Champions
- ❖ Campaigns, fundraising and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health

Transition programmes

- ❖ A programme of support to include all Year 6 children who are due to transition to secondary school

Class/teacher led activities

- ❖ Regular PSHE lessons following the Jigsaw Scheme
- ❖ Worry Monsters
- ❖ Praise for positive contributions in class via reward points or a private message to parents on Class Dojo
- ❖ Circle Time
- ❖ Stories with themes of mental health and wellbeing
- ❖ Therapeutic activities in class downtime
- ❖ MISP - Mindfulness In Schools Programme - for targeted year groups
- ❖ Behaviour Box

Whole School

- ❖ Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for support
- ❖ Wellbeing Week once a year
- ❖ Whole school assemblies with a mental health and wellbeing focus
- ❖ Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing week (February)
- ❖ Hello Yellow campaign

Small group activities

- ❖ STAR club (nurture support) (Mrs Tyler)
- ❖ Friends Resilience Training (Miss Tomlinson)
- ❖ Mindfulness Club (Miss Tomlinson)
- ❖ Wellbeing Champions (Miss Tomlinson)

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- ❖ Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- ❖ Location for the meeting in school
- ❖ Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other members of staff (likely to be part of the mental health team)
- ❖ What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you are sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Working with All 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 common mental health issues on our school website
- ❖ Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- ❖ Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- ❖ Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children

- ❖ Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.



Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents.

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

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

Policy Review

Policy Updated: January 2021

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.