South Wellfield First School

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

March 2019

(Policy Review July 2020)
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents, governors and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing.

Policy Statement

At South Wellfield First School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

We work hard to achieve a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual is valued.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make them vulnerable and at times, 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. 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:

- 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.
Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medicines Policy and our SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education), RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) and Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policies. It should also sit alongside Child Protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Ms J. Gordon- Lead Designated child protection / safeguarding officer
- Mrs L. Hull - Designated child protection / safeguarding officer
- Mrs Caroline Robson- Designated child protection / safeguarding officer
- Mrs R. Sowden - Designated child protection / safeguarding officer
- Mrs D. Yarrow- Designated child protection / safeguarding officer, SENCO and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing lead (Joint)
- Mrs T. Carr- PSHCE Lead, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing lead (Joint)
- Miss E. Craggs- Nurture group leader
- Mrs V. Burton Social and Emotional group leader

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included 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 we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner. (See Appendix)

Good Mental Health is now part of our annual Healthy School Week.

Targeted support

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

- Circle time approaches or ‘circle of friends’ activities.
- Targeted use of SEAL resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. ‘worry boxes’ and ‘worry eaters’

- Managing emotions resources such as ‘the incredible 5 point scale’
- Nurture groups.
• Friendship groups
• Therapeutic activities including art, Lego therapy and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

The school will make use of resources and assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

**Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

**Identifying needs and Warning Signs**

Staff will complete an annual well-being questionnaire with their class and be vigilant of warning signs which may indicate a child is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff will communicate their concerns with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate (as named above).

**Possible warning signs include:**

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

**Staff wellbeing**

Our staff are our most important resource. We recognise the importance of staff wellbeing and the positive effect this has on the wellbeing of the children. We therefore promote a welcoming atmosphere amongst staff so that all staff are made to feel welcome and included as a whole staff team and within specific teams. We are committed to providing a safe, secure and supportive environment for all members of staff and will be vigilant for signs of difficulties in ourselves and colleagues. We aim to address any concerns which are identified and provide support in a professional, courteous and confidential manner.
Working with Parents

In order to support parents we will:

- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, if they have concerns about their child.
- Share any concerns school has with parents.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Sometimes present messages about good mental health as part of class assemblies.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children’s emotional health and wellbeing including:

- Early Help Assessment process
- Public Health School Nurses
- Educational Psychology services
- Behaviour support through Silverdale referral unit
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health service)
- Primary Mental Health Workers
- Family support workers
- The Locality team

Training

Staff attend a range of training linked to emotional health and well-being.

As a minimum, all staff will receive training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe. Training is update annually.

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 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.
APPENDIX

**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.
- About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
  - Who to go to if they are worried.
- About different types of teasing and bullying, that these are wrong and unacceptable.
- How to resist teasing or bullying, if they experience or witness it, whom to go to and how to get help.

**Key Stage 2 children learn:**

- What positively and negatively affects their mental and emotional health (including the media).
- Positive and healthy coping strategies.
- About good and not so good feelings.
- To describe the range and intensity of their feelings to others.
- To recognise and respond appropriately to a wide range of feelings in others.
- To recognise that they may experience conflicting emotions and when they might need to listen to their emotions or overcome them.
- About resilience.
  - How to motivate themselves and bounce back if they fail at something.
  - How to empathise and be supportive of others.
- About change, including transitions (between Key Stages and schools), loss, separation, divorce and bereavement.
  - About the consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online bullying, prejudice-based language), as well as how to respond and ask for help if they are victims of this themselves.
- About the importance of talking to someone and how to get help.