



Simonside Primary School

Pupil Wellbeing Policy

INTRODUCTION

Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 Organisation).

At Simonside Primary we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind. Each individual and their 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 and 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, the factors which affect 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 can experience life challenges that can make us vulnerable and we may all need additional emotional support at times. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

This policy is intended as guidance for all staff and describes the school's approach to promoting children's positive health and wellbeing.

Teaching about mental health

At Simonside Primary we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health. One of our Curriculum Drivers is Emotional Intelligence. We strive to teach children how to recognise and manage their emotions in response to a wide range of scenarios and possible stress factors. We are committed to raising awareness of the importance of mental health and how to maintain good mental wellbeing. We aim to help children become more resilient, happy and confident. We do this by:

- creating and applying a consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and wellbeing
- adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management
- helping children to form and maintain social relationships
- helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries
- teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better
- promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world
- helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks

- identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers
- supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience
- developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

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
- enabling access to appropriate support
- mental Health and PSHE for all year groups
- a specific Children's Wellbeing week and access to information around the school
- nurture groups
- normalising discussions about a range of feelings and how we can manage them.

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
- nurture groups to focus on mental health, resilience and wellbeing.

Staff roles and responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the mental health of students.

Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Mental Health Lead and PSHE Lead – Mrs Watson

SENCO – Mrs Alderson

Parent Support Advisor – Mrs Dixon

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Teachers: Mrs Hills and Mrs Carter

This team of staff work together to:

- lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates
- liaise with mental health services and make individual referrals to them
- create individual care plans, if required, in conjunction with class teachers and parents.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils 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 being taught.

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 Zones of Regulation resources
- managing feelings resources e.g. ‘worry boxes’ and ‘worry eaters’
- managing emotions resources
- therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

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.

Early Identification

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil’s poor mental health, including:

- attendance
- punctuality
- negative behaviour patterns
- family circumstance
- recent bereavement
- health indicators.

School staff may also 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 the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Possible warning signs include:

- changes in eating/sleeping habits
- becoming socially withdrawn
- changes in activity and mood
- changes in clothing
- expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- an increase in lateness or absenteeism
- sudden decrease in academic achievement
- secretive behaviour.

Assessment, interventions and support

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with SLT, class teachers and SENCO to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible. Regular reviews are then completed with relevant staff and parents/carers to assess the impact of support, progress and any further intervention needed.

Working with parents and carers

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead, SENCO or DSLs as appropriate. To support parents and carers we will:

- provide information on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes

- share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children
- make this policy easily accessible to parents
- keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home
- share information with parents and carers about in-school initiatives that support pupils' mental health and wellbeing, such as The Zones of Regulation.

When a concern has been raised, teachers or the Mental Health Lead and SENCO will:

- contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment
- discuss any relevant referrals with external agencies.
- signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away
- create a chronology of actions and events
- agree mental health care and protection plan where appropriate, including clear next steps
- discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signpost to parenting support groups.

Working with specialist services

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support:

- SEMH team
- Educational Psychology Services
- CYPS (child and young person service)
- School Nursing Service
- Children's and Family Services
- therapists
- Family Support workers
- Counselling Services.

We also recognise that when a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. We will consider on a case-by-case basis if a pupil's friends need additional support.

Training

In order to enable them to keep pupils safe all staff, as a minimum will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues. 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.

Links to other policies

This policy links to other policies including:

Child Protection Policy

Anti Bullying Policy

Staff Wellbeing Policy

Behaviour Policy.