

# Water Street Primary School



## Positive Mental Health and Well-being Policy

**Date Adopted:** March 2019  
**Next Review:** March 2022  
**Reviewed By:** Full Governing Body

**WE**  
**create**  
BRIGHT FUTURES

# Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realizes 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 his or her community. (World Health Organization)

At our school, we recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We see our school as being a place for children to experience a nurturing and supportive environment, which has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. We aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all of our staff and children. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialized, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable children.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognize 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 pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

## 1. Scope

This policy describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This document is intended as guidance for all staff and governors and should be read in conjunction with our policies on Safeguarding, Child protection, Medical Needs and SEND. The links with the School's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

## 2. The Policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils.
- Describe the school's approach to mental health issues.
- Increase all staff's identifying of and understanding of common mental health issues.
- Alert staff to early warning signs and risk factors of mental ill health problems.
- Provide support and guidance to all staff and governors dealing with pupils who suffer from mental health issues.
- Provide support to pupils suffering ill mental health and to their peers and parents/carers.

## 3. Lead members of Staff

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

Designated Child protection lead: **Stuart Anslow**

Deputy Child Protection lead: **Jenny Macnab, Cathy Longman**

SENDCO: **Cathy Longman**

Mental Health lead: **Andrea Metcalfe**

CPD lead: **Stuart Anslow**

PSHCE lead: **Nicky Smith**

Designated Mental Health governor: **Mrs Bruno**

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 concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the school's Child Protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency then the school's procedures for medical emergencies are followed. Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, **Stuart Anslow** will lead this.

## **Teaching about 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.

This encompasses many aspects:

- Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
- Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Helping children to be resilient learners.
- Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
- Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
- Trained playground squads
- Buddy system
- Pupil lead activities
- Class lead activities
- Transition programmes
- Displays and information around the School about positive mental health and where to go for help and support.
- Small nurture groups.
- Effectively working with parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

Through PSHCE we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

## **Warning signs**

All teaching and non-teaching staff have had training on the risk factors, types of mental health needs and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the Mental Health Lead or the SENDCO.

These signs might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
- Falling academic achievement.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.

- Secretive behaviour.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE.
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the School's child protection procedures are followed.

## Managing disclosure and confidentiality

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise.

If we think it is necessary for us to pass our concerns on about a pupil, then we should discuss with the child that their concern will be shared with the appropriate member of staff, and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file on Scholarpack, including date, name of member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps. This will be shared with the child protection lead who will offer support and discuss the next steps.

Ideally, we would receive the pupil's consent before passing on information, but if a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issue, then parents should **not** be informed, but the child protection officer **Stuart Anslow, or the deputy lead in his absence**, must be informed immediately. It is advisable to share disclosures through with our lead as this is beneficial for our own emotional wellbeing and ensures continuity of care for the child in our absence.

## Supporting parents and carers of children with mental health needs

Other than the above, parents should always be informed when disclosures regarding a child's emotional or mental health and wellbeing are made. The child may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, they should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common and that help and advice are available.

As a school we will:

- Meet with the parent/carer to discuss how the school can support their child and how parents and carers can support their child.
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting.

- Agree a mental health Individual Care Plan including clear next steps.
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

## **Working with all parents**

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children. Parents and carers are valued and welcomed into the school.

In order to support parents we will:

- Communicate regularly, consult and engage with parents/carers through newsletters, texts, Facebook, assemblies, daily updates, parents' evenings and teacher communications.
- 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, if they have concerns about 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.

## **Training**

- As a minimum, all teaching and non-teaching staff will receive training about recognising and responding to mental health issues in order to enable them to keep students safe.
- Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will take place and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupil.
- There is a smaller group of staff who are trained to ensure a deeper knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and who will be assigned to specific classes to support pupils.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum.