

Stock C of E Primary School



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Date introduced: January 2019

Date agreed by the Governing Body: 12th February 2019

Date to be reviewed: February 2021

Why mental health and wellbeing is important.

At Stock C of E Primary School we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs during their school career and some face significant life events. Mental health needs can have an enormous impact on quality of life, relationships and academic achievement.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy".

Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or 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 aim to promote and facilitate positive mental health for all our staff and pupils.

- We pursue this aim using both whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.
- In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise mental ill health and social and emotional well-being issues.
- By identifying early warning signs and responding and acting on these quickly we provide early interventions for staff, pupils and, where appropriate, their families.
- Through 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.

Definition of Mental Health and wellbeing:

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 Organisation)

- At Stock we believe that mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:
- feel confident in themselves;
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.;
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.;
- cope with the stresses of everyday life; manage times of stress and be able to deal with change;
- learn and achieve.

Policy Aims

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.

Whole school approach to promoting positive 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 seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
3. Helping children to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

Lead Members of Staff

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

A Clay and S Whyman - designated child protection / safeguarding officer

A Clay and K Drage- mental health leads

R Wilkinson and D Rouse - lead first aiders

A Henson - Head of PSHE

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 student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection office of staff or the head teacher. If the student 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.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the School environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

Where a referral to EHWMS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by A Clay and K Drage, mental health leads.

Main Specialist Service	Referral Process
EWMHS - Tel: 0300 300 1600 Out of hours – crisis team Tel: 0300 555 1201 NELFT-EWMHS.referrals@nhs.net	Accessed through school, GP or self-referral
Educational Psychologist	Accessed through SENCo – K Drage
Specialist teacher (behaviour)	Accessed through SENCo – K Drage

Individual Care Plans

Where appropriate and considered helpful an individual care plan will be drawn up for pupils who have a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health or have issues that are causing concern. The drafting of the document will involve the pupil, the parents and relevant professionals. This contents 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

Teaching about Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Whole School

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. Stock C of E Primary School uses the Jigsaw Programme to deliver this area of the curriculum however the specific content of lessons may be adjusted to provide appropriate learning opportunities for our pupils and to cater to the specific needs of a cohort but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

Emotional Resilience - At Stock C of E Primary School teaching and learning also follows the principles of Growth Mindset. All stakeholders – staff, pupils, governors and parents – have the approach clearly explained. Children are taught in a safe learning environment where they are encouraged to be curious and interested learners. Pupils learn to enjoy a challenge and recognise that through failure they can find success. They develop the capacity to learn from experience and to overcome difficulty and adversity thus enabling them to develop emotional resilience.

Small Groups

In addition, Children identified with social and emotional needs may be supported by small group or 1 to 1 mentoring, which may include play therapy, Zones of Regulation, interventions that improve children's communication skills around turn taking, dealing with issues and resolving conflicts. These will provide the children with opportunities to develop the skills to manage their feelings and anxieties.

Teachers follow the **PSHE Association Guidance** to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs

Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children are paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
- Involve children in the care and support they have.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.

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 A Clay or K Drage, our mental health and emotional wellbeing leads.

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

Managing disclosures 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. Staff make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead or the Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Lead and recorded. We then implement our assessment system, which is based on levels of need to ensure that children get the support they need, either from within the School or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

Level of Need	Evidence based Intervention or support	Monitoring
Low Need	General Support E.g. School Nurse drop in, class teacher, LSA	
Some Need	Access to in school intervention group, school nurse, art therapy, lego therapy, educational psychologist, LSA/CT 1:1 intervention, LSA/CT small group intervention, skills for life/wellbeing programmes, Zones of Regulation, school counsellor.	<p>All children needing targeted individualised support will have an Individual Care Plan drawn up setting out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The needs of the children • How the pupil will be supported • Actions to provide that support • Any special requirements <p>Children and parents/carers will be involved in the plan.</p> <p>The plan and interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact</p> <p>The Care Plan is overseen by the Mental Health Lead/SENCO</p>
Highest Need	EWMHS referral by school, GP or family. External Agency support e.g Brentwood Catholic Children's Society. If school, professionals and family conclude EHCP required – refer to SEND policy	

Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs

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, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available.

When a concern has been raised, the School will:

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them (*In almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.*)

- 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.
- Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child.
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and children may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves.

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.

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 with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing/saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g., signs of relapse)

Additionally, we would highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Support and Training Staff

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular 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 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 pupil.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing, such as Wellbeing inset days and staff yoga club, opportunities to work from home, dedicated time for subject leader release; classes covered so staff can attend significant family events – (child's nativity play, Leavers' school assembly)