



# Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy

Date Adopted:	Autumn 2018
Date of Review	Biennial
Policy Reference Number:	
Staff Member:	Rachel Spregg
Governor:	



## **Policy statement**

At Wild Bank Community School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all pupils, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows pupils' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

This policy is a guide to all stakeholders – including parents, teaching staff, non-teaching staff and governors – outlining Wild Bank Community Schools approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

The Department of Education (2015) states *“In order to help their pupils succeed, schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.”*

This policy directly relates to the six principles of nurture which are recommended by NurtureUK, the principles underpin our ethos and practice within the school.

## **Policy Aims**

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and pupils.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in pupils.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with children with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to pupils with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.

- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from our Senior Leadership Team that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and pupil welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

### **Key staff members**

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of our pupils, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Mental Health & Wellbeing Lead
- Pastoral Staff – Learning Mentors
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- SENDCO/Inclusion Lead
- Youth Mental Health First Aider
- PSHE Coordinator

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, in the first instance they should record it on My Concern and then speak to the Mental Health Lead / Learning Mentors.

If there is a concern that the child is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

When a pupil has been identified as cause for concern / has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through Healthy Young Minds or another organisation, it is recommended that an Individual Care Plan (Appendix 1) should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

## **Teaching about mental health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding our pupils need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum.

Year 6 utilise the Real Love Rocks issued by Barnados, whereas the rest of the school follow the Tameside 2018 Sex and Relationships Education Curriculum. Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote pupils' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of pupils' own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing pupils who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting pupils to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

## **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware and kept regularly informed of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, leaflets in the entrance) and through our newsletters, website and Anomaly screen, we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure pupils and their families understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why should they access it
- What is likely to happen next

## **Sources of support at school**

- All children will have a daily check in with their class teachers in the form of an emotional register. Children who need to talk will be given the opportunity to speak to their teaching assistant/learning mentor on the same day.
- Worry boxes will be placed in the classroom for children to note any concerns/worries they may be experiencing. These can be dealt with on a one to one basis or through group work / Circle Time where appropriate.
- Children can access sessions / interventions with the Learning Mentor focussing on their area of need. Sessions are tailored to meet the specific needs of the children and include work around thoughts, feelings and behaviour, mindfulness and relaxation. Interventions to support children developing their self esteem, managing their anger, developing their friendship and social skills are also

delivered as part of our proactive offer (a menu of pastoral interventions is attached). Appendix 2

- Children can request one to one sessions to check in and talk through any difficulties/issues that may be bothering them.
- Referrals can be made to TOG MIND and/or Off The Record when it is felt that children need a counselling service or at the request of a parent.
- Referrals can be made to Healthy Young Minds if it is felt that professional mental health support is required.

## **Local Support**

In Tameside, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, these include The Hive at Tameside and Glossop MIND and The Anthony Seddon Foundation. The providers at The Hive specialise in children and young people's mental health wellbeing, providing one to one drop in sessions and small group interventions – they can be contacted on 0161 330 9223.

## **Warning Signs**

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 alert staff who are trained as Youth Mental Health First Aiders, these warning signs should also be recorded on MyConcern.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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

## **Targeted support**

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to Healthy Young Minds, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with outside agencies in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of pupils who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely with Tameside Council, and other agencies to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Identifying and assessing using the Boxall Profile & Goodmans Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, According to the child's needs;
- Ensure children have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including Healthy Young Minds, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it.

## **Managing disclosures**

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on My Concern, including:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with our designated safeguarding leads.

## **Confidentiality**

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a pupil to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the pupil.

We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- Why we need to tell them
- What we are going to tell them
- When we're going to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the pupil first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as children who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague on the inclusion team this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the pupil. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, child protection procedures should be followed.

## **Whole school approach**

### **Working with parents/carers**

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present – pupils, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or

phone call might be beneficial at this stage. Parents can seek support from The Anthony Seddon Centre, contact number: 0161 376 4439.

We will ensure an update is completed on MyConcern to record details of the meeting and points discussed/agreed.

### **Supporting parents**

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our website, newsletters.
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare, uniform, free school meal entitlement. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

### **Supporting Peers**

When a child is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the child 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 will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

### **Training**

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 to enable them to keep pupils safe. We have three members of staff qualified in Youth Mental Health First Aid training.

We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. 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 developing situations with one or more pupil.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight / INSET training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is **Sept 2020**. In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of the Mental Health Lead.

Read in conjunction with the following policies;

Positive Behaviour Policy

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Nurture Group



### Emotional Health and Wellbeing Plan:

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis:

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\* Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions

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\* Medication and any side effects

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\* Who to contact in an emergency (include contact details)

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\* The role of specific staff

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (member of staff)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent)