

Witherley C.E. Primary School



Wellbeing Policy - Pupils

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Policy Statement

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 Organization)

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental well-being for all of pupils. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. In addition to promoting positive mental well-being, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. We can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health, or signpost individuals to organisations for support.

Aims

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and well-being.

This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

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 pupils with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Mrs D Middleton - designated child protection / safeguarding officer
- Mrs A Hodgson – SENCo
- Mrs D Middleton – mental health lead

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or well-being of a pupil should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection lead or the head teacher. If the pupil 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.

Individual Well-being Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual Well-being Plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This 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

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 PHSE curriculum. There will always be an emphasis on helping pupils to recognise different emotions and knowing how to self-regulate. There will be regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on their emotions, actions and reactions. The school supports key mental health days e.g. Hello Yellow, World Mental Health Day to raise awareness of mental health.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. Parents will regularly be invited into school to meet professionals and discuss ways to support their children.

We will display relevant sources of support in the school entrance and staff room.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will ensure parents understand:

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

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional well-being issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with Mrs D Middleton, 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, mood and behaviour
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Low self-esteem
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Wanting to skip PE or wanting to get changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school

- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

Staff should always follow procedures set out in the Safeguarding Policy.

All disclosures should be recorded in writing on a Concern Log and stored confidentially.

This written record should include:

- Date and time
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with Mrs D Middleton who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Working with Parents and Carers

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. We should let the child know that we will have to share information. Information must always be shared with the parent/carer. However, we need to be sensitive in approach. We should inform the child and the parent/carer:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, the child protection lead must be informed immediately.

Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, members of staff and other professionals.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect. We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing.

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 steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Supporting Parents

In order to support parents, we will:

- 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 own child or a friend of their child
- Make our Wellbeing policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information meetings
- 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.

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. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil.

Supporting Pupils

We believe we have a key role in promoting children's positive mental health and well-being. Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Transition support to junior school
- Quiet/reflection areas
- Positive, structured play opportunities at playtimes
- PSHE
- Circle Times
- Promoting healthy lifestyles through diet and exercise to support mental health and wellbeing

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training on how to recognise and respond to mental health issues as part of their child protection training in order to keep themselves and pupils 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.

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

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