



MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING POLICY

Updated April 2020

As a Silver Rights Respecting School, we promote the rights of the child as laid down by UNICEF's Convention of Rights of the Child (CRC). As participants in this scheme we:

- Ensure that coverage of any relevant UNICEF Articles is undertaken.
- Listen to the views of the children in our school regarding equality, diversion and cohesion.
- This policy recognises the child's right to Article 24: All children have the right to health care, including mental health support.

UNCRC Article 28: All children have the right to an education.

Policies and practice in Whinfield Primary School respects children's dignity.

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing.

Our Aims and Ethos

At Whinfield Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We aim to promote a mentally healthy school environment through a positive, supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

At Whinfield all teachers are able to recognise the basic signs and triggers to look out for regarding emotional difficulties or mental health problems and we have specially trained and accredited mental health staff to support both staff and pupils. We want to help children to understand their emotions and feelings better and feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries. Linking with HRE we want our pupils to form and maintain relationships and develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks. We think it is important that we promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count, helping them to be confident.

At Whinfield we have a whole school approach that promotes being a mentally healthy school. We are a Rights Respecting School and encourage children to know their rights and have a voice. We give them opportunities to participate in decision making through our Rights Respecting Children Representatives and our school council. We celebrate both academic and non-academic achievements from both in and out of school and we offer opportunities to reflect and develop mindfulness strategies.

What we teach at Whinfield Primary

As set out in the HRE statutory guidance, mental wellbeing plays a big part in children leading healthy lives. Our HRE Policy states: (see Whinfield HRE Policy)

'At Whinfield Primary the aim of teaching about physical health and mental well-being is to give our children the ability to make good decisions about their own health and well-being. It will help them to recognise what is normal and what isn't within themselves and others, knowing when to seek support as early as possible from appropriate sources. We want children to know that physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked and that good health in one leads to good health in another. It is important at Whinfield that we promote our pupil's ability to self-control and self-regulate, giving them strategies to do so. We want them to be confident in their ability and achieve

well, to persevere and continue through setbacks. Through our integrated whole school approach we endeavour to have a positive impact on behaviour and attainment.

Effective teaching should aim to reduce stigma attached to health issues and should develop an atmosphere of openness. Through health and well-being education our children should feel confident to seek any necessary advice as they gain important knowledge.

The focus in our school will be on teaching the characteristic of good physical health and well-being and teacher will be clear that mental well-being is a normal part of everyday life, in the same way as physical health. This starts with our pupils being taught the importance of healthy exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep and giving them the knowledge and language to understand the normal range of emotions everyone experiences. Teachers will talk about how they can protect their health and well-being including simple self-care, personal hygiene, basic first aid etc. We will teach children about the benefits of hobbies, interests and participation with others. They will be taught about the benefits of rationing time online and the risk of excessive use of electronic devices.'

We will teach the objectives set through the HRE framework and follow guidance from the PSHE association which embeds these objectives as part of a wider curriculum.

In addition we will promote growth mind-set and include lessons to help develop reflectiveness, resilience and resourcefulness. Children will also have an opportunity every day to practise a mindful technique introduced to them every Monday (initiative such as mindful monsters have been successful). Children will be encouraged to use these techniques to self-regulate.

How we teach at Whinfield Primary

Our school adopts a range of approaches to provide the children with a good level of mental health lessons and appropriate support. Mental health and wellbeing will be celebrated in the first week of the new school year and then embedded throughout the curriculum. It will continue to have timetabled lesson time in the school week in the form of PHSE/ RSE. Statutory objectives will be followed and supplemented by initiatives that staff have been trained to use. Zippy's and Apple's friends can be used to support lessons (not duplicate) and Dino School will be used to target specific groups of children to offer more support.

In the classroom teaching might be in the form of practical activities, circle time, discussion and debate, reflective journals and independent tasks. Mindfulness will also form part of the daily routine and has a specific time at the end of the day for children to unwind before home time.

In each classroom there will be a wellness chart for children to show how they are feeling each day. Teachers will be aware of the children who need support and will make time to speak with individual children to offer guidance and care.

Mental well-being work done in school will be extended through carefully planned homework. A pick and mix homework will be sent home and all children will be expected to do this in conjunction with a parent.

Each class has BLP (Building Learning Power) mascots displayed and teachers will refer to them as they are teaching the skills. Giving praise can also be related to the mascots. Children will be introduced to the parts of their brain as the Meercat, Elephant and Owl (based on Paul MacLean's *The Triune Brain in Evolution*) to help them understand what happens to their brain as they encounter challenges and how by self-control and self-regulation they can stay calm and persevere and develop their own Calmness Toolkit.

Working with Parents

As mentioned in the previous section, we aim to keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in school and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home through carefully planned homework, sharing ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children. We will highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums, meet and greets or coffee mornings. We will ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child. We have included the thoughts and opinions of our parents in this policy and will make it easily accessible to parents on our school website.

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 in order to enable them to keep students safe. 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 to developing situations with one or more pupils.

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 child protection and safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
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- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Pupils with SEND

At Whinfield Primary we are aware of the emotional wellbeing difficulties that children with medical needs, with ASD or ADHD, language and communication difficulties or learning difficulties like dyslexia may have. (For instance additional stress, anxiety and feelings of isolation or low self-esteem). We are also aware of the vulnerabilities that pupils from disadvantaged groups may have in terms of emotional wellbeing and the additional pressures they face.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists

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.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with

policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and PSHE, HRE, RSE and SMSC policies. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

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

Shirley Welsh, Kay Murray- Designated child protection / safeguarding officer

Stacy Airey- PSHE, HRE, SRE lead

Stacy Airey- Mental Health and Emotional wellbeing lead

Theresa Kelly, Liz Knight - Teaching Assistant Mental Health First Aiders.

Shirley Welsh, Kay Murray - Senior Leader Mental Health First Aiders

Stacy Airey - Teacher Mental Health First Aider.

This Policy has been agreed by parents, staff and governors April 2020

This Policy will be reviewed April 2021
