



Stow Heath Primary School



Mental Health & Wellbeing for pupils & staff Policy



At Stow Heath Primary School, we recognise that positive mental health and wellbeing are essential to the development of thriving and successful pupils. It is therefore vital to our aims as an organisation that we provide high quality mental health and wellbeing support.

This policy sets out our commitment to monitoring and improving the wellbeing of our pupils. It sets out some of the ways in which key members of staff take responsibility for the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. It also describes our process for identifying and responding to mental ill health, and the support we make available to all pupils.

Aims

We aim to ensure that our school:

- reduces the stigma attached to mental health issues and promotes positive wellbeing in all pupils
- provides a secure environment that encourages openness and trust
- can respond effectively to concerns about pupils' mental health
- embeds the skills pupils need to make good decisions about their own mental health and wellbeing
- offers comprehensive pastoral and medical support that is accessible to all pupils.

Roles and responsibilities

The school's designated lead for mental health and wellbeing is responsible for:

- coordinating the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing
- providing all members of staff with the knowledge and skills they need to identify signs of mental ill health in pupils
- building strong working relationships with child and adolescent mental health services and other external partners
- reporting to the governing body on the school's wellbeing policy and programmes
- working with the senior leadership team (SLT), governing body, school staff, parents and pupils to create an environment where everyone feel safe, supported and motivated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- reviewing this policy on a regular basis, ensuring that it is developed in consultation with pupils, parents and members of staff
- ensuring that staff are equipped with the appropriate training to support pupils in mental health and wellbeing
- listening to the views of pupils and making sure that they have opportunities to contribute to the decision-making process
- ensuring that the school shares information on mental health with all pupils.

The headteacher implements these responsibilities with the support of appropriate members of the senior leadership team such as the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and pastoral staff.



The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for:

- keeping detailed records of any significant mental health concerns
- liaising with external services where there are any significant mental health concerns
- acting as a source of support and expertise to the school community.

All members of school staff are responsible for:

- treating all pupils with empathy, respect and kindness
- encouraging pupils to disclose concerns or seek help when necessary
- reporting any wellbeing or mental health concerns to the school's designated lead for mental health and wellbeing.

Examples of good practice may include:

- organising whole-school or year group assemblies to discuss specific mental health and wellbeing issues
- arranging for external speakers to visit and discuss topical issues such as the use of social media or the impact of body image
- using key dates such as Mental Health Awareness Week and World Mental Health Day as opportunities to raise the profile of mental health
- holding designated health and wellbeing days, organising activities across the curriculum
- dedicating time to celebrate pupils' academic and extracurricular achievements
- including pupil wellbeing in lesson observation criteria for teaching staff
- running yoga or mindfulness sessions to prepare pupils for a relaxed day
- using displays and bulletins to signpost pupils to sources of support
- organising a tutor programme so that pupils have regular opportunities to discuss mental health issues in small groups.

Mental health and wellbeing in the curriculum

The school will commit to promoting physical health and mental wellbeing through in-classroom teaching. In addition to the basic steps pupils can take to care for themselves, teachers will put specific emphasis on the skills young people need to overcome setbacks and succeed in the face of adversity.

Positive wellbeing is promoted through the curriculum and all school activities. Through a carefully planned approach to PSHE & Citizenship our pupils are helped to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives, and to become resilient, informed responsible citizens.

Specific themes that promote positive emotion health and wellbeing include:

- Autumn term: Being in my World & Celebrating Difference
- Spring term: Dreams and Goals & Healthy me
- Summer term: Relationships & Changing Me

In addition, whole school approaches such as circle time sessions are used to further develop the pupils' knowledge of strategies. For example, peaceful problem solving is taught in circle time sessions to help pupils learn to control and



manage feelings when there are disputes on the playground. Whole school events are held including Mental Health Awareness Week in May, World Mental Health Day in October, and Anti-Bullying week in November. During these events, the focus is on mindfulness and resilience and the purpose is to teach pupils' strategies for dealing with anxiety and coping with changes. Children will have the opportunity to raise difficult issues and as a result these will be acted on and a debrief provided.

Supporting individual pupils

When pupils require additional support for social, emotional and/or mental health, we use the Getting it Right Program developed by Educational Psychologist Service in Wolverhampton to personalise individual needs.

Where there is a need for more specialised, targeted approaches that support vulnerable children, school will use our Family Liaison Officer or refer to outside organisations such as CAMHs for support.

All members of staff will work together to identify and monitor mental health concerns. Open communication between members of staff will help to create a 'first line' in supporting individual pupils and responding to disclosures. Staff will record information accurately and regularly in order to track concerns. This will complement the school's pastoral tracking processes. In addition, senior and pastoral leaders will meet to discuss any ongoing concerns and make suitable arrangements as required.

Staff will be encouraged to look out for:

- erratic, unaccountable behaviour (e.g. leaving lessons suddenly)
- changes in sleeping habits
- disengagement from work or extracurricular activities
- unexpected or disproportionate reactions to ordinary situations
- aggressive or compulsive behaviour
- a drop in academic achievement
- a drop in attendance
- isolation from peers
- dysfunctionality in family life
- talking about self-harm or suicide
- changes in appetite
- changes in clothing
- abusing alcohol or drugs.

The school will provide a list of all members of staff who are available to discuss mental health concerns confidentially. If a member of staff feels it is appropriate to pass on concerns, they will explain to the pupil who they are going to talk to and what they are going to tell them.

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs





As a school, we want to ensure that we have clear systems and processes in place for early intervention and identification of mental health problems, and that referral to experienced skilled professionals is made. Staff know pupils well and are on the constant look out for any signs that children are upset, appear anxious or worried, or are acting 'out of character'. Negative experiences and distressing life events can affect mental health in a way that brings about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state. This can include:

- Emotional state (fearful, withdrawn, low self-esteem)
- Behaviour (aggressive or oppositional; habitual body rocking)
- Interpersonal behaviours (indiscriminate contact or affection seeking; overfriendliness or excessive clinginess; demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent disapproval; failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort of affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed; coercive controlling behaviour; or lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions).

Risk and Protective Factors

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school's role in supporting and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- Prevention: Creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping children to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this through our ethos and other school activities.
- Identification: Recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
- Early support: Helping children to access evidence based early support and interventions.
- Access to specialist support: Working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

Providing a network of support

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

- ❖ Mrs Scoffham, Mrs Nicholls, Mrs Billingham-Hill – designated safeguarding leads
- ❖ Mrs Billingham-Hill mental health leads
- ❖ Mrs E Nicholls – CPD Lead
- ❖ Mrs A Bennett – PSHE lead

Working with families and the community

The school believes that effective mental health and wellbeing support depends on the input of parents, carers and the broader community. We make sure that parents have regular opportunities to inform our approach.



We understand and value the need to work closely with parents to ensure that the school's health initiatives meet the needs of our pupils. We value the important contribution made by parents and appreciate the need to proactively engage parents and families in the health of the children. We see to establish and maintain strong partnerships with families, outside agencies and the wider community to promote consistent support for the children's health and wellbeing.

To support parents, we;

- Highlight resources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child
- Make our Mental Health and Wellbeing 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

Pastoral Organisation for Staff and Staff Wellbeing

Pastoral support for all members of the school community is fundamental to our aims and philosophy. We believe that a well-supported, valued staff team with a clear and shared purpose are best placed to provide emotional wellbeing for the children in their care. Members of our community meet to support the school's work around mental health and emotional wellbeing.

To ensure staff wellbeing, these principles are followed:

- Leaders act as positive role models
- Senior leaders ensure that the school environment promotes staff wellbeing
- Decision making processes are understood and supported by staff
- Opportunities are provided for staff to socialise and relax with each other
- New staff are supported with an appropriate level of induction
- Leaders promote an open listening culture that responds quickly to problems
- The regular and systematic of monitoring staff absences
- Access to confidential external counselling and support services

Working with other agencies and parties

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
- Wolverhampton Outreach support services
- Inclusion Support Services



- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)

Training

We are committed to high quality, ongoing professional development on emotional wellbeing and mental health. All staff will receive regular training linked to a recognising and responding to mental health issues. Specific issues will be covered through specialist training where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with a child/ren.

Related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with policies for:

- anti-bullying and behaviour policies
- child protection and safeguarding
- online safety
- personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- SMSC Policy

Useful links

- Young Minds is one of the UK's leading charities for children and young people's mental health.
- Place2Be is one of the UK's leading children's mental health charities.
- Mind is the UK's leading mental health charity, offering a great deal of useful information on children's mental health.
- Children's Mental Health Week is an annual opportunity to encourage children, young people and adults to celebrate their uniqueness.
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) provide support to children and young people with a wide range of behavioural and emotional issues.

Signed by

_____ **Chair of governors**

Date:

_____ **Headteacher**

Date:

This policy will be reviewed annually