Stadhampton Primary School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

June 2023
Review June 2026

Introduction

'The culture, ethos and environment of a school influences the health and wellbeing of pupils and their readiness to learn'
'Pupils with better health and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically'
Public health England (2014)

It is widely recognised that emotional health and wellbeing influence cognitive development, learning, physical and social health and mental wellbeing.

Definition

At Stadhampton Primary School, mental health and wellbeing is defined as the physical and mental wellbeing of all members of the school community; children, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

Principles

- We are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers).
- We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.
- We endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to access help when they need it.
- We 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.
- We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

A 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 eight aspects:

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

- 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.

Teaching about mental health

At Stadhampton Primary School, we work in a proactive way to avoid problems arising. The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHCE curriculum.

We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, values, policies and behaviours that support mental health and well-being.
- Adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management.
- Helping children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries.
- Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better.
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world.
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it is normal to talk about mental health; teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Enabling access to appropriate support.

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

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

- Senior Mental Health Lead – Emma Charnock
- SENDCo-Nicki Stafford

These people are responsible for

- Leading and working with all staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Ensure staff actively follow our PSHCE curriculum
- Provide advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
- Liaise with mental health services and make individual referrals to them.

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of children which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Targeted use of mental health and wellbeing resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters'.
- Managing emotions resources.
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

Raising concerns

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.

Note: 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. We give children the option of informing their parents

Early identification and warning signs

Our identification systems involve a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires),

- Analysing behaviour
- Using Leuven scales to identify children in EYFS who need support.
- Staff reporting concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons.
- Worry boxes in classes for children to raise concerns which are checked by the Class Teachers and Mental Health Lead (these are anonymous but give an indication of needs in a particular classes regularly)

These signs might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
- Falling academic achievement.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE.
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development. If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the School's child protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency then the School's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

Assessment and Tracking

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:
- The school referral planning tool and documentation
- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile

Assessment

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with class teachers and SENDCO to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Lead and recorded. We then implement our referral 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.

Interventions and Support

The kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and children For example CAMHS-assessment, 1:1 or family support or treatment, consultation with school staff and other agencies. If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a statutory education, health and care assessment is required, we refer to the SEND policy.

All children needing targeted individualised support will have an Individual Care Plan drawn up setting out the needs of the children, how the pupil will be supported, actions to provide that support, and any special requirements

Children and parents/carers will be involved in the plan. The plan and interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact e.g. through a pre and post SDQ and if needed a different kind of support can be provided. The Care Plan is overseen by the Mental Health Lead.

Working with parents and carers

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead for assessment. To support parents and carers we will:

- Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.

Working with specialist services

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- Behaviour support through class and small group intervention
- Educational Psychology Services
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- School Nursing Service
- Children's and Family Services
- Therapists
- Family support workers
- Counselling Services

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 pupils safe. We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

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.

Links to other policies

- Anti Bullying,
- SEND Policy
- Safeguarding Policy,
- Behaviour Policy.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy will be published on the school website - hard copies are available on request. The policy will be reviewed every three years.