

**Mental Health and**

**Well-being**

**Policy**

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| **Approved by Governing Body:** | January 2021 |  |
| **Last reviewed on:** | January 2021 | |
| **Next review due by:** | January 2024 | |

**Policy Content and Rationale**

*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 Organisation)*

At Penwortham Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health for our whole school community. We pursue this aim using both whole school and specialised, targeted approaches. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we aim to promote a safe and stable environment to prepare our community for the current and future challenges and opportunities.

**Policy Availability**

Communication regarding this policy has been via the school newsletter and parental questionnaire. The policy is available on the school website as a draft initially to enable consultation and the opportunity for questions. Following this period, the policy will be found on the school website and in another format can be obtained by request.

**Policy Aims and Objectives**

* To ensure that through the promotion of positive mental health and well-being, children and adults are helped to understand and express their feelings, build their confidence and emotional resilience and therefore their capacity to learn and work.
* To increase the awareness and understanding and reduce stigma amongst children and adults of issues involving mental health and well-being and to provide support at an early stage to anyone who is or appears to be suffering from mental health issues.

Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing:

Penwortham Primary School promotes positive mental health and well-being by:

* Having a whole-school approach to promoting positive mental health and well-being within an ethos of high expectations and constant support.
* Having a committed staff community that sets a whole school culture of positive mental health and well-being, support and values that everyone understands.
* Having a robust regime of continuing professional development (CPD) for staff.
* Working closely with pupils, parents and carers.
* Promoting key values to the school community to develop their **personal best**.

**Lead Members of Staff**

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

* Lisa Gaskell (Deputy Headteacher)- DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead), Pupil Mental Health Champion, PSHE Lead, CPD Lead, Line Manager for Support Staff and Welfare
* Helen Hesketh (Headteacher) – Staff Mental Health Champion
* Jo Curran – SEND Lead and Back-up DSL
* Julie Cullen - Lead First Aider
* Helen Noblett – Learning Mentor and Back-up DSL
* Rachael James – Back-up DSL

**Creating a Safe and Supportive Learning Environment**

Managing Disclosures

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or well-being of a pupil or member of staff should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance.

A student 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 student 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 first thoughts should be of the student’s emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring ‘Why?’

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMs.

If there is a fear that the pupil/staff member is in danger of immediate harm, then the usual safeguarding/child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to a DSL. If the student/member of staff 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. Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Mrs Gaskell.

Confidentiality

Pupils and staff should know that the information they give will need to be shared with the necessary people. This should include:

* Who is going to be spoken to
* What they are going to be told
* Why they need to be told

There should never only be one member of staff holding this knowledge. This is to help safeguard emotional well-being, ensure continuity of care and provide an extra source of advice and support.

**Supporting students**

Mental health and well-being is a varied and complex area and there are no quick fix solutions. Maintaining every day regular routines wherever possible, such as, attending school and lessons whilst working towards managing mental health is key. School offers a range of services to help students develop positive mental health and well-being and support those experiencing mental health issues. These include:

* The senior leadership team who lead and support positive mental health and well-being across school.
* An ELSA trained Learning Mentor
* Lego Therapy
* Questionnaires
* Timetabled 1:1 and group sessions for vulnerable pupils
* The SEND Lead
* The class teachers, teaching assistants and welfare staff who know the children in their year group well and are trained to spot signs.
* The PSHE curriculum which includes mental health topics in order to raise awareness and understanding and provide strategies for developing positive emotional health and well-being and managing mental health.
* The Bounce Back curriculum – these additional PSHE units have the flexibility to focus on developing children’s resilience, confidence and ability to learn.
* Constructive links with outside support and specialist agencies (e.g. school nurse, CANW, CAMHS) to provide interventions for those with mental health difficulties

**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 developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort and there is an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We follow the CORAM SCARF PSHE curriculum (compliant with the PSHE Association Guidance) to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional well-being issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. In addition, we tailor the curriculum to the needs of the cohorts following consultation. This includes specific work on positive mental health and well-being, resilience, conflict resolution and keeping ourselves safe.

**Signposting**

We ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community.

We display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to parents.

**Warning Signs**

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil or adult 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 Mrs Hesketh or Mrs Gaskell using CPOMs.

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 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 secretively
* Lateness to or absence from school
* Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
* An increase in lateness or absenteeism

**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.

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.

**Supporting Staff**

We understand that for staff to be able to support children’s’ mental health and emotional well-being, their own well-being is paramount.

As a school, we therefore offer:

*  A warm, supportive and caring working environment
*  A workplace where there is a clear behaviour framework, which is values led
*  An open-door policy
*  Opportunities for regular 1 to 1 meetings
*  Option of PPA time to be taken at home
*  An understanding of commitments outside of school that we, where possible, will support

staff to attend e.g. children’s sports days, awards assemblies etc.

*  EYFS supervision (teachers and support staff)
*  Regular safeguarding updates
* Counselling
* Questionnaires
* Mental Health RAG rated action plan from Anna Freud
* Display contacts for agencies and share literature for wellbeing and mental health support
* Free NHS health checks in school time to those eligible

In addition to these, there have been other methods of support and consideration during the Covid-19 pandemic.

For example:

* Removing expectations of providing after school and extra-curricular clubs whilst in the pandemic
* Additional lunchtime staffing is in place
* Having a flexible approach to supporting staff who have unplanned childcare issues during the pandemic
* Provided staff fleeces
* Little pick-ups and treats (e.g. staffroom cakes etc) to show that we are thinking of everyone
* Review of homework expectations during pandemic and whilst providing home learning alongside class teaching
* Keeping Bubbles secure

**Involving Parents and Carers**

We are committed to working with parents and carers. Mrs Gaskell and Mrs Hesketh are available by phone or email daily to discuss any issues and face to face meetings will be held as required. We encourage discussion at home through the class pages on the school website. We offer support through the school newsletters and website.

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, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
* Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
* 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.

**Review Date**

Mental health and well being for pupils and staff is reviewed termly by Behaviour, Safety and Premises Management Committee.

This policy will be reviewed by January 2022 by Mrs Gaskell. This will ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the school community.