



Hindhayes
INFANT SCHOOL

Hindhayes Infant School

Mental Health and Well Being Policy

September 2022

'Mental health is defined as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to their community' (WHO 2014)

Approved on: _____

Signed: _____

Role: _____

Policy Statement: At our school, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. Our culture is supportive, caring, and respectful. We encourage pupils to be open and we want each student to have their voice heard. At our school, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. At our school, positive mental health is everybody's responsibility. We all have a role to play.

Policy Scope: This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers, governors, and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach to promoting student mental health and wellbeing. It should be read and understood alongside our other relevant school policies.

Key staff members: All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

- Our Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Mental Health and Wellbeing champions and
- SENCO

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a pupil, then in the first instance they should speak to the DSL on duty. If a child presents as a medical emergency then relevant procedures will be followed e.g. contacting the emergency services.

Teaching about mental health: At Hindhayes we call our PHSCE curriculum, our 'Curriculum for Life'. It is developed to give students the skills, knowledge, and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy. This includes resilience techniques and training. We will regularly review our curriculum and lesson content to ensure that they're meeting the aims outlined in this policy. We'll also implement this into our curriculum at all stages to provide students with strategies to help keep them mentally well. Children take part in activities that encourage mindfulness and relaxation e.g. yoga, tai chi, colouring, deep breathing and massage. They also have access to a wonderful forest school site and outdoor learning.

Supporting Peers: We understand that, when a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. In response to this, we will consider, on a case by case basis, any peers that may need additional support. We will provide support in a one-on-one or group setting. These sessions will be guided by the student, but they will discuss how peers can help, how peers can access support themselves, and healthy ways of coping with any emotions they might be feeling.

Policy Aims: The aim of our policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our staff, pupils and school community.

At our school, we will always:

- Help children to understand their emotions and experiences better.
 - Ensure our pupils feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries.
 - Help children to form and maintain relationships.
 - Encourage children to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem.
 - Help children to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks.
- * We will always promote a healthy environment by:
- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all pupils and staff.
 - Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements.
 - Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
 - Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
 - Promoting pupil voice & giving them the opportunity to participate in decision-making.
 - Celebrating each student for who they are, making every student feel valued & respected.
 - Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to any student that needs it.
 - Raising awareness amongst the whole school community about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms.
 - Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in pupils.
 - Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health.

Managing disclosures: If a pupil discloses concerns about themselves or a friend, to any member of staff, then all staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner. All disclosures will be recorded confidentially and only shared with the appropriate authorities if it's necessary to keep the child safe, in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

The disclosure record will contain:

- The date of the disclosure.
- The name of the staff member to whom the disclosure was made.
- The nature of the disclosure and the main points from the conversation.
- Agreed next steps.

Confidentiality: If a member of staff thinks it's necessary to pass on concerns about a pupil, either to somebody inside the school or somebody outside it, then this will first be discussed with the pupil. They will be told:

- Who the staff member is going to tell.
- What the staff member is going to disclose.
- Why it's necessary for somebody else to be told.
- When the contact will be.

However, it may not be possible to gain the pupil's consent first, such as in the case of students who are at immediate risk. Protecting a pupil's safety is our main priority so we would share disclosures if we judged a child to be at risk.

Identifying needs and warning signs: All of our staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems. This means that they will be able to offer help and support to pupils who need it, when they need it. These warning signs are taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs will communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Leads as appropriate.

Staff will be able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:

- Physical signs of harm.
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in mood.
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide.
- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer.
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:

- Attendance and absenteeism.
- Punctuality and lateness.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.
- Family and relationship problems. Finally, staff will be well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a child's mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement **and health difficulties.**

Training: All staff will receive regular training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of their regular safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep children safe. We will consider additional training opportunities for staff and we will support additional CPD throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with pupils. Identified mental health champions have and continue to undertake training in this area so that they are informed and able to support with the impact of e.g. self-harm, low mood and depression. The mental health lead has completed both local and national training in the leading of mental health, these have been delivered by Somerset Local Council and the First Aid Industry Body.

Support at school and in the local community: We have a range of support available in school for any pupils who may be struggling. The interventions, how to access them and the aim and purpose of them is listed below:

Lunch club and access to the tree house: children have access to our designated area for wellbeing during playtimes and if and as required. It provides a quiet and reflective space.

Time to Talk: is a wave 2 intervention used in Key Stage 1 where children who are less confident in social situations can develop their personal skills.

ELSA nurture group: through classroom observations teachers identify children who may benefit from a trained adult playing alongside them in their classroom. In Key Stage 1 these children may be grouped and work on planned activities to develop e.g. friendship skills.

ELSA 1:1 sessions: Two members of our staff are trained in the national recognised emotional literacy support assistant training. Pupils are identified through pupil progress and vulnerable meetings to work from emotional base lines. Outcomes are shared with parents.

PFSA: Our parent family support worker has a wealth of experience and can provide support in the home for families on strategies to support parenting e.g. emotional coaching & priming. A referral can be made through the DSL/Head Teacher

Mental Health Workers: Some pupils may benefit from a short piece of CBT work. This can be accessed through the school DSL/SENCO and at the infant age range requires parental **engagement**

Whole School Approach: We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our pupils. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary. Working with parents and carers We aim to support parents as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child & offering support at all times. To support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information & support for mental health & wellbeing that we have.
- Share and allow parents to access further support.
- Ensure that parents know who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.
- Give parents guidance about how they can support their child's positive mental health.
- Ensure this policy is easily accessible to parents through e.g. the school website.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health training our school staff receive and how mental health is covered in our school curriculum.

Working with other agencies and partners as part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our pupils' emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with e.g. the school nurse, Paediatricians, CAMHS, counselling services, therapists. family support workers, behavioural support workers.

Signposting: We will ensure that all staff, students, and parents are aware of the support that's available in our school for mental health. This includes how to access further support, both inside and outside of school hours.

Policy Review This policy will be reviewed annually. This is so that it remains up to date, useful & relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local & national policy changes.