



THE FEDERATION OF
HACKBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL & SPENCER NURSERY SCHOOL

Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy



We all have mental health – some people call this emotional health or wellbeing. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act.

Good mental health and wellbeing is just as important as good physical health. Like physical health, mental health can range across a spectrum from healthy to unwell; it can fluctuate on a daily basis and change over time.

Most children grow up mentally healthy, but surveys suggest that more children and young people have problems with their mental health today than 30 years ago. It is thought that this is probably because of changes in the way that we live now and how that affects the experience of growing up.

The aims of the policy are to:

- Describe the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing
- Increase understanding of mental health awareness so as to facilitate early signposting and intervention for mental ill health
- Alert staff and parents to warning signs and risk factors
- Provide support and guidance to all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors
- Provide support to pupils who suffer from mental ill health, their peers and parents/carers

Our approach to mental health and wellbeing:

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines mental health as a state of wellbeing in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Good emotional health and wellbeing promotes individual achievement, school improvement and success in various ways:

- Pupils are happy and engaged with their learning
- Pupils and staff have high esteem and resilience
- Improved progress and attainment in every curriculum area
- Effective teaching
- Improved behaviour
- Improved attendance for staff and pupils
- Positive respectful relationships between pupils and staff

Lead members of staff

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (HPS – Mrs N Edmonds-Chappell; SNS – Mrs S Tanner)
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (HPS – Mrs E Walford, Miss N Robins, Miss K O’Doherty, Mr A Jasper; SNS – Mrs S O’Connor, Miss L Jackson)
- Youth Mental Health First Aiders (Miss N Robins, Miss K O’Doherty)
- Adult Mental Health First Aid Champion (Miss N Robins)
- Youth Mental Health Aware (Mrs E Walford, Mrs N Edmonds-Chappell, Mr A Jasper, Miss Y Adnyana, Mrs T Ruparelia)
- SENCO/Inclusion Manager (Miss N Robins)
- Assistant Manager for SEND & Inclusion (Mrs S Prior)

What happens in school?

In school, we teach children about what it means to have good mental health and wellbeing throughout our curriculum and daily practice. Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental ill health and to be a school where:

- All children are valued
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their worries without feeling any stigma
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- Bullying is not tolerated
- PSHE is taught regularly and consistently and gives children opportunities to understand emotions, feelings and learn key skills in how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy

Any member of staff or our school community who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to the relevant DSL, Deputy DSL or Youth Mental Health First Aider.

Warning Signs

Members of our community, including staff, may become aware of warning signs that could indicate that a pupil is struggling with their wellbeing or experiencing mental ill health. These warning signs must always be taken seriously and anyone observing any of these warning signs must communicate their concerns to the DSL/Deputy DSLs immediately. For staff, this is logged via *MyConcern*. However, if the warning sign is severe, then the individual who has become aware of this should report it verbally to the DSL/Deputy DSL immediately and without delay.

Possible warning signs include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. wearing long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Noticeable changes in appearance/behaviour/attitude
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Lateness to, or absence from, school
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Managing disclosures

A child may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to a friend, family adult or any member of staff so it is important to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a child chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend, the response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

The person being told should listen rather than advise and their first thoughts should be of the child's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures must be followed with an immediate referral to the school's DSL.

If the child presents a medical emergency in school, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies must be followed. In school, this includes 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 the SENCo or Assistant Manager for SEND & Inclusion.

Curricular and Extra-curricular Support

We support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils through:

- A strong school ethos which empowers tolerance and respect, including respect for difference and diversity
- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about behaviour
- Encouraging positive, caring and constructive relationships
- Supporting pupils to develop resilience and the ability to solve problems
- Having active listeners, including assistants and adults other than school staff to whom a child may turn
- Enhancing school and classroom layout with pupils in mind, and facilities and resources such as The Den
- Recognising the lived experiences of individual children and their physical, social and emotional needs
- Consistent support for vulnerable children and those with SEND from our trained team of staff and other agencies where appropriate
- A balanced curriculum with opportunities for intellectual, physical and expressive development

- Using a range of teaching styles, including Circle Time, appropriate to pupils' age, ability and level of maturity
- Opportunities for pupil leadership through School Council, Eco Team, School Prefects and other roles
- Opportunities for reflection and spiritual development through art, literature and the RE curriculum
- Nurture groups to support aspects of wellbeing and mental health
- Access to trained Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs)
- Referral to our Child & Family Support Worker (Jigsaw4U), who is in school once a week

Working with All Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Promote the understanding that good mental health and wellbeing is just as important as good physical health. Like physical health, mental health can range across a spectrum from healthy to unwell; it can fluctuate on a daily basis and change over time.
- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our Hackbridge Primary School website at <https://www.hackbridgeprimary.sutton.sch.uk/mental-health-wellbeing.php>
- Ensure that all parents/carers 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
- Share ideas about how parents/carers can support positive mental health in their children
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics that their children are learning about in PSED/PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home where appropriate

Parents/carers and staff

If a pupil, parent or staff member requires mental health first aid, one of our Youth Mental Health First Aiders or our Adult Mental Health First Aid Champion will follow the action plan (referred to as (ALGEE for short set out below:

- A**pproach, assess and assist with any crisis
- L**isten non-judgmentally
- G**ive support and information
- E**ncourage appropriate professional help
- E**ncourage other supports



Staff Support

We support the mental health and wellbeing of all staff through:

- Curriculum planning time within the school week
- Whole school training events, including safeguarding
- Staff surveys carried out annually to inform decisions e.g. introduction of weekly briefings, frequency of reporting to parents and so on.
- Self-monitoring tool for wellbeing via Lessons Learned platform
- Work life balance regularly reviewed and acted upon i.e. reduction of unnecessary paperwork, streamlined written reports.
- Promotion of workplace options and education support
- Opportunity for staff supervision
- Encouragement of social events

(Please also refer to the Staff Wellbeing package and Staff Wellbeing policy.)

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 safeguarding training to enable them to keep students safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal on www.minded.org.uk 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.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Helpful Websites

Mental Health First Aid England: <https://mhfaengland.org/>

Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families: <https://www.annafreud.org/>

Young Minds: <https://youngminds.org.uk/>

Place2Be: <https://www.place2be.org.uk/>

Heads Together: <https://www.headstogether.org.uk/>

Mental Health Foundation: <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk> Mind: <http://www.mind.org.uk/>

NHS: <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/mentalhealth/Pages/Mentalhealthhome.aspx>

NHS Every Mind Matters: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

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