



# Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Knotty Ash Primary School and DRB



2019-2021

*Loving Learning Together*

## Purpose of the policy

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health
- How we prevent mental health problems.
- How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems
- Key information about some common mental health problems.
- Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support.

This policy is available on the school website and hard copies are available on request from the school office.

## Rationale

At Knotty Ash Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and families), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "In order to help their children succeed, schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy." School's nurturing and supportive environment has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing. Schools can help engender a sense of belonging and community. Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to 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.

## Aims

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children are valued and their uniqueness is celebrated.
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying is not tolerated.

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

## Definition of mental health and wellbeing

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing:

**"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."**

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems.

We want all children/young people to:

- feel confident in themselves and their own identity.
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- understand and manage the stresses of everyday life.
- manage times of stress, be able to deal with change and know how to access support when needed.
- learn and achieve.

## 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 the following aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.

2. Encouraging children to develop a positive self-identity through inclusive ethos and valuing each unique individual and their contribution to the school family.
3. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
4. Helping children to be resilient learners.
5. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
6. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
7. Effectively working with parents and carers.
8. 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.

#### Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems. These include: physical long-term illness; having a parent who has a mental health problem; death and loss, including loss of friendships; family breakdown and bullying. Staff also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, emotional literacy, and a sense of worth and belonging.

#### Mental Health and Wellbeing Staff Team

Strategic responsibility lies with the Headteacher:

R Clements-Bedson

Curriculum responsibility lies with all members of the Communities and Diversity Team:

K O'Hanlon (Mental Health)

Y Murphy (P4C)

K Sweeney (Religious Education)

R. Clements-Bedson (PSHE)

Named mental health lead: K O'Hanlon

SENDCo: C England

Mental Health practitioners:

C Hegarty

J Rooke

J Rees

Named Governor with lead on mental health:

#### **Our Communities and Diversity Curriculum Team:**

- Leads and works with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Leads on PSHCE teaching about mental health.

## Sources of support, advice and referral for further help

In-school sources of relevant support include:

- Named Mental Health & Wellbeing lead

School Mental Health team

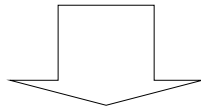
School Mental Health practitioners, including Th.inc therapists and bereavement counsellor

Senior Leadership Team

- Our Safeguarding/Child Protection Lead

- School support staff employed to manage mental health needs of particular children

- Our SENDCO who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including children whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision.



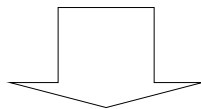
Sources of support to whom school staff can refer for advice:

- Our School Nurse team

Liverpool Early Help team

Colleagues in SEND Consortia

Colleagues in Mental Health & Wellbeing network



Sources of support to whom children may be referred:

Seedlings therapist

Play therapist

YPAS

CAMHS

Deaf CAMHS

NSPCC

Educational Psychologist

## Supporting children's positive mental health

We believe the School has a key role in promoting children positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

### Pupil-focused activities

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health.
- Worry Monsters in class - where children can anonymously share worries or concerns
- Mental health teaching programmes e.g. ROAR, PSHE, RSE
- P4C

Year 5 Play Leaders and Year 6 Prefects

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (trained by Bullybusters)

- Wellbeing activities

Massage and relaxation therapies

· Displays and information around the School about positive mental health and where to go for help and support

### Small group activities

- Th.inc Room group work
- Social communication groups (Sew Social; Time to Talk; Socially Speaking)
- ROAR sessions

## Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum

Through our Inclusive Curriculum, we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems.

EYFS & Key Stage 1 children learn:

- To recognise, name and describe feelings including good and not so good feelings.
- Simple strategies for managing feelings.
- How their behaviour affects other people.
- About empathy and understanding other people's feelings.
- To cooperate and problem solve.
- To motivate themselves and persevere.
- How to calm down.
- About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
- Who to go to if they are worried.
- About different types of teasing and bullying, and that these are wrong.
- How to resist teasing or bullying, if they experience or witness it, whom to go to and how to get help.

## Key Stage 2 children learn:

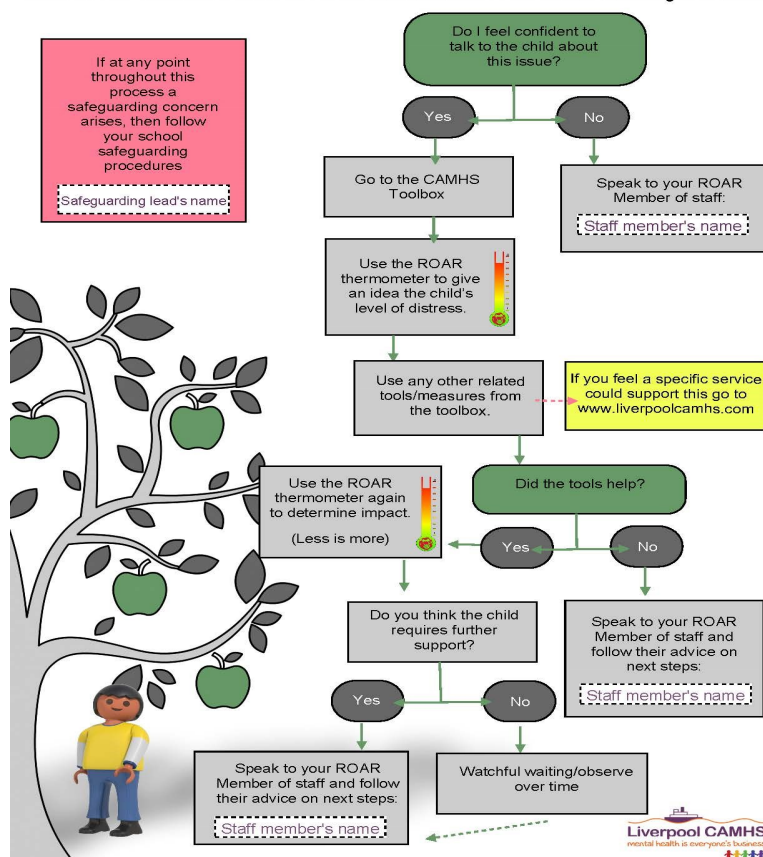
- What positively and negatively affects their mental and emotional health (including the media).
- Positive and healthy coping strategies., including resilience.
- To describe the range and intensity of their feelings to others.
- To recognise and respond appropriately to a wide range of feelings in others.
- To recognise that they may experience conflicting emotions and when they might need to listen to their emotions or overcome them.
- How to motivate themselves and bounce back if they fail at something.
- How to empathise and be supportive of others.
- About change, including transitions (between Key Stages and schools), loss, separation, divorce and bereavement.
- About the consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online bullying, prejudice-based language), as well as how to respond and ask for help if they are victims of this themselves.
- About the importance of talking to someone and how to get help.

## Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs

### Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children is paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
- Involve children in the care and support they have.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.

What do I do when I'm worried about the mental health or emotional wellbeing of a child?



## Early Identification

Our identification system involves 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:

- Analysing behaviour, attendance and sanctions.
- Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons.
- Worry Monsters in each class for children to raise concerns which are checked by the Class Teachers (children have choice to identify themselves or remain anonymous. If anonymous, 'worries' are addressed in P4C).
- Pupil Progress Review meetings termly
- Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns.
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer.
- Parental meetings.
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff.
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff.

All staff at Knotty Ash have had training in Mental Health First Aid (ROAR Response) including types of mental health needs and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to a member of the Mental Health Team and/or the SENDCO.

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.
- Drugs or alcohol misuse.
- 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.

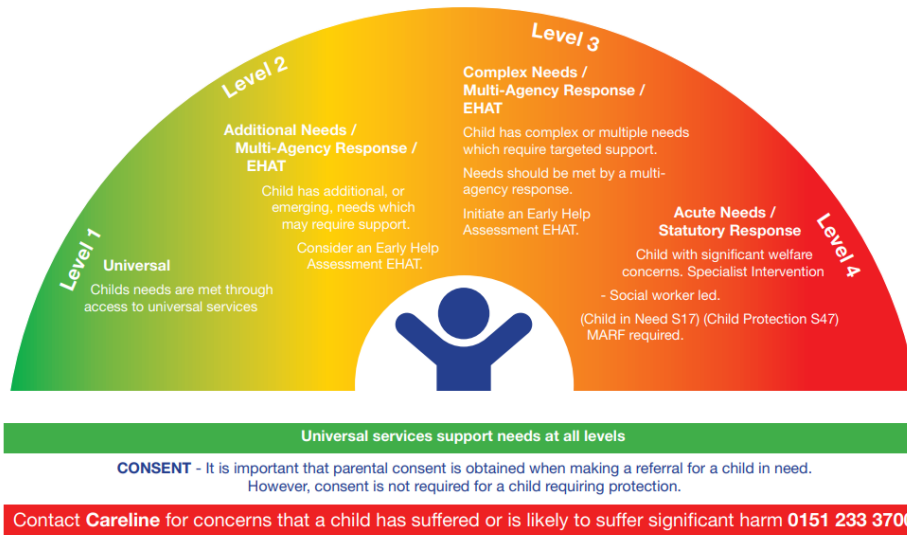
## Disclosures by children and confidentiality

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead/SENDCo or the Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil. All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file (CPOMS), including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Team and recorded. We then implement our assessment 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.

**Safeguarding Across the Continuum – Levels of Need and Response**



Practitioners must escalate to resolve any areas of professional disagreement. See LSCB Escalation Policy. Lorem ipsum



**Mental Health Continuum Model**



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal mood fluctuations</li> <li>• Calm &amp; takes things in stride</li> <li>• Good sense of humour</li> <li>• Performing well</li> <li>• In control mentally</li> <li>• Normal sleep patterns</li> <li>• Few sleep difficulties</li> <li>• Physically well</li> <li>• Good energy level</li> <li>• Physically and socially active</li> <li>• No or limited alcohol use/ gambling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irritable / impatient</li> <li>• Nervous</li> <li>• Sadness / overwhelmed</li> <li>• Displaced sarcasm</li> <li>• Procrastination</li> <li>• Forgetfulness</li> <li>• Trouble sleeping</li> <li>• Intrusive thoughts</li> <li>• Nightmares</li> <li>• Muscle tension / headaches</li> <li>• Low energy</li> <li>• Decreased activity/socializing</li> <li>• Regular but controlled alcohol use / gambling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Pervasively sad / hopeless</li> <li>• Negative attitude</li> <li>• Poor performance / workaholic</li> <li>• Poor concentration / decisions</li> <li>• Restless disturbed sleep</li> <li>• Recurrent images / nightmares</li> <li>• Increased aches and pains</li> <li>• Increased fatigue</li> <li>• Avoidance</li> <li>• Withdrawal</li> <li>• Increased alcohol use / gambling is hard to control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Angry outbursts / aggression</li> <li>• Excessive anxiety / panic attacks</li> <li>• Depressed / suicidal thoughts</li> <li>• Over insubordination</li> <li>• Can't perform duties, control behaviour or concentrate</li> <li>• Can't fall asleep or stay asleep</li> <li>• Sleeping too much or too little</li> <li>• Physical illnesses</li> <li>• Constant fatigue</li> <li>• Not going out or answering phone</li> <li>• Alcohol or gambling addiction</li> <li>• Other addictions</li> </ul>
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## Involving parents and carers

### Promoting mental health:

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting children who do have mental health needs. On first entry to the school, our parent's meeting includes a discussion on the importance of positive mental health for learning. We ask parents to inform us of any mental health needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing, based on a list of risk factors pertaining to the child or family. It is very helpful if parents and carers can share information with the school so that we can better support their child from the outset. All information is treated in confidence.

### To support parents and carers:

- We provide information and websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes and have produced leaflets for parents on mental health and resilience, which can be accessed on the school website. The information includes who parents can talk to if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child and where parents can access support for themselves.
- We include the mental health topics that are taught in the Inclusive Curriculum area of the website, including the Mental Health and Wellbeing progression plan.
- When children start school, all parents and carers are given our mental health and resilience leaflet that includes information on how parents can support their child's mental health and where to go for help and support.

### Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs :

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we are sensitive and supportive. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available. 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. 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 and carers about their mental health needs for themselves or of accompanying and supporting them to do so. We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the children, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

## Involving children

Every year we train up groups of children as Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (y5&6), Play Leaders (y5) and Prefects (y6) to support younger children throughout the school.

Our pupil 'Communities and Diversity Council' work alongside our School Council to lead on whole school campaigns on health and wellbeing.

We seek pupils' views about our approach, curriculum and in promoting whole school mental health activities. We always seek feedback from children who have had support to help improve that support and the services they received.

### Supporting and training staff

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do and where to get help. Two staff members have been fully trained on the ROAR response; two staff members have been trained in Th.inc Room; one staff member is a trained bereavement counsellor; one is a qualified L2 counsellor, and all our learning and teaching staff have had twilight training from our ROAR Response.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work-life balance. These are detailed in the Staff Work-Life Balance policy.