



Preparation for life's journey

Gresham Village School and Nursery

Emotional Health and Well-Being Policy

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‘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)

This policy has been developed using the resources provided by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families. The policy follows an audit using the Anna Freud Five Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing tool, which was carried out in collaboration with our parent and staff Emotional Health and Wellbeing Working Party and through discussion with pupils and parents.

Mental Health is high on the government and DfE’s agenda at the current time and should be developing fast over the coming years with a more structured approach both nationally and locally and through the training and support that schools will be able to access. It is therefore important that we are aware of changes and opportunities as they develop at both a local and national level, as well as responding to our own changing context and individual needs. It is important to view this policy as the first draft of a policy that will be evaluated and changed on a regular basis over the coming years.

This policy will:

- Set out the aims and rationale for our whole school approach to mental health and well-being.
- Explain how we work together within school and by using national and local agencies to provide the best possible approach to mental health and well-being for our pupils.
- Explain how we support mental health and well-being through safe environments and school culture and the school curriculum.
- Describe how we understand the needs within our school, identify children and families at risk and support children and families.
- Set out how we ensure that our staff are well trained and able to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.
- Explain how we evaluate and review our policy and procedures to ensure we are meeting the needs of our school community.

Links to other policies and documents

Safeguarding Policy

Positive Behaviour Policy

Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

PSHE Programme of Study

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Anti-Racism and Discrimination Policy

Trust Staff Well-being

Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools, DfE 2018

Aims and Rationale

At Gresham Village School and Nursery, we aim to promote positive mental health and well-being for our whole school community; pupils, staff, parents and carers, and recognise how important mental health and emotional well-being 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 has a significant effect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulties with learning than the majority of those of the same age.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice identifies Social, Emotional and Mental Health as one of the four areas of Special Educational Need. All children go through ups and downs through their school career and some face significant life events. About 10% of children aged 5 to 16 have a diagnosable mental health needs and these can have an enormous impact on their quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy".

School can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that 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 pupils well-being and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that we help our children be able to manage times of change and stress, develop resilience, are supported to reach their potential and able to access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils 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.

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

- all pupils are valued
- all pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- all pupils feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- positive mental health is promoted and valued
- bullying in any form is not tolerated

In addition to children's well-being, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and well-being. This is supported by

We understand the importance of early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support. The school role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- **Prevention:** creating a safe and calm environment in which children feel secure and which helps the emotional health and wellbeing of all children and equips pupils to be resilient, so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This includes teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos.
- **Identification:** recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
- **Early support:** helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions.
- **Access to specialist support:** working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

Responsibilities within School

The **Local Governing Board** are responsible for monitoring the implementation and review of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy. They are responsible for ensuring that the Headteacher is provided with the resources required for its implementation. The LGB receive an annual report into the implementation and effectiveness of the policy from the Headteacher. The SEND governor monitors the implementation of the policy in relation to SEND learners on a termly basis and reports to the Governor Monitoring Committee.

The **Headteacher** is responsible for the implementation of the policy and the effective and efficient allocation of resources. The Headteacher delegates part of the implementation of the policy to the **Mental Health Lead**, who is part of the Senior Leadership Team.

The **Mental Health Lead**, in conjunction with the **SENDCO**, is responsible for the identification of need, assessment and co-ordinating the delivery of adaptations and interventions. The Mental Health Lead reports to Pupil Support Team meetings every fortnight.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that adaptations and interventions are deployed for the children in their class and for ensuring that the full PSHE curriculum is taught.

All staff are responsible for identifying emerging mental health issues and risk factors for children in their care and reporting this to the Mental Health Lead through CPOMS. All staff must operate within the structures and expectations of this and associated policies. Some staff have specialist roles in implementing the policy, such as through delivering interventions or conducting Wishes and Feelings conversations. Some staff are trained as **Mental Health Champions**.

Prevention

It is important that we create and maintain a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This includes teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos.

At school, we can do much to reduce and prevent mental health issues through:

Positive relationships between adults and children

- Our Staff Code of Conduct, Safer Working Practice Guidance, Positive Behaviour Policy and Early Years Policy clearly set out how we expect staff to interact, mentor and support our pupils. It is vital that all adults are seen as fair, safe and supportive and as trusted people, who children feel comfortable talking to. Adults in school must always have every child's interests at heart and treat every concern, worry and anxiety with respect, importance and dignity, however trivial it may sound. Children need to feel confident that if they speak to an adult in school, they will listen carefully without making assumptions and take them seriously.

A safe environment

- Schools are busy places, but it is important that school life is underpinned by structure and routines that give children consistency and security.
- This includes having a clear and consistent daily and weekly timetable that is known to the children and parents. It is important that the timetable is shared with children and displayed at the beginning of each day and any changes are communicated. Some children will need additional support, such as a daily check-in or their own visual timetable.
- Transitions and movement during the day need to be managed well to avoid stress and disorder. Examples of times that need to be managed well are transitions at the beginnings and ends of breaks and lunch, during the lunch hour, at the beginnings and ends of days and the movement to and from assembly.
- Lunchtimes, in particular, need to be managed well with clear routines and expectations. It is important for lunchtimes to be staffed adequately, as this is a time of day when disputes between children are more likely and staff will need more time to help children resolve difficulties and discuss their emotions. The **Lunchtime Management Plan** sets out the ratios, routines and expectations for lunchtimes in EYFS and the rest of the school.

Activities that focus on mental health and wellbeing

- A structured Forest School and outdoor learning programme is offered to every child from Early Years to Year 6, primarily because of the mental health and personal development benefits it provides. Forest School develops team work, practical skills and risk-taking and develops independence and resilience.

- Classes use different methods to gauge how children are feeling, particularly first thing in the morning. Early Years and Key Stage 1 use signing, which also enables the children to name a variety of emotions; in Key Stage 2, children put pegs on washing lines outside their classrooms to signify if they need a member of staff to check in with them.
- Assemblies have a regular focus on mental health and wellbeing through focussing on a specific school value. Our focus on Great Lives also gives children real life examples of how people throughout history have shown resolve and resilience.
- We focus specifically on mental health through joining in with the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families Mental Health Awareness week

Transitions

Transitions from one year group to another need to be managed carefully.

- In the summer term, the children and parents will know as early as possible which class and teacher they will be moving to. Opportunities will be found for the new class teacher to spend time with their new classes in the weeks leading up to the summer holiday.
- There is an annual 'move up' morning, so children are able to spend time in their new classrooms.
- Teachers are given time to meet in order to discuss their new class using the Class Profile as the basis for the conversation.
- Additional consideration is given to children moving to Year 1 with adaptations to the classroom and timetable in the first term of Year 1 to support elements of continuous provision.
- Year 6 benefit from transition days at their new schools, as well as a nurture programme during the final half term at Gresham Village, including visits from former pupils.

A curriculum with a focus on personal development and emotional health and wellbeing

- Children are directly taught about their emotional health in Early Years and through Key Stages 1 and 2 (see Early Years Long-term Plans and Personal, Social and Health Education Programme of Study). Currently we use the PSHE Association planning and Norfolk RSE resources to support this teaching.
- We are a Forest School, because of the benefits of this programme to children's emotional health and wellbeing. Forest School is timetabled for all children from Nursery to Year 6 from Easter to October half term. We have an Outdoor Learning Programme that leads these sessions, based on the Wild Passport resources.

Identification

Prevalence of mental health problems in children

Mental health problems affect many people, and most schools will have pupils who need some mental health support. This is no different at Gresham Village School and Nursery.

We know that where a pupil has a **Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND)** there is an increased likelihood of mental health problems. Children with autism or learning difficulties, for example, are significantly more likely to have conditions such as anxiety.

Children in Need, looked-after children and previously looked-after children are more likely to have SEND and to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers. For example, they may struggle with executive functioning skills, forming trusting relationships, social skills, managing strong feelings (eg: shame, sadness, anxiety and anger), sensory processing difficulties, foetal alcohol syndrome and coping with transitions and change. Children in Need may be living in very chaotic circumstances and be suffering or at risk of suffering abuse, neglect and exploitation. The impact of these circumstances can have wide-ranging impacts on children's own behaviour, their interpersonal behaviour and emotional state.

Mental health problems and disorders

Short term stress and worry is a normal part of life and many issues can be experienced as mild or transitory challenges for some children and their families. Others will experience more serious and longer lasting effects. The same experience can have different effects on different children depending on other factors in their life. For example, it is normal for children to feel nervous or under stress around exam times, but other factors can make such stress part of an enduring and persistent mental health problem for some children. When a problem is particularly severe or persistent over time, or when a number of these difficulties are experienced at the same time, children are often described as experiencing mental health problems.

Where children experience a range of emotional and behavioural problems that are outside the normal range for their age, they might be described as experiencing mental health problems or disorders.

Mental health professionals have classified these as:

- Emotional disorders, for example phobias, anxiety states and depression.
- Conduct disorders, for example stealing, defiance, fire-setting, aggression and anti-social behaviour.
- Hyperkinetic disorders, for example disturbance of activity and attention.
- Developmental disorders, for example delay in acquiring certain skills such as speech, social ability or bladder control, primarily affecting children with autism and those with pervasive developmental disorders.
- Attachment disorders, for example children who are markedly distressed or socially impaired as a result of an extremely abnormal pattern of attachment to parents or major care givers.
- Trauma disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, as a result of traumatic experiences or persistent periods of abuse and neglect.
- Psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and manic depressive disorder.

- Other mental health problems including eating disorders, habit disorders, somatic disorders.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Non-professional diagnoses, however well meant, can exacerbate or promote mental health problems. Schools, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. This may include withdrawn pupils whose needs may otherwise go unrecognised.

Procedures and Structures

All staff have a responsibility for identifying pupils at risk of developing mental health issues and must report this in the same way as they would report a safeguarding concern through CPOMS. This includes all concerns raised by parents and children. If staff feel that there is an immediate risk or danger for a child, they must accompany this report with a conversation with a DSL or the Mental Health Lead as a matter of urgency.

It is important for staff to report all concerns in the same way as they would a safeguarding concern.

DSLs and the **Mental Health Lead** meet fortnightly at a **Pupil Support Team** meeting. At this meeting, the team reviews the Emotional Health and Wellbeing section of the **Pupil Support Register** and assesses new alerts, support for vulnerable pupils and levels of need.

On the Pupil Support Register, we have a tier system that we use to monitor the level of need for vulnerable pupils:

Tier 1 Children with low level or emerging concerns. Adaptations have been made in the Class Profile and their welfare is being monitored.

Tier 2 Children who require Early Support, such as an intervention or longer term adaptation.

Tier 3 Children at risk of long term mental health issues. These pupils will be discussed at Partner Focus meetings each half term and may be referred to external agencies. Children at Tier 3 may be on the SEND register for Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. They may have a Pupil Support Plan.

Tier 4 Children with diagnosed mental health issues. These pupils will be on the school SEND register and are likely to have an external agency involved. Children at Tier 4 will have a Pupil Support Plan.

Tiers 1 and 2: Early support

Early Support can take the form of adaptations and interventions. These adaptations are recorded on the **Class Profile** and reviewed at **Pupil Progress Review Meetings**.

Adaptations might include:

- Check-ins from the class teacher or school Mental Health Champions

- Adjustments to the school timetable
- Adaptations to the expectations of lesson outcomes
- Breaking lessons down into smaller chunks
- Provision of a Key Adult in the classroom or at lunchtime
- Visual timetables
- Use of stress relieving strategies and toys
- Reviewing seating position and work partners in class
- Use of wishes and feelings to ensure we capture a child's voice and opinions
- Positive discrimination in terms of selection or non-selection for activities, rewards etc.
- Use of reward systems

Tiers 3 and 4: Access to specialist support

When we are concerned that we require specialist advice or services, we are able to access specialist mental health support from our Partner Focus Officer in half termly meetings and from the Local Authority Inclusion Team at Norfolk Children's Services.

We are also able to contact **Just One Norfolk** (<https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/>), who will direct us to the relevant local services including CAMHS.

All children on Tier 4 and most children on Tier 3 will be on our SEND register. At this point, we will use our SEND Policy procedures and cycle to support the child's needs.

Monitoring and Review

Mental Health and Wellbeing needs are monitored every fortnight at Pupil Support Meetings involving the DSLs and Mental Health Lead.

The Emotional Health and Wellbeing Working Party reviews the effectiveness of the schools approach using the Anna Freud Centre Five Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing audit tool on an annual basis. As a result of this, this policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

The SEND Governor monitors the effectiveness of the policy with regard to SEND learners on a termly basis and reports at full governors meetings. The Local Governing Body receives a Mental Health and Wellbeing report from the Headteacher on an annual basis.