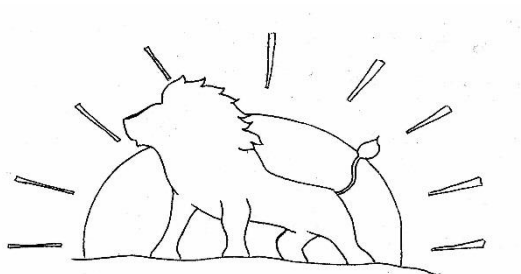


Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

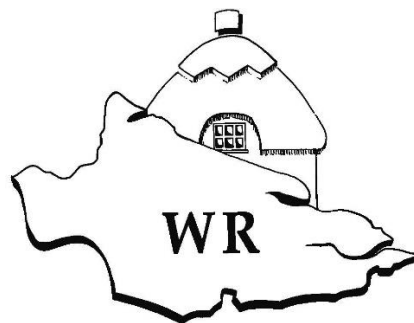
Northwick Park MAT



Northwick Park Primary and Nursery
We Take Pride



...working together



Approved by: LGBs

Date: March 2021

Last Reviewed: October 2024

Next Review Date: October 2026

Rationale

The Northwick Park Multi-Academy Trust aims to ensure that all stakeholders are able to maintain positive wellbeing and mental health, for best possible outcomes in life, no matter what their circumstances are. We are committed to promoting resilience and positive wellbeing for all our staff and pupils by creating an environment that has a whole school approach where positive mental health is “everyone’s business”.

Definition of Mental Health and Wellbeing

“Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 his or her greater community.” (World Health Organisation, 2014)

Aims

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems.

We aim to ensure that in our schools:

- All children are valued
- 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
- Understanding and awareness of mental health and emotional wellbeing is increased through regular taught sessions
- Bullying is not tolerated

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

We aim to ensure that our schools:

- Support staff mental health and wellbeing
- Help staff to keep a healthy work-life balance
- Minimises stress
- Provide relevant training
- Ensure staff feel valued
- Take account of equality implications

Lead Members of Staff

All staff have responsibility for promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Governing Body and school staff will work towards an ethos where everyone is valued; where respect, empathy and honesty are the cornerstones of all school relationships and where health and wellbeing are central to school practice.

Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Designated child protection / safeguarding officer
- Mental Health and Emotional wellbeing lead
- School Counsellor
- SENCO
- Trained Mental Health First Aider at Work
- Subject Lead for PSHE
- Pastoral Learning Support Assistants

Supporting Staff's Positive Mental Health

It is recognised in the Northwick Park Multi-Academy Trust that promoting staff health and emotional wellbeing should be an integral part of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Therefore, training and signposting to materials about mental health and emotional wellbeing will be made available for all staff and all staff have access to a designated Mental Health First Aider at Work. An open door policy to senior leadership is always made available if staff are in need of speaking to someone about any issues of concern. Supervision and appraisal will allow for mutual communication about personal health and emotional wellbeing if both parties felt it is deemed necessary. Other approaches include:

- Secret Buddy Scheme
- Providing lunch and refreshments in Inset Training
- Celebrating Staff achievements using the 'Shout out' board and 'I've noticed' notes.
- Providing pastoral services - drop in and chat sessions
- Staff Council
- 'Thank you' initiatives
- Positive Social Media posts
- Regular and varied social events

Supporting Children's Positive Mental Health

We believe schools have a key role in promoting children's positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Each school in the trust has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

Pupil-led activities

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health
- Peer mentoring – children working together to solve problems and planned sessions where identified adults mentor a designated child

- Playground Friends
- Wellbeing Warriors

Transition programmes

- Transition Programme to secondary schools
- Year 6 Mentors
- Transition from Year 2 – Year 3
- Transition meetings for Years R – 5 with both old and new teachers

Class activities

- Achievement Awards
- Star of the Week
- Team points and well-done tickets
- Worry boxes/monsters
- Timetabled relaxation/mindfulness sessions/yoga
- Circle times
- Forest School
- Regular physical activities
- Walk a Mile

Whole school

- Health and Wellbeing week – whole school focus on doing things which make us feel good
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support
- Mental health directory
- Support from School Counsellor
- Drop in and chat sessions

Small group activities

- Nurture groups
- Relaxation
- Social skills
- SEMH groups

Targeted support

- Counselling
- 1:1 Mentoring/Special time/pastoral support
- Zones of Regulation/Colour Monster
- Managing emotions resources e.g. The Red Beast
- Friendship groups
- Social stories

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our revised PSHE curriculum (Summer 2019). The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner. Growth Mindset (Years 2-6) and Characteristics of Effective Learning (YR and 1) is embedded into all lessons.

Identification and Warning Signs

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, exclusions, visits to the medical room/school nurse, attendance and sanctions
- Using the Early Years curriculum to identify children in EYFS who need support
- Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons
- Worry boxes/monsters in each class for children to raise concerns which are checked by the Class Teachers (these are anonymous but give an indication of needs in a particular class)
- Bonnie Box which is checked weekly by the School Counsellor
- Pupil Progress Review meetings half termly
- Caring and Sharing meetings
- A parental information and health questionnaire on entry to the School
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer
- Parental meetings in EYFS
- Pupil drop in and chat sessions
- Staff drop in and chat sessions
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff

All staff in the Northwick Park Multi-Academy Trust have had a basic level of training on the protective and risk factors, types of mental health needs and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer, the SENCO, School Counsellor or wellbeing lead as appropriate.

These signs might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits

- Falling academic achievement
- Changes in activity and mood
- Often feeling anxious or worried
- 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 pupils with mental health needs, such as anxiety, might present 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.

Working with Parents/Carers

We see parental involvement as a vital part of emotional well-health. Regular opportunities exist to promote partnership with parents including:

- Welcome newsletter at the end of the summer term ready for September
- Parent/carer consultations in the autumn term
- Parent/carer consultations in the summer term with both the old and the new class teacher
- Regular newsletters and wellbeing newsletters
- Annual parent/carer questionnaire
- One planning meetings for children with special educational needs
- Invitations to come in for plays, concerts, outdoor assemblies, craft activities and special events
- Parent/carer and child clubs e.g. cookery club

In order to support parents/carers specifically with emotional wellbeing concerns we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website and social media pages
- Ensure that all parents/carers are aware of who to talk to and how to contact them, if they have concerns about their child
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents/carers

- Share ideas about how parents/carers can support positive mental health in their children through social media and our regular wellbeing newsletter
- Access to our PSHE scheme of work through the school website

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Mental Health Support Team
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- CAVS (Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers

Training

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. Staff have had Mental Health Awareness for Young People training either in a face-to-face session or through online training and new members of staff will also complete this online module. Staff will receive annual 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 due to developing situations.

Links to Other Policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, E-Safety and SEND and Equalities. Links with the school's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The provision across the school is monitored by the Head Teacher and Wellbeing Co-ordinator. They will provide support and advice to members of our school community about the provision and implementation of pastoral care in the school. Regular updates will be given to the Governing Body.

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school office. The policy will be reviewed

biannually and updated with any new initiatives, legislation regarding child welfare and changes to personnel.