

Grove Street Primary and Nursery School



Where Learners Grow

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Date of Policy	November 2021	Due for Review	November 2022
Headteacher Signature		Chair of Governors Signature	

Policy Statement

At Grove Street Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all our children and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

We recognise that early help and preventative intervention are key and that our Whole School approach to promoting good mental health is a protective factor for children's mental health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for children affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

At our school we:

- Help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- Promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count
- Encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for children going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at children with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989

This policy has been created with regard to the following DfE guidance:

- DfE (2020) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2016) 'Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice: 0 to 25'

This policy also has due regard to the school's policies including, but not limited to, the following:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy and our SEND policy in cases where children's mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and PSHE and SMSC policies. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of children, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Lisa Walsh - Headteacher/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Caroline Stanley - Assistant Headteacher /Deputy DSL and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing lead
- Jenny Dinning- SENCO/ DSL
- Alison Gillies, Kirsty Evans, Bev Chase - Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs)
- Clare Mercer - PSHE/SMSC Lead

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves mentally healthy, and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're 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.

We have adopted The Zones of Regulation curriculum to improve social and emotional learning and deepen children's understanding of how to regulate their emotions. During their PE lessons, children use My Personal Best strategies to improve their health and wellbeing and personal skills.

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual children or groups of children which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters'
- Managing emotions resources such as "The Zones of Regulation Curriculum"

- ELSA support/therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Individual support from The ADHD Foundation
- A Chance for Change support (SHAFTES)
- Mental Health Support Teams group/individual interventions

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaires
- The Boxall Profile
- Leuven's Scale
- Pyramid of Needs

We will ensure that staff, children and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

Mental Health and Wellbeing is discussed during termly Pupil Progress Meetings. The opportunity is given to identify a range of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a child is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the appropriate lead member of staff. Children's mental health and emotional needs are discussed weekly during ELSA supervision meetings.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits

- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Working with Parents and Families

In order to support parents and families we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Share and support parents to access sources of further resources e.g. through parent workshops
 - Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

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 or Educational psychology services
- Behaviour/MHWP support through Gilbrook
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- ADHD Foundation
- MHSTs
- Alternative provision - EVOLVE, UTOPIA, WRAP

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 training in order to enable them to keep children safe. The MindEd learning portal 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 children.