

MOTTRAM ST. ANDREW PRIMARY ACADEMY



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING POLICY

Motttram St Andrew Primary Academy is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all of our pupils and staff.

Our culture is supportive, caring and respectful. We encourage children to be open and we want each child to have their voice heard.

At our school, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. Positive mental health is everyone's responsibility. We all have a role to play.

Scope

This policy is a guide for all staff, including teachers and non-teaching staff, and governors. It outlines our approach to promoting student mental wellbeing. It should be read and understood alongside our other relevant policies.

Aims

- To help children understand their emotions and experiences better.
- To ensure our children feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries.
- To help children to form and maintain relationships.
- To encourage children to be confident and to help promote their self-esteem.
- To help children to develop resilience and ways with coping with setbacks.
- To provide support to staff working with children with mental health issues.
- To provide support to children suffering mental ill health.
- To provide support to staff suffering mental ill health.

Implementation

We will always promote a healthy environment by:

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all children and staff.
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promoting our school values of Kindness, Honesty, Co-operation and Determination and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
- Promoting our pupil voice and giving children the opportunity to participate in decision making.
- Celebrating every child for who they are and making every child feel valued and respected.
- Adopting a whole-school approach to mental health and providing support to any child that needs it.
- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in children.
- Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health.

Lead Members of Staff

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of children and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jean Willerton (Headteacher)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Lucy Rusbridge. (SENCO and PSHE Lead)

Emotionally Healthy School Lead: Nina Mowforth (Deputy Headteacher)

Teaching about Mental Health

Our PSHE curriculum is taught using the PSHE Association programme of study. Through the teaching of PSHE, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe.

Our PE curriculum has been enhanced with the implementation of a Wellbeing Through Sport programme designed to nurture positive mental health and wellbeing through physical activity.

Support and School and in the Local Community

We have a range of support available in school and in the local community.

This includes:

Educational Psychologists

School Nurse

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

Counselling services

Cheshire East Autism Team

Sensory Inclusion Service

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children and parents are aware of the support that is available in our school for mental health. This includes how to access further support both inside and outside of school hours.

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All of our teaching staff have been trained in how to recognise the warning signs of common mental health problems. This means that they will be able to offer help and support to children who need it, when they need it.

Warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs will report their concerns. Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm.
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends or family and becoming socially withdrawn.

- Changes in mood.
- Talking and or joking about self-harm and/or suicide.
- Drug or alcohol abuse.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss or hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. long sleeves in warm weather.
- Lateness or absence from school.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.
- Family and relationship problems.

Managing Disclosures

A child may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need 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 to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the child's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the mental health lead who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Whole school Approach

We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our children. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies (see above) and partners where necessary.

Working with Parents

We aim to support parents as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and offering our support at all times. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website.
- Ensure that all parents 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.
- Make our 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 where appropriate.

Supporting peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations with the student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told.
- How friends can best support.
- Things friends should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset.
- Warning signs that their friend may need help.

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves.
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition.
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling.

Training

Staff will receive training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues.

We will consider additional training opportunities for staff and we will support CPD throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations.