

Emotional Health & Mental Wellbeing Policy Glodwick Infant and Nursery School

At Glodwick we aim to promote holistic development alongside academic achievement for all pupils; encouraging children to 'be the best they can be'. The key to this is the emotional health and mental wellbeing of our whole school community. Our aim is for all children in school to develop the self-esteem, resilience and emotional understanding to be able to play an active part in school life, becoming successful learners and friends.

Aims

- Promote positive emotional health and mental wellbeing across the school community
- Develop and sustain universal interventions which will be accessed by all pupils and embedded in the ethos and culture of the school
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Provide information for pupils and families about promoting positive emotional health and mental wellbeing
- Provide support to pupils and families when a pupil is experiencing mental ill health
- Alert staff to early warnings of mental health concerns and the process for reporting these
- Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues
- Provide support and compassion to staff experiencing mental ill health
- To utilise the Oldham framework 'Supporting Young Minds in Tough Times' and self-assessment audit to evaluate and develop provision within school, including staff training needs
- Utilise the Graduated Response of Universal, Selected and Targeted support for pupils
- To embed the Assess-Plan-Do-Review process to ensure high quality work is monitored and evaluated.
- We seek to raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and pupil welfare where everyone is aware of warning signs, with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare throughout the school.

Training

Training schedules will be responsive and lead by the needs of the pupil population. This ensures that support matches the changing needs of the school as a whole and each cohort.

As a minimum, all staff will receive training about recognising and responding to mental health issues and associated topics as part of their Continuing Professional Development. This will be in addition to regular Child Protection training and updates. Staff are also able to request relevant training as part of their Performance Management process.

Any suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Mental Health lead who can also signpost sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Staff Wellbeing

A key component in the delivery of the Universal offer is staff wellbeing; ensuring that staff are well-supported and able to deliver quality provision for emotional health and mental wellbeing to all pupils. Therefore, as a school, we are committed to promoting positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and will provide suitable support for all members of staff.

Ethos & Environment

We encourage staff as individuals to accept responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and promote an open culture in which emotional health and mental wellbeing are taken seriously and in which staff are supported in order that they may seek any help and support they need. We promote a culture of sympathetic alertness, remaining mindful of any indication of changes in staff behaviour, performance or signs of being under stress.

Policy & Procedure

Our Absence Policy and Return to Work Policies are supportive of staff with emotional health and mental wellbeing issues, both during any periods of absence and upon their return to work, including phased returns. These policies are available on the school website or via Oldham Education HR.

We will ensure that all school policies are assessed for their workload impact and work/life balance to promote positive mental health.

We shall be understanding of the differing needs of the staff, at different points and events during their life cycles, and offer support accordingly, if and when required.

General

We undertake regular anonymous surveys to monitor the wellbeing of all staff and have a suggestion box where staff can share ideas, comments or concerns. These are shared and acted upon by the Senior Leadership Team.

We provide wellbeing support to staff in a variety of ways including:

- A staff wellbeing team with representatives across school that feeds back to SLT
- A staff wellbeing board with details of local and national agencies who may support emotional and physical wellbeing
- We have access to an Employee Assistance Programme for counselling – details of how to refer to this service are readily available in school and from the Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing Lead
- Staff can also refer themselves to Occupational Health
- Wellbeing chats offered by Catherine Kavanagh and Lynn Moran.

Teaching about Emotional Health & Mental Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are taught across all curriculum areas, but particularly in our developmental PHSE curriculum and through our whole school assemblies. It is appropriate to children's age and stage of development.

We also promote emotional health and mental wellbeing through the Five Ways to Wellbeing:

- Connect

- Be active
- Take notice
- Keep learning
- Give

Staff use a variety of methods and opportunities to promote emotional health and mental wellbeing alongside the formal curriculum. These complement the whole school approach and overall ethos of the school. These include:

- Celebrating awareness days and campaigns such as World Mental Health Day, Anti-Bullying Week etc.
- Reward systems embracing positive behaviour and individual achievements
- Assemblies and circle times addressing issues arising in school
- Having a culture of challenge, promoting 'beautiful mistakes' and embracing 'there is no such thing as failure, only feedback' to enable children to develop resilience
- Providing forums for listening and talking
- Encouraging a culture where "every child has a right to a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously" (Article 12, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1992)
- Encouraging co-operation and collaboration through peer working and the school council.

Supporting Parents/Carers & Families

We see parent/carer involvement as a vital part of promoting emotional health and mental wellbeing: alongside an open-door policy, regular opportunities exist to promote partnerships with parents/carers, including:

- Annual transition/welcome meetings – a chance to meet staff, find out about the organisation, routines and curriculum in each class, enabling parents to support their children effectively with day-to-day change, promoting resilience.
- Structured parents' /carers' meetings with class teachers to provide feedback
- Annual parental questionnaires sent out by Parent Governors, to help us build on what we do well and identify areas for improvement
- Parent workshops on key topics ie: phonics, SATs etc.

We recognise that families play a key role in influencing children's emotional health and mental wellbeing, therefore it is vital that we work with parents/carers to promote positive wellbeing for them. We do this by:

- Highlighting sources of support available within school and the local community: we will ensure this information contains services that are available to promote positive emotional wellbeing for all pupils, as well as those for children experiencing mental ill health.
- Making this policy easily accessible to parents/carers
- Offering support to help parents/carers develop their parenting skills. This may include providing information or offering programmes run by appropriately trained practitioners. E.g. Early Help

What are the warning signs of emotional health or mental well-being issues?

School staff may become aware of certain signs which indicate a pupil may be experiencing emotional health or mental wellbeing issues. These should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing **any** of these should communicate their concerns with the Lead for Emotional Health & Mental Wellbeing or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Possible warning signs include (but are not limited to):

- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating habits
- Changes in sleeping habits, including falling asleep in lessons
- Increased isolation from friends and family or becoming socially withdrawn – this may include not wanting to spend time with friends at break-time, frequent fallouts or seeking adult company/reassurance.
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Using drugs or alcohol
- Changes in clothing – eg. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Avoiding PE or asking to get changed privately
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause – this may include repeatedly expressing feelings of being unwell or requesting to visit the first aid room/go home

We also recognise that some children and young people have been exposed to multiple risk factors which may mean they are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example: those who are looked after or previously looked after children, young carers, those who have had previous access to mental health services, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness, those living in households experiencing domestic violence and those who have experienced bereavement or loss.

These risk factors **do not** mean that the child **will** experience poorer mental health, they should be considered alongside resilience factors such as: a secure attachment experience with appropriate adults, good communication skills, capacity to reflect, a positive school climate enhancing belonging and connectedness, an open-door policy for children to raise concerns, a range of leisure activities and a whole school approach to supporting good mental health.

We promote a culture of sympathetic alertness, particularly to changes in behaviour or presentation of pupils. Staff should be aware that some children will not openly demonstrate any of the above signs, even when experiencing distress.

If you are at all concerned about a child, always inform the Lead for Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Managing Concerns

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to **any member of staff** so it is vital that **all staff know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure or concern about a child's mental health**. School will source and provide training for all staff to ensure they are comfortable with this process.

In this situation, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen, rather than give advice and if questions are needed, these should be open such as "tell me about..." or "describe what happened". Our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than exploring "why?".

In line with the Safeguarding Policy, all disclosures must be recorded on CPOMs, as soon as possible, within a 24 hour period. The report should detail:

- Date and time of the concern/disclosure
- The names (and positions if applicable) of those present
- What was discussed, in as much detail as possible
- What the agreed next steps are
- Who the concern/disclosure was reported to

This report should be held on the pupil's confidential file, and shared with all members of SLT.

Confidentiality

We need to be honest with pupils who make a disclosure about themselves or a friend. If we feel it is necessary to pass on the concerns we must inform them:

- Who we are going to tell (parents/carers, other staff, health care professionals etc.)
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

Parents/carers will be informed, and their support sought, unless there is reason to believe that there is an underlying child protection issue, in which case the DSL and local MASH team will be informed immediately. Pupils will be informed if this is the case.

See Safeguarding policy for more information on confidentiality.

Sharing Concerns with Parents/Carers

It is standard practice to inform parents/carers of concerns unless there is reason to believe there is an underlying Child Protection concern; however, we remain mindful of the need to be sensitive in our approach.

Mental ill health can affect individuals of any age, background, ethnicity or gender; yet it may sometimes be difficult or distressing for parents to learn that their child is experiencing difficulties with their emotional wellbeing. Families may respond with fear, anger, upset or even shame during initial conversations: although we may find this challenging, we should be accepting of this (within reason) and give parents/carers time to reflect and come to terms with the change in situation.

Adopted by Governing Body: November 2020

To be reviewed; November 2021

Lead Members of Staff

Lead for Emotional Health & Mental Wellbeing – Miss D Preece (Mrs. J. Lomax / Miss C. Fowle)

Named Governor for Emotional Health & Mental Wellbeing – Mrs. L. Moran (TBC)

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs. J E A Brierley

Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Mrs. M. Russell / Miss S. Peachey

Well Being Team: Miss D Preece, Mrs C Kavanagh, Mrs J Lomax, Miss C Fowle, Miss H Francis, Miss A Everall, Mrs A Rashid, Mrs N Rehman

SENCO – Miss D Preece (Mrs. J. Lomax / Miss C. Fowle)

Important: Children in Crisis

There may be isolated times where it is not appropriate or safe to follow the graduated approach, and a more immediate response is required.

Examples of this include:

- If a child informs you they have taken an overdose or made an attempt to end their life
- If a child informs you they have actual INTENT or a PLAN to end their life
- If a child appears to be in a highly distressed state due to experiencing altered perceptions, unusual or abnormal experiences such as hearing voices.

In these circumstances it would be appropriate to implement one of the following steps:

- If the child reports an overdose/severe self-harm and appears physically unwell then an ambulance should be called and parents/carers informed.
- If the child reports any intent/plan to end their life a telephone consultation should be initiated with Health Young Minds and parents/carers informed before the child leaves school.
- If there is **any** uncertainty about the risk to a child or young person's mental health or safety, please contact the duty worker at Healthy Young Minds Oldham for a consultation.
T: 0161 770 7777

If there are safeguarding concerns, the usual Safeguarding procedure will be followed