



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Updated March 2023

What is mental health?

Emotional wellbeing is described by the National CAMHS Support Service (2011) as:

'A positive state of mind and body, feeling safe and able to cope, with a sense of connection with people, communities and the wider environment'

Everyone has mental health, it's not just mental illness. When children have good levels of wellbeing it helps them to: learn and explore the world, feel, express and manage positive and negative emotions and form and maintain good relationships. At Netherton Infant and Nursery school we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all our pupils, staff and parents. Nurture is at the heart of all that we do and we understand that good mental health facilitates growth, development and achievement. We know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times anyone may need additional emotional support.

Purpose of the Policy

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 all children feel valued.
- Support children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

We promote a mentally health environment through:

- Promoting our school values of respect, friendship and achieve and encouraging a sense of belonging.

- Promoting pupils voice and opportunities to participate in decision making.
- Celebrating **ALL** achievements academic and non- academic.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal whole school approaches.
- Supporting children experiencing emotional difficulties such as bereavement.
- Specialized, targeted approaches aimed at children with more complex or long term difficulties such as attachment disorder, autism.

Link to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with our SEND, behaviour, anti-bullying, and PSHE policies in cases where a pupil's mental health needs overlap with these. It also sits alongside child protection procedures.

The Mental Health Lead (MHL)

In 2018 The Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for education held a consultation on 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision'. One of the key proposals identified was to incentivize all schools to identify a Designated Senior Lead for mental health. The Mental Health Lead's (MHL), role is to establish a whole school approach to mental health, including establishing preventative actions and promoting good mental wellbeing and resilience amongst children and staff.

The MHL's role involves:

- Oversight of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, including its behavior and curricular policies, how staff are supported and how pupils and parents are engaged.
- Supporting the identification of 'at risk' children.
- Having knowledge and links with local mental health services and referring children to them when appropriate.
- Oversight of any interventions being delivered in school.
- Supporting staff who are in contact with children with mental health needs.
- Overseeing the outcomes of the interventions on children's education and wellbeing.

MHL is Mrs Jenny Gurden. (Mrs Gurden is also the SENCO and DSL.)

Governor for Mental Health is Julia Stacey Cartright.

Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our school uses the 'Laughology Happy Centred School Programme' (See Appendix 1), for teaching PSHE. All children have weekly opportunities to develop and promote social and emotional skills through dedicated PSHE sessions. The core

themes are: Self-Confidence, Achievement & Success, Positive Relationships Support and Coping Skills. Whole school assemblies will also explore these themes and the MHL takes regular assemblies with a specific mental health and wellbeing focus.

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All staff in school are aware of and understand risk factors, such as parental separations and bereavement, and how these experiences can impact on a child's mental health. Staff can identify basic warning signs, (e.g. poor attendance, altered attitude to learning, negative behavioural patterns, socially withdrawn etc.) that a child may need emotional support and communicate their concerns to the MHL. The MHL is also currently the SENCO and DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead) and therefore has a thorough overview of the specific needs and circumstances of children in need of emotional support. A Five Steps to Support format (See Appendix 3) is used to document the pupil's mental health concerns, assess the interventions already implemented and to plan additional personalised interventions. The MHL works closely with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational Psychology
- Behaviour support
- CAMHS (Child and adolescent mental health service)
- Family support workers
- Social services

Targeted Support

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

- Circle time approaches or 'Circle of Friends' activities
- ELSA, (Emotional and Literacy Support Assistant), support groups covering a range of wellbeing themes such as self-esteem, anger- management etc. (See Appendix 2).
- Class feelings charts in ALL classrooms using the Zones of Regulation
- Therapeutic activities e.g. Forest school, where targeted children can attend weekly sessions
- Attachment time: 1:1 opportunity for children to build trusting relationships with key adults

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available in school and how to access further support. This is achieved by:

- Regularly updating the school Mental Health and Well Being page on the school website

- Having a Mental Health and Wellbeing notice board
- A Mental Health and Wellbeing section on the school two-weekly newsletter when appropriate
- Parent workshops in school

Monitoring and Evaluation

The MHL maintains case studies on individual children recording concerns, interventions, progress made, agencies involved, communication with parents and any additional recommendations. The MHL is also receiving training how to gather and analyse data regarding staff and pupil's mental health and wellbeing using the 'BounceTogether' survey tool. This data will then be used to identify strengths and areas for development.

Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing

SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and the MHL work together to ensure that our school promotes the health and well-being of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees' stress levels and mental and physical health. SLT respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members. Where additional, professional advice is required, the school will contact Occupational Health Professionals and Human Resource experts whose advice will be acted upon appropriately. The school will provide support to any employees facing high levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work-related issues which are having/ have the potential to have a negative impact on the staff member's health and well-being. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate. During this time, the school will always ensure that the staff member's privacy and dignity is respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employees' rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity. Staff members will be consulted about the explanation given to parents should they enquire a period of absence.

Procedures to promote staff well-being

- Continuing professional development
- Performance Management/ Appraisal for all staff
- Mental Health and wellbeing is a standing item on staff meeting agenda
- SLT meeting has mental wellbeing as a standing item on the agenda
- All staff invited to INSET Days
- Recognition of staff birthdays / special occasions
- Headteacher to meet with support staff weekly to provide opportunity to voice concerns and to have their views sought
- Staff can raise concerns in confidence with members of the senior leadership team.

- Governors to fund tea, coffee etc. for all staff from the school budget.
- An annual staff well-being survey to be completed by all team members.

Policy Review This policy will be reviewed every year.

APPENDIX

- 1 [PSHE lessons | Happy-Centred School Programme | | FREE lesson plan download \(laughology.co.uk\)](#)
- 2 [Useful Resources – ELSA Network](#)

- 3 Five Steps to Support format - example

Steps	Academic Progress	Inconsistent Behaviours	Personal Strengths and difficulties
Step 1 What can we see?	Not making progress. Refuses to engage. Issues with writing.	Runs out of classroom. Shouts, gets upset and frustrated frequently.	Well-liked by other children. Good at sport. Falls out with peers easily and blames peers
Step 2 What have we tried?	Differentiated work. Assessment for dyslexia.	Following behavior management strategies. Behaviour support plan.	Following behavior management strategies. Behaviour support plan.
Step 3 What do we know?	Working within lower end of age expected, below in literacy.	Anger management problems especially with sibling. Calls himself "Thick" and hates school. Happy to draw how he feels.	Can be good at home. Likes bike and computer. Plays in local football team. No close friends.
Step 4 What is the mental Health Message?	Finding learning difficult. Making no progress. Doesn't like reading or writing.	Change in behavior. Aggressive behavior at home.	Trouble with remembering things. Negative perception of himself.
Step 5 What would personalised	Supporting his expressive and receptive	Develop social and interactive	Support in promoting a positive

planning look like for this pupil?	language. Use of computer.	skills and social understanding.	perception of himself. Use sport.
---------------------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------