

Positive Mental Health Policy

Homefields Primary School
Mental Health Policy



2021-2022

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Policy review dates and changes

Review date	By whom	Summary of changes made	Date implemented	Approved by FGB
February 2022	S. Coleman And Full Governing Board	To reflect changes to staffing and individual careplans	October 2021	Yes

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Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of well-being 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 her or his community. (World Health Organization)

At Homefields Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health for all our pupils from FS1 to Year 6 and for each member of staff. We do this by using a whole school approach based on our school ethos and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable children.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill 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 students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance, for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

[This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:](#)

- Medical policy, in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue.
- SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need
- Safeguarding policy, where a child may disclose issues related to this.
- Behaviour policy where children may communicate mental health needs by their behaviour.
- PE, PSHE and Information Communication and Technology Policy

Aims for the school:

This policy aims to ensure:

To improve the mental health and wellbeing of all at Homefields Primary school.

To raise awareness and increase understanding of mental and emotional health at Homefields Primary School.

To continue our culture of good practice within school. This being a caring, supportive and nurturing environment for children, staff and parents.

To improve the processes of referral.

To ensure all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities.

Legislation

Mental health and behaviour in Schools – November 2018 (non-statutory advice)

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Mrs S Coleman - Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer
- Mrs D Rollerson - Mental Health Lead & Mental Health First Aider / Deputy Safeguarding Lead/ CPD lead
- Mrs Tomlinson - Learning Mentor
- Mr Jones – PE lead and Mental Health First Aider
- Mrs Wainwright – SEN lead
- Miss Draper – ICT lead
- Miss Daley - PSHE lead

- Mrs Ellen Wilkinson – Mental Health Governor

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection officer, the head

teacher or the designated governor. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Head. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided on the website.

Individual Care Plans

Pupils who refer themselves, those that are causing concern and those who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health, will have an individual care plan drawn up. This will involve the pupil, the parents, staff and any relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

An example of this can be found in appendix 1

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum, PE curriculum and E-safety curriculum, as well as through our schools skills and attributes.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort that are being taught but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the [PSHE Association Guidance](#)¹ to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. Years one to six use the scheme Kapow which uses the PSHE Guidance in their long-term map. Foundation Stage One and Two follow the guidance from Development Matters.

Signposting -

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined on our school website under mental health <https://www.homefields.derby.sch.uk/mental-health-and-well-being/>

Where a referral to CAHMS is appropriate, this will be led by the Head. Guidance about referring to CAHMS is provided on their website

¹ [Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing](#)

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as staff rooms and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next Posters came down during covid to ensure appropriate cleaning – these need to be put back up again.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs, which indicate a student 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 Mrs Rollerson, our mental health and emotional wellbeing lead. She will then refer/discuss the child and their needs at a weekly review meeting with the Head and the Learning Mentor. These children can then be assessed as to if they need immediate help, signposting or monitoring.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- The Leuven Scale for younger children in school

Managing disclosures

A student 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 student 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-judgmental.

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

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the student's confidential file on CPOMS. 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 Head Teacher and the mental health lead, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information would be shared with another member of staff without the child's consent, for example if there was a safeguarding concern and the student was in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share mental health disclosures with a colleague, usually the mental health lead and possibly the safeguarding lead. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence; and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed if their child has disclosed any mental health issues and students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the student should

be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed until the lead child protection officer (Sarah Coleman) has been informed. This must be done immediately.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect. It is never acceptable for a parent to be aggressive or threatening towards a member of staff. If this happens, the meeting must stop immediately and further support from another member of staff must be sought.

We should always highlight further sources of information, such as leaflets or websites for further reading. Parents may often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too, e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting school as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Booking in a follow-up meeting or phone call right away will give them the platform to do this. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record (CPOMS).

Working with All Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. 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 through our regular information evenings.

- 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.

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 (e.g. signs of relapse)

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

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 to enable them to keep students safe.

We will host relevant information on our website for staff (parents and children) who wish to learn more about mental health. The [MindEd learning portal](#)² 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 developing situations with one or more students.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Head and our CPD Coordinator, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as minimum. It is next due for review in August 2025.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Debbie Rollerson our mental health lead via email debbie.rollerson@homefields.derby.sch.uk

Appendix 1

Homefields Primary School Individual Mental Health Care Plan		
Childs name	DOB	Year group
Referral from	Date of referral	Agencies involved
Details of pupil's condition		
Medication	Any known side effects	
Special requirements and precautions		
What to do in an emergency		
Emergency contact details		
The role of the school		

Review date	Staff reviewing plan