



Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

This policy has been written to underpin our core values and priorities with particular reference to our Rights Respecting ethos.

Article 3 (best interests of the child)

Article 6 (survival and development)

Article 12 (respect for the views of the child)

Article 16 (right to privacy)

Article 23 (children with disability)

Article 24 (health & health services)

Article 28 (right to an education)

Article 29 (goals of education)

Last Updated: November 2019

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 Crowcroft Park, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupils. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health and aim to promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people who have mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Designated child protection / safeguarding officers - Lizzie Wray, Ally Mottram, Catherine Daly & Liz Webb
- Mental health champion - Lizzie Wray
- SENCO - Catherine Daly
- PSHE lead - Alyson Nunn
- School nurse

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the mental health champion or school SENCO in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral on CPOMS. If the pupil 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 school SENCO.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and 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 class we're teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Signposting support

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community and will signpost external agencies on our school website.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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 school SENCO, our mental health champion or a member of the safeguarding team. We use CPOMS to report and record any concerns we have which will alert the relevant people immediately.

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

Managing disclosures

A pupil 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 pupil 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 pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'.

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMS and held on the pupil's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Any action to be taken

Confidentiality

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

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

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but a member of the safeguarding team must be informed immediately.

Working with Parents

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 parent workshops
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE through class newsletters.

Support for pupils

To help children's better understanding of mental health and wellbeing, and supporting ways for them to help improve mental health and wellbeing we will provide:

- Planned classroom teaching on the issues surrounding mental health and wellbeing including providing the children with strategies to support themselves through PSHE lessons and circle time
- Annual Health and wellbeing week of activities
- Targeted support for more vulnerable children at transition
- Working with the NSPCC to deliver messages around keeping safe
- Art therapy and Play therapy for those children who staff have identified as being able to benefit from it
- Play leaders and buddies at lunchtimes who have been trained to look out for more vulnerable children and try and engage them in play
- Worry boxes in classrooms
- Further intervention for children highlighted in our friendship socio-metric survey and focused monitoring at playtimes.
- Coordinated support from a range of external organisations as necessary
- One page profiles for all staff to have information on any particularly vulnerable children and the best ways to support them

Training

All staff will receive training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep pupils safe. We will use resources from Manchester Healthy schools to help enhance staff's understanding and teaching around mental health and wellbeing.

We will signpost relevant information for staff who wish to learn more about mental health including: Manchester Healthy Schools, NSPCC, MIND and Anna Freud plus Manchester Health Assured (for staff's own mental health).

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 pupils.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in November 2022.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.