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| **Owner** | **Gemma Holloway**  |
| **Reviewed** | **Annually** |
| **Audience** | **All staff and families** |



**Mental Health**

**and**

**Wellbeing Policy**

**Why mental health and wellbeing is important**

***The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: “in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy”.***

All children go through difficulties during their school career and some face significant life changing events. At Harrow Gate Primary Academy, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives, in just the same way as physical health.

Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children’s wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that all children are able to manage times of change and stress and all children have access to the support needed for them to reach their true potential. We also have a duty to ensure that all children have an understanding of

* How to establish and maintain positive mental health.
* What issues may affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues.
* Where, who and how to help and support from.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors that build resilience and support positive mental health:

* All children are valued.
* Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
* Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
* Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
* Bullying is not tolerated.

In addition to children’s wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

**2. Purpose of the policy**

This policy sets out:

* How we promote positive mental health.
* How we prevent mental health problems.
* How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
* How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems
* Key information about some common mental health problems.
* Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support.

**3. Definition of mental health and wellbeing**

We use the World Health Organisation’s definition of mental health and wellbeing

*“ 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”.*

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

* Feel confident in themselves.
* Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
* Be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
* Cope with the stresses of everyday life.
* Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.
* Learn and achieve.

**4. A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health**

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.

2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.

3. Helping children to be resilient learners.

4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.

5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.

6. Effectively working with parents and carers.

7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

**5. Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility**

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to show understanding of protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff have an understanding of possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy *(see appendix 1 on risk and protective factors).*

**Our** Inclusion Lead and SENCO, and **Our** Positive Mental Health Officer

* Lead and work with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
* Provide advice and support to staff, and organises training and updates.
* Plan appropriate support and intervention for identified children showing signs of mental health difficulties
* Are the first point of contact with mental health services, and make individual referrals to them.

**Our** PSHE Leader leads and monitors the general whole class teaching about mental health which is delivered through the Jigsaw PSHE

As a school, with the expertise of our inclusion team and external agencies we can support a range of behavioural and emotional difficulties Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

6. **Supporting children’ positive mental heath**

We believe the School has a key role in promoting children positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

*Class activities*

* Worry boxes - a place where children can anonymously share worries or concerns in class
* Mental health teaching programmes e.g. Jigsaw PSHE
* Teaching of the Chimp Paradox by Prof Steve Peters – Y4-6
* Circle times
* Philosophy for Children (P4C) sessions
* Daily Mindfulness sessions
* Peer Massage sessions
* Focused/ targeted Power of Reading book choices

*Targeted group Intervention*

* Meet and greet Colouring club 8.45am each day (KS1 and KS2)
* Break time and lunchtime Lego Club
* Games club during lunchtime
* Lego Therapy focused intervention
* Social Interaction intervention
* Restorative Circle activities
* Talkabout – a small group intervention to improve children’s communication skills around turn taking, dealing with issues, resolving conflict

*Transition programmes*

* Bespoke transition plans for individuals moving to different secondary schools
	+ Key members of HGPA staff meeting with secondary staff
	+ Transitions plans developed
	+ Transition books created and shared
	+ Additional visits arranged to schools
	+ Links made to a key adult to support in secondary school.
* Bespoke transition plans for individuals transitioning within school
	+ Transition meetings held between old and new teacher with the Assistant Principal for Inclusion and the PMHO. Transition plans written
	+ Transition books created and shared both in school and home
	+ Frequent visits arranged to new classrooms, to meet the new teacher
	+ Planned relationship building sessions with new adults.

*Teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing*

Through Jigsaw PSHE we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems.

**EYFS & Key Stage 1 children learn:**

* To recognise, name and describe feelings including good and not so good feelings.
* Simple strategies for managing feelings.
* How their behaviour affects other people.
* About empathy and understanding other people’s feelings.
* To cooperate and problem solve.
* To motivate themselves and persevere.
* How to calm down.
* About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
* Who to go to if they are worried.
* About different types of teasing and bullying, that these are wrong and unacceptable.
* How to resist teasing or bullying, if they experience or witness it, whom to go to and how to get help.

**Key Stage 2 children learn:**

* What positively and negatively affects their mental and emotional health (including the media).
* Positive and healthy coping strategies.
* A wide range of feelings and to describe them.
* To describe the range and intensity of their feelings to others.
* To recognise and respond appropriately to a wide range of feelings in others.
* To recognise that they may experience conflicting emotions and to self-regulate.
* Building resilience so as to motivate themselves and bounce back if they fail at something.
* How to empathise and be supportive of others.
* About change, including transitions (between Key Stages and schools), loss, separation, divorce and bereavement.
* About the consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online bullying, prejudice-based language), as well as how to respond and ask for help if they are victimised.
* About the importance of talking to someone and how to ask for help.

*Targeted Individual Intervention*

* Attachment Aware Trauma Informed Schools approach assessment of need
	+ Assessment of the child
	+ Meet with parent to gather information
	+ Write an Individual Development Plan (IDP)
	+ Have regular TAC meetings
* Allocation of a Key Worker
* HeartMath intervention to development management of emotions.
* Sensory Intervention Approach intervention throughout the timetable
* Big Red Bus Approach to developing self-worth, self-image, relationships and trust.
* Individual targeted sessions based on one specific need i.e. anxiety
* Specific targeted Therapeutic Touch delivered by a trained Bodyworker Therapist.
* Full therapeutic programme work – POM, focusing on the key highlighted areas of difficult from the Healthy Child Jigsaw. This will include focused Emotional Intelligence Intervention, mindfulness, meditation, Heartmath, Therapeutic Touch.

**7. Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs**

**Our approach:**

* Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
* Ensure the welfare and safety of children are paramount.
* Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
* Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
* Involve children in the care and support they have.
* Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.

**Early Identification**

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

* Analysing behaviour, exclusions, attendance and sanctions.
* Using the Early Year Profile to identify children in EYFS who need support.
* Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons.
* Worry boxes in each class for children to raise concerns that are checked by the Class Teachers (these are anonymous but give an indication of needs in particular classes regularly).
* Pupil Progress Review meetings termly
* Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns.
* Teacher and Inclusion Lead and SENCO termly Graduated Approach meetings where new concerns can be highlighted.
* A parental information and health questionnaire on entry to the School.
* Gathering information from a previous school at transfer.
* Parental meetings across school
* Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff.
* Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff.

All staff at Harrow Gate Primary Academy have had training on the protective and risk factors, types of mental health needs and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the Positive Mental Health Officer or the Inclusion Lead and SENCO.

These signs might include:

* Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
* Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
* Falling academic achievement.
* Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
* Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
* Secretive behaviour.
* An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
* Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE.
* Wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
* Drugs or alcohol misuse.
* Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
* Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the School’s child protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency the School’s procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

**Disclosures by children and confidentiality**

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

All disclosures are recorded and held on CPOMS with a factual summary of the disclosure and next steps.

**Assessment, Interventions and Support**

All concerns are reported to the Positive Mental Health Officer or the Inclusion Lead and SENCO, and recorded on CPOMS. We then implement our assessment system, which is based on levels of need to ensure that children get the support they need, either from within the School or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

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| **Need** The level of need is based on discussions at the regular Inclusion meetings with key members of staff  | **Evidence-based Intervention and Support-**the kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and children *For example*  | **Monitoring**  |
| Highest Need  | * Attachment Aware, Trauma Informed Assessment then Intervention including an Individual Development Plan and regular Team around the Child meetings.
* POM Therapeutic Intervention
* Sensory Intervention Approach intervention throughout the timetable
* Individual targeted sessions based on one specific need i.e. anxiety
* Specific targeted Therapeutic Touch delivered by a trained Bodyworker Therapist.
* Big Red Bus Approach to developing self-worth, self-image, relationships and trust.
* Allocated Key Worker

Referral to:* Future Steps specialist OT
* CAMHS
* The Bungalow Project (Therapy service)
* Family Hub
* Sunflower Sensory Service
* Daisy Chain
* Educational Psychology
* School Nurse
* Early Help
 | All children needing targeted individualised support will have an Individual Care Plan drawn up setting out* The needs of the children
* How the pupil will be supported
* Actions to provide that support
* Any special requirements

Children and parents/carers will be involved in the plan.The plan and interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact The Care Plan is overseen by the Inclusion Lead and SENCO.  |
| Some Need  | * Heartmath intervention
* Meet and Greet Colouring
* Allocation of a Key Worker
* Break time and lunchtime Lego Club
* Targeted games club during lunchtime
* Lego Therapy focused intervention
* Social Interaction intervention
* Restorative Circle activities
* Talkabout – a small group intervention to improve children’s communication skills around turn taking, dealing with issues, resolving conflict

Referral to:* Family Hub
* Early Help
* School Nurse
* Sunflower Sensory Service
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| Low Need  | Advice given by the Inclusion Lead and SENCO or the Positive Mental Health Officer to the class teacher and TAs. Class Teacher then implements the recommendations and feedbacks back impact. In addition, consistent use of the class based mental health provision.  |

**8. Working with specialist services to get swift access to the right specialist support and treatment**

In some cases, a pupil’s mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders.

We have access to a range of specialist services and during the support will have regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the children’ Individual Care Plan.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Inclusion Lead and SENCO following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil’s specific needs.

**SEND and mental health**

Persistent mental health problems may lead to children having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age. In some cases the child may benefit from being identified as having a special educational need (SEN) under the category of Social, Emotional, Mental Health needs (SEMH).

**9. Involving parents and carers**

*Promoting mental health*

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting children who do have mental health needs.

On first entry to the School, our parent’s meeting includes a discussion on the importance of positive mental health for learning. We ask parents to inform us of any mental health needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child’s mental health and wellbeing, based on a list of risk factors pertaining to the child or family. It is very helpful if parents and carers can share information with the School so that we can better support their child from the outset. All information will be treated in confidence.

To support parents and carers:

* We provide information and websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes and have produced leaflets for parents on mental health and resilience, which can be accessed on the School website. The information includes who parents can talk to if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child and where parents can access support for themselves.
* We include the mental health topics that are taught in the PSHE curriculum section, on the School website
* When children start school, all parents and carers are given our mental health and resilience leaflet that includes information on how parents can support their child’s mental health and where to go for help and support.

*Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs*

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available.

When a concern has been raised, the School will:

* Contact parents and carers and meet with them (*In almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children’s interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)*
* Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
* Be available for follow up calls.
* Make a record of the meeting.
* Agree a mental health Individual Care Plan including clear next steps.
* Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child.
* Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and children may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. We give children the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health needs for themselves or of accompanying and supporting them to do so.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the children, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

**10. Supporting and training staff**

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do and where to get help.

The Positive Mental Health Officer and Inclusion Lead and SENCO have delivered a wider range of different training with a current focus on recognising attachment and trauma and the associated mental health needs.

**11. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school office. All mental health professionals are provided with a copy before they begin working with the school as well as external agencies involved in our mental health work.

The policy is monitored at an annual review meeting led by the Inclusion Lead and SENCO, and involves staff with a responsibility for mental health, including specialist services supporting the school and governors.