



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

At Spa, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

We know that mental wellbeing is as important as physical wellbeing and we ensure all members of our school community get the support they need, when they need it. We know that people with autism may have specific challenges around maintaining good mental health and we work hard to ensure these needs are identified and met.

We have an ethos of kindness and compassion where everyone is valued.

At Spa we:

- help pupils to understand their emotions and feelings better through the Zones of Regulation
- help pupils have the communication skills needed to share any concerns or worries
- teach pupils directly and empower them to know they can accept or reject interactions and what safe relationships look like
- help pupils socially to form and maintain relationships with a range of people
- promote self-esteem and ensure pupils know that they are important and valued
- help pupils to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks
- support pupils to understand about sensory regulation and how to work towards self-regulation

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating all achievements, both academic and non-academic
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and resilience
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Specialised, targeted support for those in need
- Referrals and signposting to external organisations when specialist help is required

Scope

This policy should read in conjunction with our safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, staff handbook and PSHE policy.

Lead member of staff

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

SMT across the Trust, Family Support Workers

Staff who have completed the Mental Health First Aid Training

Staff support

We recognise the link between workload and wellbeing and we regularly review staff workload and will always amend and adjust any tasks that are not having a direct impact on pupils.

Within the schools there is a culture of respect, support and kindness. Visitors to the school recognise and comment on how welcoming staff are and how warm and friendly staff are towards pupils and each other.

We conduct annual staff surveys and we feedback results to staff and complete any actions needed as a result of these.

We subscribe to Worklife Support (08000 856148), giving all staff access to free, confidential support and advice 24 hours a day.

We ensure that staff know who they can speak to at school about support they may need.

All staff have a return-to-work interview with their line manager if absent from work to ensure that any support needs are identified.

We include a wellbeing focus during all staff appraisals.

All staff can have a free school lunch each day.

SMT organise and support activities for staff which have a wellbeing and social focus regularly.

Within our CPD programme each year there are allocated slots with a wellbeing focus.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. There is a clear, long-term plan, and mental health, resilience and RSE are key parts of this curriculum.

We are members of the PSHE Association and use their recommended resources to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing issues safely and sensitively.

All pupils are taught how to use and apply the Zones of Regulation, and this language is used across the entire school. Social Communication lessons are also used to teach about kindness, tolerance and respect. Being kind is a topic that is addressed in assembly throughout the year.

Secondary pupils revise key safeguarding points at the beginning of each assembly.

Young Women's Group and Young Men's Group support students to manage the emotional health and wellbeing through discussions, social stories and visual support particularly around puberty, relationships and self esteem.

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils, which may include:

- Art therapy
- Music Therapy
- Dance and Movement Therapy
- Yoga
- Mindfulness
- Ensuring allocated time with a trusted adult for scheduled, regular check-ins.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of the support available to them both in school and out. This may include:

- The Nest in Southwark <https://www.thenestsouthwark.org.uk/>
- Kooth - <https://www.kooth.com/signup/where-do-you-live>

- Place 2Be <https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/>
- Southwark CAMHS
- School Nurse Service
- Family Early Help
- Southwark's Local Offer <https://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk/wellbeing/mental-and-emotional-health-services>

Identifying needs

Autistic people are at higher risk of developing poor mental health. We are mindful that many may need additional help. Class teams report any concerns directly to their assistant head teacher. Lack of engagement, withdrawal, poor attendance, and change of mood or presentation can all be indicators that help is required.

Working with Families

We have regular contact with all parents at our school via telephone, chats at the school gate, notes in the diary or quick e-mails. Our Family Support Workers work closely with families and work alongside our Assistant Headteachers to share or identify any concerns. They also support families to access any external support by making referrals and supporting with applications. Information is shared through our website of any additional services that we are made aware of that may benefit our families and support their wellbeing.

We have regular parent sessions on a range of issues and with specialist providers. We have mindfulness sessions for families to access. We upload PowerPoints and other useful information from parent sessions to our website. We will always share strategies that have been successful at school so they can be used at home. We have provided Mindapples sessions for families each year.

Working with other agencies

We work closely with:

- School Nurse Team
- CAMHS
- Family Early Help
- Southwark Educational Psychology Service
- SIAS