



Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Status:	Non-Statutory
Responsible Person:	Headteacher
Responsible Governor:	Full Governing Body
Review Date:	July 2022

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Statement of Intent

At Penkford School 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. Many children are 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 pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

Penkford School are committed to promoting positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and will provide suitable support for all members of staff. See appendix A.

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)

1. Scope

This document describes the school's approach to wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff and governors.

2. 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 with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers
- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all staff.

3. Lead Members of Staff

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

Mr Francis - Deputy Head, Mental Health Lead and Lead for Child Protection and Children Looked After

Mr McKune - Safeguarding Leader

SENCO

Mrs Hall - Pupil and Family Support

Mrs Savage - Attendance Officer and Family Support

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the mental health lead 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 to a designated child protection officer. 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 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the mental health lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in Appendix B.

4. Education, Health Care Plans and Risk assessments

Each pupil has an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) and risk assessments are in place for those pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should always involve the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals, where possible. 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
- Preventative measures

5. 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 in our provision:

We put proactive and caring approaches at the heart of our educational provision.

Our vision is that Penkford pupils experience 'Success Every Day'. Our holistic approach aims to give pupils the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in life. Our pupils are encouraged to access the many supportive and caring intervention opportunities available.

Many of our pupils have been excluded from mainstream and PRU establishments and have negative experiences of education. We offer a complete fresh start with an emphasis on improving engagement and boosting literacy and numeracy skills, which upon entry are often weak and act as a barrier to accessing the formal curriculum.

Children's Mental Health Week each February and World Mental Health Week each May are highlighted with a whole school programme of events and activities. Our 1:1 mentors work with the most hard to reach youngsters to help them devise strategies.

Resilience themed projects which have promoted character formation and British values.

Provision:

1:1 literacy and numeracy interventions are delivered by an in-house specialist learning mentor. Resilience, Mindfulness, Communication and Social Skills are timetabled lessons.

KS3 and KS4 pupils have one day each week Outdoor Education on their timetable delivered by our own in-house specialist teaching staff leading to the Duke of Edinburgh Award. KS2 pupils have weekly Forest School afternoons. This investment in provision and staffing highlights our commitment to learning experiences outside the classroom. This in turn re-engages reluctant and disaffected pupils through building resilience, offering opportunities for team-building skills and raising self-esteem and confidence.

Weekly Enrichment afternoons enable pupils to focus on personal interests, gain new skills and confidence through sport, music and the arts. Our recent glass kiln project was a great success and highlighted that learning a new practical skill boosts wellbeing.

Weekly Whole School Assemblies address learning styles, study skills and motivational strategies. Our most complex pupils are offered personalised programmes and timetables allowing them to access learning through a tutor and bespoke therapeutic activities e.g. photography and gym passes.

Proactive approaches:

Dedicated timetabled weekly Draw and Talk sessions with an in-house qualified teacher practitioner give pupils the opportunity to express themselves and discuss personal worries.

We have commissioned in our own on-site counsellor funded by pupil premium one day a week to support pupils and families. Referrals are made by staff. Pupils can also self-refer.

KS2 pupils run the 'Morning Mile' to promote healthy lifestyles and to raise self-esteem. Yoga is popular with both pupils and staff.

Designated quiet spaces and reading areas support pupils who need time out or 'alone time'. Investment in 'Healing Rhythms' a relaxing and calming ICT program promotes mindfulness and a sense of inner self.

Supportive Interventions:

Anger management project - 'Think Green not Red'.

A team of 3 Learning Mentors focus on removing barriers to learning, encouraging engagement and healthy relationships.

Several staff are trained in Restorative Justice and conflict resolution so that any friendship issues are resolved swiftly. The focus is on encouraging pupils to see the point of view of others and on self-management strategies.

We work closely with local police and have a designated officer who facilitates a weekly drop-in visit. The emphasis is on early intervention and prevention.

Nurturing approaches incorporated into daily practice.

Supporting parents of pupils with complex emotional needs:

Our active Parents Group participate in half termly Family Focus Groups.

A Family Support HLTA has designated time to interact with families and aid transition.

Staff attend important medical appointments to support pupils and families.

Other initiatives:

Half termly TAPS (Team around Penkford School) meetings support the most at risk pupils.

6. Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils 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 in Appendix C.

We will display relevant sources of support in pupil services areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it

- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

7. 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 our mental health lead or a member of the Safeguarding team.

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

8. 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 will be non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise, and our first thoughts should be about emotional and physical safety. For more rather information about than how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively - see Appendix D.

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Who the information was passed on to.

This information should be shared with the mental health lead who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. See Appendix B for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS.

9. 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

Ideally, we would request consent, although there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent/carer.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with the Mental Health / Safeguarding Team. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence; and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed if a pupil is at risk of or has been harmed. Pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves, which is also encouraged. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give pupils 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, before parents are contacted, the safeguarding team must be informed immediately.

10. 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 pupil, and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be traumatic and upsetting for parents to 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.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible, as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you are sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too, e.g. parent helplines and forums. See appendix C.

We should always follow up with parents, after disclosures have been discussed, to allow them to ask further questions and consider booking in a follow-up meeting or phone call right away, as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

11. 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. 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 and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home
- All parents / carers will be invited to our half termly Family Focus Group sessions.

12. Supporting Peers

When a pupil 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 pupil 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 the healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

13. 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 pupils safe.

Training opportunities for staff, who require more in depth knowledge, will be considered as part of our performance management process. Additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate, due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host 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 mental health lead or designated safeguarding lead, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

14: Additional Good Practice:

Other methods of support for pupils and staff include:

- Weekly SLT meetings include a 'support for staff' section
- Half termly TAPS (Team around Penkford School) meetings support the most at risk pupils.

- Safeguarding Lead attends Safeguarding Networks, Early Help Forums, Safeguarding Updates and CPD
- All staff have professional buddies with similar responsibilities to their respective roles
- We have commissioned in our own on-site counsellor one day a week to support pupils and families
- All staff have 1:1 appraisals including Teaching Assistants
- Weekly Safeguarding meetings are held
- Weekly Attendance Working Group meetings are held
- Weekly Behaviour Working Group meetings are held
- We hold a weekly Teaching and Learning Hub
- Every Tuesday staff attend CPD sessions
- Open Door Policy for pupils and staff
- Work life balance week
- Team Around the Child Meetings
- We have an annual subscription to the Education Support Partnership: Free information, advice and guidance for all staff 24/7.
- Supervision is utilised for staff at risk of working in isolation e.g. DSL. The purpose of Safeguarding Supervision is to provide protected time to reflect on practice, provide support with emotional well-being, resilience, picking up on demands and developing coping strategies, have an opportunity to off-load, talk about how they are feeling when dealing with distressed pupils and the impact on their own life. It should feel restorative and help build resilience, celebrating success, review workloads and time management, discuss and seek guidance on specific cases – review action plans, avoid drift. Provide a fresh eye, talk through intolerances, frustrations e.g. with other agencies/systems, provide an opportunity where a member of staff can be challenged supportively and constructively with advice offered on areas for improvement, allow for issues relating to the work place and to working practices to be identified and discussed including safer working practice and professional boundaries, enable an opportunity for reflection, creative thinking and solution focussed thinking, consider how their role fits with the rest of the school/other services and the community, identify achievements and good practice, consider appropriate CPD/training needs in relation to the safeguarding role etc.
- Half termly Pupil Council meetings
- Half termly Pupil Safeguarding Council meeting

15. Appendices

A: Promoting staff wellbeing

NSAT recognise the value of good management practice with systems in place to effectively manage staff and encourage a partnership approach with staff, and workplace unions by:

- Fostering a supportive work environment, operating in a fair and consistent manner.
- Promote a healthy workplace and practices that ensure that members of staff are able to develop a healthy mind.
- Pay attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in staff and promote sympathetic alertness to staff who show signs of being under stress.
- Understand the differing needs of staff, at different points and events during their life cycles, and offer support accordingly, if and when required.
- Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental-health problems.
- Ensure that a return-to-work policy is established in the workplace that is supportive of staff both while absent and upon return to work.
- Carry out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as possible.
- Carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible and appropriate.
- Manage pressures, which may affect staff, including the impact of workload pressures, and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible.
- Conduct an annual survey of staff, including a section on health and wellbeing, and share and act upon results.

All staff need to:

- Seek support or help when they think they are experiencing a problem, if possible, to a clearly identified line manager.
- Act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves or others whilst in the workplace.
- Consider wellbeing support mechanisms offered e.g. Health Assured helpline 0800 030 5182, occupational health and mediation meetings to assist employees to return to normal working relationships.
- Where possible, be alert of any indication of changes of behaviour in colleagues and promote sympathetic alertness to colleagues who show signs of stress.

B: CAMHS referral procedure

Contact CAMHS direct by calling 01925 579405

Referral form found in the Z drive under CAMHS.

C: Support Services:

CAMHS (as above)

All Children's services, including Social care – 01744 671290

Early Help Service – 01744 673444 ChildLine -08001111

Young minds parents helpline: 0808 802 5544

Accident and Emergency Department at Whiston Hospital

Websites:

youngminds.org.uk gives parents guide to support A-Z

Actionforchildren.org.uk <https://www.childline.org.uk>

D: Referral Process

Complete a Concerns Form, which can be found in the Teacher Staff Shared Area under forms and templates, and signpost to the relevant person depending on the issue e.g. Mental Health Lead or Safeguarding Lead.

E: Anna Freud's 'Ten steps towards school staff wellbeing'. A copy of this document can be found on <https://www.annafreud.org/schoolstaffwellbeing/>