

Penkford School Safeguarding Information for Parents / Carers - *November 2019*



Mental Health and Wellbeing



Penkford School is an age 8-16 provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health issues. Our learners are the most vulnerable children in the borough.

We put Mental Health and Wellbeing at the heart of our educational provision.

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 Penkford School we aim to promote positive mental health for pupils and staff. 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.

Our Aims:

- 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.

Our vision is that Penkford pupils experience 'Success Every Day'. Our holistic approach aims to give learners the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in life. Our learners are encouraged to understand the link between having good mental health and good physical health.

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 efforts have been highly praised and acknowledged by the St Helens Star local newspaper and St Helens Online.

We have employed experienced staff to do 1:1 mentoring with the most hard to reach youngsters to help them devise strategies. Military Mentors have facilitated several Resilience themed projects which have promoted character formation and British values.

We have also achieved the BIG award for three consecutive years for excellence in challenging bullying.

Provision

- Resilience, Mindfulness, Communication and Social Skills are timetabled lessons.
- KS3 and KS4 pupils have one day a 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 learners through building resilience, offering opportunities for team-building

- skills and raising self-esteem and confidence. Pupils have had the opportunity to kayak down the Ardeche, cycle around Mont Blanc and climb to Base Camp Everest.
- 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 aspects of mental health with staff encouraging pupils to ask for support and to support their peers.
- Our most complex pupils are offered personalised programmes and timetables allowing them to access learning through a tutor and bespoke therapeutic activities e.g. fishing, photography and gym passes.

Mental health is an integral part of our extra-curricular activities

- 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.
- 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

- Y6 are piloting an 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.

Supporting parents of pupils with complex emotional needs

- Our active Parents Group participate in art, pamper sessions, baking sessions, MacMillan Coffee morning and countryside walks.
- A Family Support HLTA has designated time to interact with families and aid transition.

Ground-breaking initiatives

- Thrive National Pilot Penkford facilitated fortnightly meetings of this multi-professional discussion forum and clinic.
- 'Heads Up' Emotional Literacy project pilot with Y6, encouraging dealing with difficult emotions.
- Half termly ADHD clinics support pupils with stresses and anxieties.
- Half termly Team Around Penkford School meetings support the most at risk pupils.