

Whittle-le-Woods CE Primary School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy



Our Vision

Our Christian family leads and encourages everyone to:

- *Flourish; soar in faith and talents*
- *Serve others courageously*
- *Be excited and curious to learn*

We do this within our safe, happy, diverse and nurturing Christ centred environment ensuring 'all have life and have it to the full' John 10:10

At Whittle-le-Woods C.E. Primary School, we embrace the development of Christian Values embedded in Christian love.

We are God's children doing God's work

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing.

At Whittle-le-Woods CE Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We have a supportive and caring Christian ethos and our approach is respectful and kind. The dignity of each individual is ensured and all contributions are valued. We want everyone in our school community to Flourish. Flourishing will only happen if positive Mental Health and Wellbeing strategies are in place within our community. Wellbeing is woven through school life within our vision, ethos and curriculum. As a church school, spirituality is an important part of our school life which supports those who need post-traumatic growth.

Here at Whittle-le-Woods CE, we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's responsibility and that we all have a role to play. We have developed our provision, processes and procedures in response to HM Government and the Children and Young People's Mental health Coalition's publication, 'Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing: A whole school approach' (Appendix 1 page 5).

At our school we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count
- promote safe and supportive relationships between staff and pupils
- help children to connect, be active, take notice, keep learning, and give NHS 5 ways to wellbeing
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through the following:

- Promoting our school Christian values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support and environment that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through the following

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement and family separation.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment and neurodiversity.

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our SEND and Child Protection/Safeguarding policies in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with this. This policy should also be read in

conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and PSHE and SMSC policies. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

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

Mrs Metcalfe, Headteacher- Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL)

Mrs Haughin, Deputy Headteacher – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL)

Mrs Bidder, SENDCO and Mental Health and Emotional wellbeing lead

Mrs McGreavy- Emotional Support Assistant , Lego Therapy lead

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 developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Targeted support

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

- Circle time approaches or ‘circle of friends’ activities.
- Targeted use of KidSafe resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. ‘worry boxes’ and ‘worry eaters’
- Managing emotions resources such as ‘the Incredible 5 Point Scale’
- Primary Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups - Socially Speaking support groups.
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques. The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:
 - Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
 - Pupil action plans
 - The Boxall Profile
 - Emotional literacy scales

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support. Useful links can be found on our school website

<https://whittleprimary.com/safety-mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

All staff will complete termly wellbeing trackers on their pupils aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Changes in behaviour including angry/aggressive behaviours

- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

These are colour coded to aid identification. School staff may also become aware of warning signs, which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate. Staff also discuss concerns with parents so that we can work in partnership with them to support their child. When a child has been identified as vulnerable, monitoring is set as appropriate to the individual and ranges from daily to half termly.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Working with Parents

In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website <https://whittleprimary.com/safety-mental-health-and-wellbeing/>
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.
- Work together to develop and deliver a pupil specific action plan.
- Deal with concerns in a sensitive manner.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support through our Early Help Partners
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists

Training

As a minimum

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues and groups that may be at increased risk as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue <https://www.minded.org.uk/>. 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.

Appendix 1

Eight Principles to promoting a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing at Whittle-le-Woods CE Primary School

