



# Hampton Hargate Primary School

## **Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

Date: AUTUMN 2021

Review date: AUTUMN 2023

Hampton Hargate Primary School believes that all children, regardless of ability and behaviour are valued equally. Groups of pupils (eg. SEND pupils, children in care, EAL pupils etc) are not viewed as separate but are part of the whole school approach. Different children's needs are recognised and met through varied and flexible provision and the use of different styles of teaching & learning throughout the curriculum. Every Child Matters (ECM) is an important part of the school ethos and we encourage all staff, governors, visitors, helpers etc to play their part in promoting this. This policy therefore applies to all our children, regardless of their gender, faith, race, culture, family circumstances or sexuality.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of all children and expects all staff to share in this commitment. All staff must follow the guidelines set out in the relevant section of **myconcern®** which is available online.

## **Policy Statement**

*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 our 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. In an average classroom, three children will be 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 students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

### **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
- 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:**

- Promoting our school 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 that meets their needs

### **We pursue our aims through:**

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

## **Scope**

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

### **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

### **Lead Members of Staff**

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

Mr A Lyons- Headteacher and Designated Safeguard Lead  
 Mrs A Christophi- Mental Health Lead, Senco and Safeguarding Lead  
 Miss E Porter- Mental Health Lead, Senco and Deputy Safeguarding Lead  
 Mrs R Wilding- Deputy Safeguarding Lead  
 Miss A Cross & Miss R Kelly - PHSE lead  
 Mr C O'Brien - Wellbeing Governor  
 Miss S Moss- Deputy Head teacher and Deputy DSL  
 Mrs Gardiner and Mrs Barrett – Family and Pupil Wellbeing 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 the designated child protection officer, the head teacher or the designated governor. If the student 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 CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Mrs Christophi and Miss Porter Mental Health Lead and SENCO. Guidance about referring to CAMHS will be discussed with Mental Health Support Practitioners and parents.

### **Individual Care Plans**

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. 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
- The role the school can play

### **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and 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're teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the Cambridgeshire Scheme of Work to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as common rooms and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

### **Warning Signs**

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 Leads Mrs Christophi or Miss Porter.

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

### **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 should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively also refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy

All disclosures should be recorded on My Concern and held on the pupil's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the Mental Health Lead who will store the record appropriately on Safeguard and offer support and advice about next steps.

### **Confidentiality**

We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a pupil without consulting or informing parents first. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations (e.g. where a pupil is at serious risk of harm) when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the mental health lead, Mrs Christophi or Miss Porter. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, 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 kept informed and contacted at the earliest convenience.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues or safeguarding concerns, parents should not be informed, but the Designated Safeguarding Leads (as named above) must be informed immediately.

### **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 shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may 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're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too, e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with 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.

### **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. In order to support parents, 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 in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

### **Support for Pupils**

All pupils will be able to access a range of support within the school. All Year groups have a Year Leader as well as the pupil's class teacher.

- Each classroom has a Worry Box for pupils to communicate with the teacher. PHSE lesson support the teaching of wellbeing and mental health as well Circle Time. Assemblies are also used to reinforce positive messages.
- Pupils and Staff can refer to the Peace Corners, where we can provide a quiet space to carry out some mindfulness activities.
- Each class has Worry Monsters where children are encouraged to indicate how they are feeling at various points in the day.
- Pupils can request to leave the class and find an adult who will make time to listen to pupil's concerns and worries.
- Pupils who need further professional and medical support will be referred to CAMHS via GP or through YouNited.
- 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
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### **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 student 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 their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Examples of good practice may include:

- organising whole-school or year group assemblies to discuss specific mental health and wellbeing issues
- arranging for external speakers to visit and discuss topical issues such as the use of social media or the impact of body image
- using key dates such as Mental Health Awareness Week and World Mental Health Day as opportunities to raise the profile of mental health
- holding designated health and wellbeing days, organising activities across the curriculum
- dedicating time to celebrate pupils' academic and extracurricular achievements
- including pupil wellbeing in lesson observation criteria for teaching staff
- running yoga after school club or mindfulness sessions to prepare pupils for a relaxed day
- using displays and bulletins to signpost pupils to sources of support
- organising a tutor programme so that pupils have regular opportunities to discuss mental health issues in small groups.

## **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 students safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd Learning Portal ([www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)) provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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 developing situations with one or more students.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight 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 members of the senior leadership and mental health leads in school.

## **Useful links**

**Young Minds** is one of the UK's leading charities for children and young people's mental health

**Anna Freud Centre** for Children and Families- is a charity dedicated to providing training & support for child mental health services

**Place2Be** is one of the UK's leading children's mental health charities

**Mind** is the UK's leading mental health charity, offering a great deal of useful information on children's mental health

**EGFL**- Ealing Mental Support Teams, Health Improvement Team have a range of resources on a number of topics relating to Mental Health and wellbeing

**Mentally Health Schools** - Quality – assured information, advice and resources to help primary schools understand and promote children's mental health and wellbeing Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) provide support to children and young people with a wide range of behavioural and emotional issues.

## **Related policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with policies for:

- Anti-bullying
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Online safety
- Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- Resilience

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in October 2023

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Mrs Christophi our Mental health Lead via phone 01733 296780 or SEND@hampton-haragte.peterborough.sch.uk

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.