

The Avenue Primary School

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy



Policy Lead	Jaden Bytheway
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Review date	Sept 2022

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

Policy Statement

At The Avenue Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At our school, 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 business and that we all have a role to play.

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 specific 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 policy should be read in conjunction with both our Medical policy and SEND policy in cases where pupils' mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and PSHE, and sits 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 Jayne Gibson – Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Head of School

Mrs Emma Watson- Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Head Teacher

Miss Jaden Bytheway - Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Pastoral Lead

Lucy Owens - Designated Safeguarding Lead /Teacher

PSHE curriculum at The Avenue

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 called Jigsaw. Jigsaw combines PSHE, emotional literacy, mindfulness, social skills and SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) development.

All of the pieces of learning are brought together to form a cohesive picture, helping children to know and value who they really are and understand how they relate to other people in this ever-changing world. The Jigsaw programme from Nursery to Year 6 ensures that we teach children about mental health and emotional wellbeing 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:

- Wellbeing sessions with Miss Bytheway
- Therapeutic activities with Miss Bytheway including Art, Lego and relaxation/ mindfulness techniques
- Practising certain skills with Miss Bytheway, to help children feel more confident in a particular subject area
- Managing feelings using resources e.g. 'worry monsters'

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.

The Avenue Primary School work in partnership with Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind. Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind delivers emotional support to children and young people aged between 5 and 16 years old through their Schools In Mind Service.

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

A member of the Safeguarding team meets with class teachers every half term to track their pupils, aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

These are colour coded to aid identification and the level of concern. The safeguarding team meet to discuss these children and decide on appropriate actions/ next step. Each child is reviewed every half-term.

School staff may also 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 Miss Bytheway our Pastoral Lead or the Head of School.

Possible warning signs include:

- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Changes in eating
- Signs of a sleeping issue evident in school
- 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
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. parent workshops
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to and how to get help, if they have concerns about their child
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents on the school website
- 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 as part of the PSHE Jigsaw scheme.

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:

- Schools in Mind (Counselling)
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- The School Nursing Team
- Educational Psychologist
- Family support workers
- Therapists

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 in order to enable them to keep students 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.