



Newall Green Primary School

Aiming High To Reach Our Goals

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Mental Health in School Policy for Staff & Students

Document Control	
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Date	January 2022
Supersedes	NA
Amendments	Inclusion of specific processes for staff
Related Policies/Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inclusion and SEN Policy• SEN Information Report• Safeguarding Policy• First Aid Policy• Medication Policy & Procedure• Behaviour Policy
Review	3 Years

Approved by: MGPS SLT

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Positive Mental Health Policy Newall Green Primary

Introduction

In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health condition.

The school has an important role to play, acting as a source of support and information for both students and parents. However, many school and college staff feel out of their depth when faced with issues related to mental health. This guidance is designed to help schools develop policies and procedures which will empower staff to spot and support students in need of help and to follow appropriate referral pathways and procedures. A well-developed and implemented policy can prevent students from falling through the gaps.

Guidance and advice documents, including advice from the Department for Education and Public Health are included in Appendix B

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)

Intent:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students
- 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 students 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:

- Sarah Rudd, Executive Head Teacher
- Elizabeth Pattenden, Deputy Head
- SENDCos: Vicki Murphy, Kirstie McKenzie, Clare Mullally
- Nancy Bibby, Link School Nurse
- Tom Rudd, Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Evelyn Uche Parent support officer
- Jane Thompson – Acorn Room (Child Emotional Health intervention)
- Amanda Jackson, School based Social Work
- Dianne Harris, Business Manager

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to one of the above staff. If there is a fear that the student 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. The School Risk Assessment identifies the actions that can be used to reduce stress for staff – however if support is required staff should speak to a member of SLT immediately.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Send team.

Social Emotional Plan (S.E.P.) 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. See SEND Policy

Considering Mental Health

Staff at NGPS are sensitive to pupils' and parents' mental health needs, and will make allowances when necessary eg. Pupils who are embarrassed to get changed in class for PE are allowed to change in private

Implementation:

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

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.

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 Dimensions PHSE 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 students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PHSE and SMSC curricula to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

At Newall Green Primary School, we strive to be a 'nurturing school' as we believe it is important to ensure our pupils are in a nurturing environment that supports them to learn. Nurture helps us to develop our social and emotional skills to support our development as well as to develop our resilience. To do this we aiming to ensure we promote and embed Nurture UK's "**Six Principles of Nurture**" across the whole school environment and to work together to gain The National Nurturing Schools Award in 2022-2023.

School based support for students

- Children signposted to staff as a 'listening ear'

- Miss Kay, Worry Boxes and 'Feelings displays' used to communicate with adults
- Interventions for pupils including Drawing and Talking, School Counsellor, Play Therapy sessions allocated
- 'What I Think' scheme of work for Years 5 and 6, adapted for Newall Green Primary by our School Nurse
- Fit For Life Programme
- Growing and Changing PHSE Curriculum delivered to Years 1-6
- Parental Support Officers to provide advice and support through Early Help Assessments
- Mental Health Theme Days (eg. Time to Talk)
- Children's Mental Health Week

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student / member of staff / themselves is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and be communicated to the SENDCos or the Designated Safeguarding Leads if it relates to a student or Sarah Rudd / Dianne Harris for a member of staff.

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 student or member of staff 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.

Staff should be calm and non-judgemental, listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's or staff members emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

For students all disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the student's confidential file on CPOMS. 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 one of the DSLs or SENDCos, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

For staff members

- Main points of the conversation
- Agreed next steps
- Agreement for support form
- Copy of referral will be kept in the staff members file

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 student without first telling them.

Parents must always be informed, and students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the student should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give students 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, parents should not be informed, but the DSL should be.

Signposting

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

Sources of support at school and in the local community

- The Carol Kendrick Centre (CAMHS), Southmoor Rd, Wythenshawe •
Children's Services, Etrop Court, Wythenshawe

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach.

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

Supporting Peers

When a student 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

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.

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.

- Our SENDCos, Clare Mullally & Kirstie McKenzie have completed the Manchester CAMHS school training awareness course so that we can make direct referrals from school.
- Our Parent Support Officer, Evelyn Uche has completed the 'Mental Health First Aiders' Course with St John's Ambulance Service.

Impact:

Wellbeing is taught daily across the curriculum as well as being an integral part of our Dimensions PSHE curriculum. We expect our pupils at Newall Green Primary to be fully equipped to manage the transition to secondary education with the key skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to establish positive relationships and reinforce the importance of taking care of their own and others' mental wellbeing.

Evidence of the impact:

- Miss Kay, Worry Boxes and 'Feelings displays' used to communicate with adults
- 'A day in the life' journals showing class experiences and curriculum coverage of wellbeing
- Provision map showing interventions for Wellbeing eg. Drawing and Talking, School Counsellor sessions, Play Therapy sessions allocated to identified pupils
- Dimensions and Growing and Changing PHSE Curriculum delivered to Years 1-6
- School awards such as Healthy Schools, Wellbeing, SEND Inclusion and Peacemala. We are also working towards the National Nurture award.

Support on mental health issues can be accessed via:-

[Young Minds](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) (www.youngminds.org.uk), [Mind](http://www.mind.org.uk) (www.mind.org.uk) and (for e-learning opportunities) [Minded](http://www.minded.org.uk) (www.minded.org.uk).

[SelfHarm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk): www.selfharm.co.uk

[National Self-Harm Network](http://www.nshn.co.uk): www.nshn.co.uk

[Depression Alliance](http://www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression): www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression

[Anxiety UK](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk): www.anxietyuk.org.uk

[OCD UK](http://www.ocduk.org/ocd): www.ocduk.org/ocd

[Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPHYRUS](http://www.papyrus-uk.org): www.papyrus-uk.org

[On the edge: ChildLine spotlight report on suicide](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/research-and-resources/onthe-edge-childline-spotlight/): www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/research-and-resources/onthe-edge-childline-spotlight/

[Beat – the eating disorders charity](http://www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders): www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders

[Eating Difficulties in Younger Children and when to worry](http://www.inourhands.com/eating-difficulties-in-youngerchildren): www.inourhands.com/eating-difficulties-in-youngerchildren

Books

Lucy Willetts and Polly Waite (2014) *Can I Tell you about Anxiety?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Carol Fitzpatrick (2015) *A Short Introduction to Helping Young People Manage Anxiety*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Amita Jassi and Sarah Hull (2013) *Can I Tell you about OCD?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Susan Connors (2011) *The Tourette Syndrome & OCD Checklist: A practical reference for parents and teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) *By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self-harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Terri A.Erbacher, Jonathan B. Singer and Scott Poland (2015) *Suicide in Schools: A Practitioner's Guide to Multi-level Prevention, Assessment, Intervention, and Postvention*. New York: Routledge

Bryan Lask and Lucy Watson (2014) *Can I tell you about Eating Disorders?: A Guide for Friends, Family and Professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Pooky Knightsmith (2015) *Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Pooky Knightsmith (2012) *Eating Disorders Pocketbook*. Teachers' Pocketbooks