



Mental Health Policy

Responsible staff member: Lianne Pearce and Jo Newell

Governor lead: N/A

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Mental Health Policy for Guildford Grove Primary School 2024/5

Last Updated: September 2024

Policy Introduction

Mental Health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual recognises their potential, can cope with the normal stress of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her own community (World Health Organisation; WHO 2014)

At Guildford Grove Primary School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health for pupil and staff. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures we can promote an emotionally and physically safe environment for those affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health, thereby ensuring the best possible outcomes for all.

Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health.
- Develop resilience amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience through a whole school approach.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues so that staff and pupils can take quick and effective action
- Create an awareness of how to take a graduated response to mental health issues.

A Whole School Approach to Mental Health

This policy is shaped around the Public Health England 8-point model; Promoting children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing, a whole school approach document. The policy also includes guidance from the Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools document (DFE 2018)



We will ensure we are fulfilling our statutory duty to ‘*promote children’s welfare and prevent concerns from escalating*’ and ‘preventing the impairment of children’s mental health and physical health or development’ (Keeping Children Safe in Education; Sept 2021).

This policy is for all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors. It should be read with the following relevant policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Staff well-being policy
- First Aid policy
- SEND Code of Practice
- Confidentiality policy
- Menopause policy
- PSHE policy or curriculum statement

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health. All staff must look out for early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils with mental health needs are provided with the support they need. When appropriate, all staff are expected to make referrals to key members of staff who have the following specific roles:

- Senior Mental Health Lead. **Joanna Newell**
- Designated Senior Lead for Safeguarding. **Quirien Buchanan**
- PSHE lead or Head of PSHE. **Natasha Dwyer**
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategic **Lead Louise Vymetal**
- Pastoral staff with responsibility for mental health. **Quirien Buchanan and Lianne Pearce**
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) **Maria Haslett, Lianne Pearce, Helen Caley.**
- Designated Governor for SEND. **Tia Bearne**

If any member of staff is concerned about the mental health of a pupil, they should alert the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) following the school safeguarding protocol. If, however there is a concern that the pupil is in imminent danger or harm, the schools’ safeguarding procedures should be followed and the designated senior safeguarding lead should be notified. If the pupil is presenting as needing immediate medical care, relevant first aid procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services where necessary. When a member of staff suspects that a pupil is struggling with their mental health, they should not delay in seeking advice and putting appropriate support in place.

In addition to the above, members of staff can signpost parents to supportive organisations to address mental concerns for pupils and parents.

Curriculum

The school will deliver a curriculum which will help pupils understand and regulate their emotions using well-established Zones of Regulation resources. To achieve a good understanding of what keeps them mentally and physically healthy, they will learn about the importance of sleep, exercise and eating healthily. They will become confident in how to understand and manage emotions, and how to access support as part of developing resilience. Cohort specific worries and concerns will be included into Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSE). As well as curriculum opportunities, school will use the assembly programme to promote good mental health, resilience and raise awareness of what is available to pupils and parents to support their own well-being.

We believe personal development is at the heart of resilience and confidence, the school will ensure pupils are encouraged to be involved in personal development opportunities and school projects.

The school will ensure that all relevant staff are suitably trained to confidently deliver lessons on mental health and relationships, sex and health education. Training and continuing professional development will be available to all staff who teach mental health and will follow the PSHE Association guidelines on the safe teaching of mental health.

Further relevant information is available for staff and parents on key aspects of spotting the signs of mental health difficulties and how to promote good mental health on the school's website.

Whole school Ethos and Environment

Positive classroom management and an emotionally safe classroom are part of a healthy whole school ethos and help to promote good behaviours. All staff will ensure that the welfare and safety of pupils are a priority and will make reasonable adjustments to the environment in order for pupils who may be struggling with their mental health to succeed both academically and personally.

Schools should be a safe and affirming place for pupils where they can develop a sense of belonging and talk openly about positive mental health. Our school will create an environment which prevents and tackles bullying, along with setting out a clear system for behaviour expectations and, where necessary, sanctions.

All staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand the protective and risk factors which are believed to be associated with mental health outcomes. Some pupils will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. This includes understanding the cumulative effect of risk factors and the protective factors which support good mental health.

Managing Disclosures

When a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend to any member of staff, the member of staff should remain calm, supportive and non-judgemental. The adult should listen rather than advise in the first instance. All disclosures will be recorded through normal safeguarding procedures.

Targeted Support

We understand that some pupils are at a greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, looked after and previously looked after children, Children in Need, families living in poverty, young carers, pupils who identify as LGBTQIA+ and those pupils identified to have a Special Education Need. We ensure those pupils more at risk of mental health difficulties are provided with in-school support and interventions through teaching staff and the pastoral team.

For pupils whose persistent mental health difficulties mean they would benefit from support from the SEND department, the SENDCO will ensure colleagues understand how the school identifies and meets pupils' needs, provides advice and support to colleagues as needed and liaises with external SEND professionals as necessary.

We will effectively engage with our local early help offer and display relevant sources of effective, evidence-based services and organisations both locally and nationally. The promotion of these services will be through the school website, newsletters, noticeboards, and staff room.

At Guildford Grove we have a Mental Health Support Team that come into school offering a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, including group and 1:1 interventions for mild to moderate mental health difficulties in children and adolescents.

We support our Young Carers at school, by having a young carers social group where they meet and do fun activities with the Young Carer Ambassador. We work with "Surrey Young Carers" to support the child and family at home and have achieved the Surrey Young Carers "Angel Award".

We respond to the needs of pupils when the needs arise e.g "The Worry Bubbles". It is a system where year 5& 6 children are able to ask for help from a trusted adult, by posting their name in a box, the designated adult then takes them out to discuss any big worries they may have and advice or just have a listening ear.

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is struggling with maintaining good mental health it can be helpful if their friends know how to support them. PSHE will cover this subject with understanding of empathy, practical ideas and reference to Guildford Grove's Playground Pals and Sports Leaders from year 6.

- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset

- Warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g. improving self-regulation through applying the Zones of Regulation approach)

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

Working with parents

A large proportion of pupils and families are not always aware of the mental health support available or what are the most useful resources to support their child's mental health. The Mental Health Support Team works alongside parents as well as children and can signpost courses and support. Information on school based and local services will be available on the school website and through newsletters. Furthermore, parents should be made aware of who to talk to in school if they have concerns about their child or a friend of their child.

It is good practice to inform and involve families when discussing any initial concerns about a pupil, being mindful that hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may respond in different ways, and we must allow time for them to reflect and discuss issues further. Signposting parents to good sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances, including a follow up meeting.

Ensure meetings are recorded, including points discussed and agreed and any follow-up discussions which are part of their safeguarding record or in the development of an individual care plan.

Parental Consent

Pupils under the age of 16 need consent from a parent or carer to access treatment or interventions. However, in some circumstances a relevant medical professional may deem that the pupil has sufficient intelligence, competence and understanding to appreciate what is involved in their treatment. This is known as being 'Gillick Competent'. Pupils aged 16 or over are presumed capable of consenting to their own medical treatment and any procedures involved in treatment. This is by virtue of section 8 of the Family Law Reform Act 1969.

Confidentiality

As part of taking a whole school approach to mental health, it may be important to share with other members of staff information about a pupil.

Sharing disclosures with Home School Link Worker /Assistant Home School Link Worker ensures that one member of staff is not solely responsible for a pupil. This also ensures continuity of care should there be a staff absence.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years as a minimum. The next review date is: September 2025

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of Hannah Cover/Kim Sheik

Any staff changes will be implemented immediately.