



Eastfield Infant and Nursery School

Mental Health Policy

1. Policy Statement

The aim of this policy is to demonstrate how we support our whole school community to develop and maintain positive mental health. We know that mental health is important to us in our lives in the same way as physical health. We understand that our children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall well-being and can affect their learning and achievement and we work from the premise that most children have good mental health most of the time. We will ensure parents and carers know how to get support and understand how we identify and support children with mental health needs. We will ensure staff know how we promote positive mental health and how to access support if they need it.

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises their potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community. (Taken from the World Health Organisation)

A mental health problem is when difficult experiences or feelings go on for a long time and affect our ability to enjoy and live our lives the way we want.

At Eastfield Infant and Nursery school we aim to promote positive mental health for all staff and pupils. We will do this by using a universal and whole school approach plus specialised, targeted approaches for those who need more support.

The diagram below shows the different areas we focus on to ensure a whole school approach.



2. Ethos and Environment

We know school can provide a supportive and nurturing environment, to support the development of self-esteem and confidence, to promote well-being and help children have a sense of belonging and community. Our role in school is to ensure children are equipped to manage change, stress and life's difficulties and to be resilient, to bounce back from difficult experiences. We have to make sure we teach children how they can maintain good mental health and who to ask for help from if they need extra support.

We aim to promote positive mental health for our staff members through a strong ethos of care and genuine concern, whilst reducing stigma by making mental health more visible, having it as an agenda item for every staff and support staff meeting and promoting ways in which staff can seek help and guidance through information sharing and individual support as needed. The Senior Mental Health lead (SMHL) with the support of the Senior Leadership team will:

- Lead on whole school provision to promote positive mental health
- Provide up to date and swift support and advice for staff who are concerned about a child or colleague
- Keep staff up to date with key information and training on mental health and share resources
- Lead on and make referrals to external services
- Develop a whole school action plan and ensure staff are aware of this
- Monitor and evaluate provision and its impact
- Access training where available
- Support individuals where needed through a personalised mental health support plan

3. Curriculum teaching and learning

Eastfield school uses the Cambridgeshire PSHE Service teaching materials to ensure a wide coverage of PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education) is taught, incorporating the statutory teaching and learning set out in the new SRE (Sex and Relationships education) documentation. We also teach about mental health specifically through weekly 'Well-being Wednesday' and 'Feel good Friday' sessions and through assemblies and themes days. Every classroom has a dedicated mental health display with resources, pictures, vocabulary and tools to help children manage their mental health. Our ultimate aim is to ensure children:

- Feel confident in themselves
- Are able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- Are able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- Cope with the stresses of everyday life
- Manage stress and be able to deal with change e.g. through periods of transition
- Learn and achieve their potential
- Know when and who to ask for help from if they need it

We will also use resources and learning materials from other sources e.g. Anna Freud, Mentally Healthy Schools, Place2Be, the YMCA, BBC Teach, the NSPCC.

3.1 Student Voice

Our school council gathers the views and wishes of the school population which get passed to the Head teacher. Monitoring and evaluation will always include pupil voice to seek the views and feedback of the children in the school. We will also use age appropriate surveys to gather the views of pupils.

3.2 Staff Development

The SMHL will ensure staff receive regular training on supporting the mental health of pupils and the Head teacher will continue to provide support for staff on managing stress and change. Key information and resources will be on the display board in the staff room.

4. Identifying need and monitoring impact

All children go through ups and downs in their school career and may face significant life events. Around 10% of children aged 5-16 have a diagnosable mental health need which can impact negatively on their happiness and achievement. These are some of the ways in which children may communicate differences in how they are feeling:

Differences in non-verbal behaviour	Isolation from friends and family	Socially withdrawn	Change in eating habits	Falling behind academically	Self-harming behaviours
Feeling like a failure	Increased lateness	Drop in attendance	Struggles to part from caregiver	Pain/nausea with no apparent cause	Non-compliance with adult requests
Disruptive or aggressive behaviour	Problems with attention to lessons	Difficulties sleeping	Hypervigilance	Excessive worry preventing normal activities	Long lasting sadness
Nervousness	Feeling overwhelmed	Tearfulness	Panic attacks	Attention needing	Shortness of breath

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge and understanding of mental health and well-being and to be able to promote positive mental health and well-being and identify mental health needs as early as possible.

Any disclosures made by pupils or staff will be managed in accordance with the school safeguarding policy. Confidentiality when speaking with children and staff will also be carefully explained and pupils and staff will understand that we may need to pass concerns on to someone else.

Once support has been put in place we will monitor the impact by observing the child, collecting notes and observations to see if behaviour changes, speak with parents to monitor possible changes at home and refer back to referral notes to look at whether the initial difficulty has improved. We may also use simple feedback sheets as shared by the mental health team.

4.1 Working with parents/carers

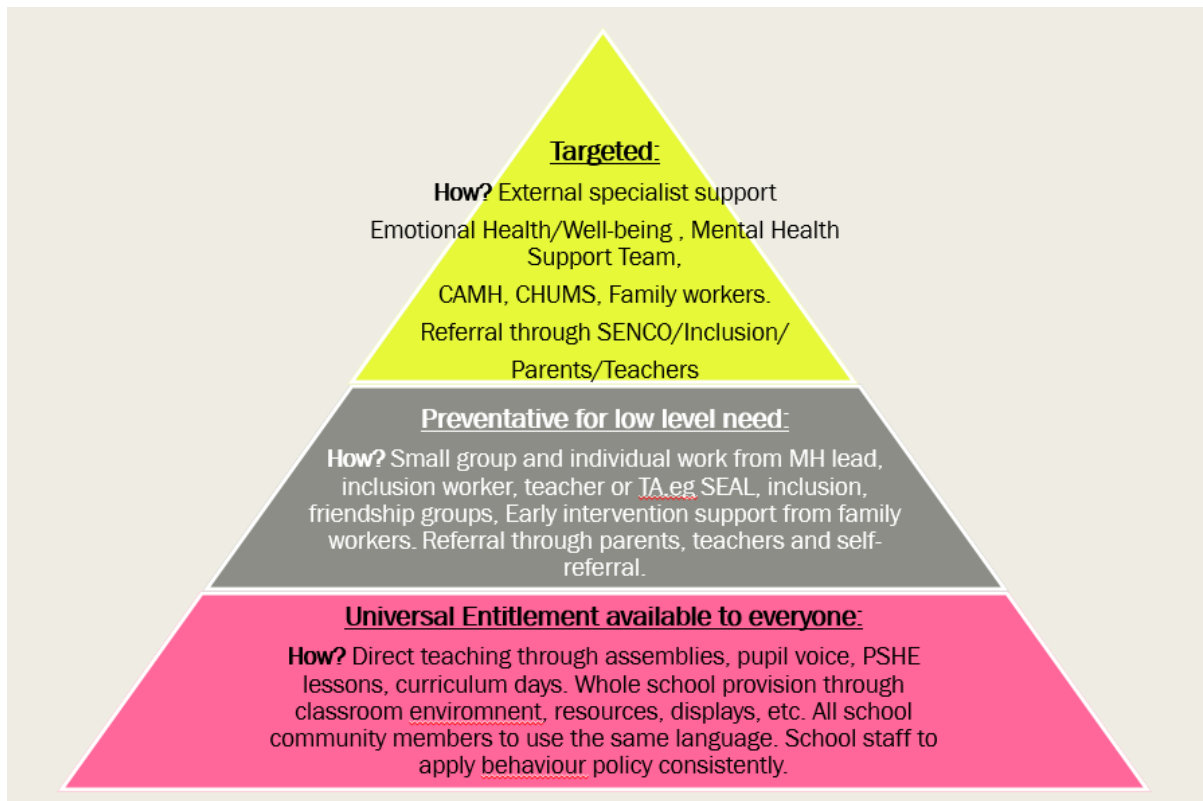
We recognise the important role parents and carers play in supporting the mental health needs of their children. We have an open door policy where parents and carers can contact staff at any time to discuss the needs of their child/ren. In the first instance this should be through the child's class teacher. We are able to pull together a team to work out the best way to support, this is likely to involve the inclusion worker and SMHL as well as the class teacher. On rare occasions there may be a need where parents/carers may not be involved such as where there are child protection issues. Staff will record the meeting, offer information and guidance, resources where suitable and agree actions to take and a date to meet again. We may write an All About Me plan or an Individual Learning Plan for the child.

4.2 Universal and Targeted support for pupils

Universal support will include teaching for **all** children through lessons, theme days, displays and assemblies. Signposting on the school website and in half-termly newsletters will help parents know where to get help and support.

Preventative support will focus on those who may be at risk of, or already developing low level difficulties around anxiety, eating, sleep, friendships, emotional regulation or who we have identified as needing specific support around a significant life event. This may be through signposting, support from staff in school or external staff such as the Mental Health Support team or Early Intervention family worker. We will support these pupils through inclusion support from staff in the classroom, Drawing and Talking therapy, social skills groups and through individual and small group support from class teachers or TAs.

Targeted support will help those who are in need of external support for more serious difficulties around anxiety, emotions or behaviour or a more traumatic life event. Pupils may be referred to teams such as CAMH (Child and Adolescent Mental Health services), CHUMS or the Mental Health Support team for individual support for parents.



In the first instance parents and carers should speak with their child's teacher who can then discuss with the SMHL.

4.3 Universal and targeted support for staff

Universal - All staff have access to our Employee Assistance Programme. Coaching is available for anyone to access. A mental health display in the staff room has information and resources on where to get additional support. All staff will be asked well-being questions in their termly appraisal meetings. Staff are given opportunities to raise issues around mental health at staff meetings and support staff meetings. Regular staff questionnaires will be used to audit staff knowledge and understanding of mental health and these questionnaires will inform planning.

All staff will also be invited to stress management staff and support staff meetings to improve their understanding of their own stressors and to be given ideas about how to manage and support their own and others' mental health.

Targeted – Senior leaders can offer bespoke support for individuals through mental health support plans.

5. Leadership and Management roles and responsibilities

All school staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. All staff will be able to look out for warning signs that a child's mental health may be problematic, including through shared understanding that all behaviour is communication.

Headteacher and Safeguarding lead – Laura Summerfield

Deputy Headteacher and designated safeguarding person – Claire Worth

Senior Mental Health Lead and deputy safeguarding person – Nicky Oliver

SENCO –Nicky Oliver

PSHE/SRE lead – Nicky Oliver

Governor for mental health – Hannah Duarte

Links to useful websites for staff and parents:

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/a-z-mental-health/

www.minded.org.uk

www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk

www.annafreud.org/training

6. Monitoring and Review

5.1 Links to other policies

This policy has links to our policies and documents for the following areas: Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs and Disability, Information report, Inclusion, CIC (Children in Care), Behaviour, PSHE curriculum overview, SRE policy.

5.2 Policy Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the SLT and SMHL and reviewed every three years or sooner where necessary.