

Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy 2022

Witton Church Walk CE Aided Primary School

Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

OUR VISION – OUR INTENT

Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 Organisation)

‘To Live Life in all its Fullness’

Jesus said 'I have come that you may have life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). He calls us to a full life in mind, body, heart and spirit.

At Witton Church Walk Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and every pupil.

Pupils

We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils; our ‘Support for All’ programme. 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 pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

Staff

The importance of promoting positive mental health for our staff means that they will be able to perform to the best of their ability and ensures that they are able to make a positive contribution to the school, both in terms of their support of children, to each other and the enrichment of their careers.

AIMS

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 pupil’s mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil 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/carers;
- ☐ Provide support to staff who may be struggling with their own mental health;
- ☐ Outline the support available for pupils, staff and parents/carers.

INCLUSION

We recognise that supporting access to support with wellbeing and mental health for all pupils and staff is crucial. The range of needs include those for whom language and communication difficulties are the result of sensory or physical impairment; for some, English may be an additional language requiring additional support; pupils may have a speech and language delay, impairments or disorders, specific learning difficulties as a result of dyslexia, dyspraxia or ADHD. Other difficulties in communication/interaction may have arisen from a disrupted education through illness or early childhood trauma. We ensure that we are aware of barriers to learning and we endeavor to meet the needs of all pupils in our school.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of all employees, pupils and visitors to our school is of paramount importance. As part of our duty to these groups we have put together this policy to protect the health, safety and welfare of these groups. There is also a duty of care of all these groups to look after their own health and safety as far as reasonably practicable; if you have concerns about your own or another's mental health or safety please try to do all you can to speak out.

LEAD MEMBERS OF STAFF

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

- Tracy Parr - Designated Child Protection Officer / Safeguarding Lead/Trauma Informed Practice
- Graham Sheen – Link Governor with responsibility for Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Sarah Johnson – SENDCo
- Jo Osborn - Mental Health Lead
- Jackie Ellison Simcock – Family Support Worker
- Julie Doyle - Lead First Aider
- Denise Kelly – ELSA trained
- Kathryn Magiera – Behaviour Leader
- Sian Simcock – PSHE Leader

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 Safeguarding Lead. If the pupil 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 Kathryn Magiera in liaison with Sarah Johnson, SENDCo.

ROLE OF GOVERNORS

The role of the link governor for Mental Health & Wellbeing is based on trust, openness and transparency. They know the school well. The governors will make sure that supporting mental health and wellbeing remains a collective responsibility. This will be done by reviewing and developing the existing school improvement plan to ensure that pupil and staff mental health and wellbeing represents an integral part of strategic and operational practice. This vision will be shared through consultation with all concerned parties.

‘Love Your Neighbour as Yourself’

Mark 12:31

ROLE OF MENTAL HEALTH LEAD

The role of the Mental Health Lead will be overseen by the link Governor and the Headteacher and their primary aim is to promote good mental health and wellbeing of all pupils and members of staff and parents. This is achieved is by:

- ② Developing a whole school approach to support mental wellbeing through this policy;
- ② Teaching about mental health and wellbeing through a programme of PSHE and via INSET/staff meetings and through parental outreach programmes.

Playing a key part in identifying emerging mental health needs throughout school by:

- ② Making sure staff can recognise signs and symptoms of mental health needs in pupils and colleagues and know what to do should they have a concern.

Referring pupils on to health professionals for appropriate specialist support and treatment by:

- ② Having a clear process to follow where a concern is raised about a pupil's mental wellbeing;
- ② Developing links with specialist mental health services;
- ② Knowing what local and national help and support is available in order that these can be signposted to pupils and their families to access help and support.

Supporting and managing pupils with mental health needs in the school environment and in their learning by:

- ② Ensuring staff are equipped with the skills to support and manage pupils with mental health needs in their learning;
- ② Sharing information about pupils who are experiencing any mental health issues with those who work with them in school so that they can be supported in the school environment.

Supporting staff with their mental health needs by:

- ② Promotion of strategies to support good mental health;
- ② Support when staff need assistance from outside agencies;
- ② Safe space to talk, sign post to others who may be able to help.

Supporting parents/carers with mental health needs by:

- ② Developing programmes of support including drop-ins, focus afternoons;
- ② Signposting to organisations who may be able to offer support.

PROCEDURES FOR SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH

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 pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum and the use of our My Happy Mind programme for children, parents and staff. 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 PSHE Association Guidance 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.

What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in Appendix A.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as corridors and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils 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 pupil 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 Jo Osborn, our Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead or Sarah Johnson, SENDCo. Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental;
- Changes in eating/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?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing 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 Safeguarding lead, Tracy Parr, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

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

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

Parents must always be informed and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give pupils 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead 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, 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 step 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 get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child;
- Make our Mental Health & Wellbeing 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 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 by the pupil 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/saying which may inadvertently cause upset;
- Warning signs that their friend 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 in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

Further training is available through EduCare, our online training portal, for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal² 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 to developing situations with one or more pupils.

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 our Mental Health Lead or Headteacher, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

SUPPORT FOR ALL

Pupils

All children at Witton are offered support for their mental health and wellbeing which takes a 3-tier approach:

Universal Support

- Regular PSHE lessons, the content of these lessons will be led by the needs of the class and the school environment;
- A Relationship Policy that focuses on building positive relationships and recognising achievement rather than punishing failure;
- Weekly lessons with My Happy Mind to gain a greater in depth understanding of our brain and how it works and how we can use it to maintain our belief in the importance of good mental health and what to do if extra help is needed;
- Consistent relationships with adults in school to offer stability and a safe place to talk;
- Signposting material throughout school;
- Mindfulness sessions within the school day;
- Questionnaire to give pupils a voice about their wellbeing;
- School Council gives children a voice in the running of the school.

Specialised Support

- Individual Care Plan which may include (but is not limited to):
- Pastoral support through ELSA, art/child/play therapy, drawing talking, counsellor is available, Theraplay – See Appendix B for referral form;
- NEXT STEPS intervention support – permission from parents required;
- ‘Quiet Club’ at lunchtime for children who find the playground overwhelming – identified by teachers;
- Contact with parents to offer support;
- Tailored interventions for small groups identified by class teachers;

Crisis Support

- Contact with NHS mental health helpline 0300 303 3972;
- Referral to CAMHS;
- Parental support offered by school and CAMHS;
- Peer support given by class teacher.

STAFF SUPPORT AND WELLBEING

At Witton Church Walk Primary School all staff are valued and their mental health and wellbeing is vitally important to making our school a great place to work. Good staff wellbeing has many benefits for school including a positive impact on all pupils, increased productivity, reduced absence in relation to sickness, improved job satisfaction and staff feeling valued, supported and invested in.

Workload and work-life balance are two of the main stressors affecting those working at school, but issues outside of the workplace can also affect mental health and wellbeing. Staff are encouraged to speak out about any issues they have, support is always available from:

- Line manager – Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher
- Headteacher
- Mental Health Lead – Jo Osborn

Staff who are concerned about a colleague should also speak to the above if they do not feel able to approach them.

Stress

Stress that arises from day-to-day work is a normal aspect of the modern working environment and can help us to meet the challenges of balancing work, home and family life.

Ways to relieve stress are very personal, and each person will have their own way of managing their stress. Some of the best ideas are those which take us out of the situation, even for a brief period of time. These activities can give our brains a break from the stressful thoughts that can exacerbate feelings of stress.

The NHS recommend these 10 'stress busters':

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/reduce-stress/>

NHS 5 steps to mental wellbeing:

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/>

MIND

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

- Exercise, especially outdoors;
- Take control;
- Connect with people or nature;
- Have some 'me' time;
- Set yourself a new challenge;
- Try to avoid unhealthy habits;
- Help others;
- Work smarter, not harder – prioritise your workload;
- Try to be positive;
- Accept things that you cannot change.

Mindfulness is another way to combat stress, see Appendix C for further details and ideas.

It is important to understand however that stress that is enduring and has an on-going effect on your life is **not** normal and can lead to symptoms including:

- Feeling overwhelmed;
- Having racing thoughts or difficulty concentrating;
- Be irritable;
- Be constantly worried, anxious or scared; Feel a lack of self-confidence;
- Have trouble sleeping or feel tired all the time;
- Avoid things or people you are having problems with;
- Be eating more or less than usual;
- Drink or smoke more than usual.

If you are feeling stressed due to a work or home issue, it is important to talk to someone if you can. It is not always easy to discuss stress with friends or colleagues, here are some people who can help:

- Jo Osborn - Mental Health Lead
- Our staff insurance – please see appendix
- OHU referral – counselor available or therapies eg CBT

Other sources of support are listed in Appendix D

SUPPORT FOR ALL

Staff

All adults who work at Witton Church Walk are offered support with their mental health and wellbeing via 3-tier approach.

Universal Support

Effective leadership and management throughout school in relation to wellbeing;

- Open-door policy;
- Work-life support, flexibility for personal wellbeing appointments within school time where it is not possible for them to be made outside of working hours.
- Work-life support, flexibility for family celebration and times of family needs within school time
- Cover during the day for termly planning, termly assessment drops and parents evening to limit time after school spent on these
- Teachers not needed to deliver an afterschool club each term – two half terms throughout the year
- Cover provided each term for subject leadership responsibilities so some can be done during the school day. If requested additional time available if needed.
- Preparation time given to all staff
- Clear and regularly used communication channels with all staff/Key Stage teams – emails, Key Stage/Staff/8.30am meetings, WhatsApp group for work notices – between 8am – 5pm work days only
- Opportunity to discuss and react in advance of proposed changes in working practices (*where this is possible*);
- Staff wellbeing policy
- Well being week (prior to Covid for whole school but revisit 2022)
- Dedicated staff room and areas around school to allow for refreshments to be had
- Open discussions for mental health concerns
- Regular requests for feedback about school wellbeing ethos in the way of half termly school forum in place to aid this regular requests for feedback to SLT and Governing body about school wellbeing ethos (forum- solution focused discussions, for the whole school)
- Promotion of self-care including encouragement of regular breaks, staff get-togethers, managing workload – always whole school focus so that everyone feels fully involved.
- Wellbeing discussed during each performance management meeting;
- PPA can be taken away from school if this helps with work-life balance.
- Collaborative planning in Key Stages enables teachers to discuss and share best practice rather than everyone busily planning the same lessons in their individual classrooms, therefore much less work to do individually
- Staff within Key Stages, where possible, have PPAs together to allow for collaborative planning should they wish to do so. All teaching staff have a school laptop so they are able to meet virtually if needed during PPA yet prefer to take PPA at home.
- Key Stage resources are shared centrally to stop reinventing the wheel – these should be saved on the server for all to have access to. The subject leader to ensure they are organised clearly on the server so

items can be easily found by teachers – list in staff handbook as to where all staff can find resources for each subject.

- Homework books purchased for all children so staff are not searching online resources for single activities or homework tasks and ideas. Online subscriptions to support homework eg Rockstar maths, Numberblocks and Big Cat
- No requesting or completing of daily lesson plans. Teachers have a planner to make daily notes rather than full lesson plans
- Pay policy stipulates a day off during term time for attending the Christmas and Summer fayres for all staff.

Specialised Support

- Training around mental health, to support own and children's mental health
- 'Safe' space to talk with Mental Health Lead, if requested.
- Supervision (support after disclosures)

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) at Witton Church Walk have fantastic relationships with children they support and therefore it may be that a child discloses either a safeguarding or mental health issue to them. These can be distressing times, made more difficult by the confidential nature of such

disclosures where staff cannot go home and discuss what has happened. If a child has made a disclosure to a member of staff, they should arrange an appointment with their HT, DHT or FSW to de-brief. This is then an opportunity to discuss their feelings which can be very difficult to deal with, especially when the details have been handed on to the relevant authority and then the member of staff has no more involvement in the incident.

Crisis Support

- Assistance to contact specialist support from our Employee Assistance Programme (see Appendix E for further details);
- Referral to Occupational Health;
- Crisis support via NHS, supported by Headteacher if requested.

SUPPORT FOR ALL

Parental Support

In addition to supporting parents with their child's mental health, Witton Church Walk recognises its role in the local community to promote positive mental health.

A 3-tiered approach is currently under development that will reach out to our community to support each individual's mental health.

Universal Support

- Help parents to feel a sense of belonging to the community, and the importance of parents/children/school as a 'team';
- Opportunities for parents to come into school to maintain and strengthen relationships, especially as children get older and these occasions seem to diminish;
- Phone calls home to acknowledge the 'good' in line with Relationship Policy can strengthen relationships with school;
- Stresses of parenthood is acknowledged;
- Parents are provided with opportunities to ask for help when needed;
- Support groups and advice, parenting courses available with SENCo and FSW
- Opinions are sought, valued and listened to;
- *Under development: workshops, drop-ins, wellbeing afternoons.*

Specialised support

- Signpost and support to contact appropriate agencies for assistance see Appendix C
- *Under consideration: tailored support for specific groups e.g. parents with shared experiences of SEND / bereavement / mental health issues / CLA etc.*

Crisis support

- Help to access urgent mental health support

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum.

Appendix A – Support Agencies

CAMHS (Childhood and Adolescent Mental Health Services) Primary
Mental Health Team
Duty Advice Line

Education Support Partnership: 0800 0562561

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>

Staff Insurance - Schools Advisory Service 01773 814400

Working Rewards - <https://cwcc.employeebenefitsplatform.com/>

MIND is a charity that offers support to anyone suffering from mental health distress, their website is here

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

NHS URGENT support for mental health crisis 0300 303 3972

The Samaritans offer a confidential listening service for anyone who needs to talk.

You can call 116 123 for an immediate conversation or if you prefer you can email jo@samaritans.org.

Appendix B – Self-care

The NHS have put together a Mood Assessment questionnaire which contains helpful links

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mood-self-assessment/> Mindfulness can be

a great way to find a bit of headspace, these apps can be very helpful:

- Calm
- Headspace
- Aura

This advice is provided by MIND, the charity that provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

Mindfulness exercises to try:

Here are a few exercises you could try. You don't need any special equipment:

- **Mindful eating.** This involves paying attention to the taste, sight and textures of what you eat. For example, when drinking a cup of tea or coffee you could focus on how hot and liquid it feels on your tongue, how sweet it tastes or watch the steam that it gives off.
- **Mindful moving, walking or running.** Notice the feeling of your body moving. You might notice the breeze against your skin, the feeling of your feet or hands against different textures on the ground or nearby surfaces, and the different smells that are around you.
- **Body scan.** This is where you move your attention slowly through different parts of the body, starting from the top of your head moving all the way down to the end of your toes. You could focus on feelings of warmth, tension, tingling or relaxation of different parts of your body.
- **Mindful colouring and drawing.** Focus on the colours and the sensation of your pencil against the paper, rather than trying to draw something in particular. You could use a mindfulness colouring book or download mindfulness colouring images.
- **Mindful meditation.** This involves sitting quietly and focusing on your breathing, your thoughts, sensations in your body and the things you can hear around you. Try to bring your focus back to the present if your mind starts to wander. Many people also find that yoga helps them to concentrate on their breathing and focus on the present moment. See our page on [types of alternative and complementary therapy](#) for more information on meditation and yoga.

Different things work for different people, so if you don't find one exercise useful, try another. You can also try adapting them so that they suit you and are easier to fit in with your daily life.