

Ribble Drive Community Primary School



Mental Health and Well Being Policy

RATIONALE

At Ribble Drive, we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We have a supportive and caring ethos and, as a Trauma Informed School, our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. We endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support. 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.

Thus, we will be enabled to realise both our Mission Statement:

"Be the Best You Can Be."

And our Disability Statement:

"To make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that any member of the school community with a disability is not placed at a disadvantage and to endeavour to anticipate their needs in advance of their participation in any activities within the school"

This policy applies to the **whole school**, including the EYFS

This policy supports Articles 3 (Best Interests of the Child), Article 28 (Access to Education) and Article 29 (Goals of Education) UNICEF: The Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Prevalence of Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Issues (Source: Young Minds)

- One in six children aged five to 16 were identified as having a probable mental health problem in July 2021, a huge increase from one in nine in 2017. That's five children in every classroom.
- The number of A&E attendances by young people aged 18 or under with a recorded diagnosis of a psychiatric condition more than tripled since 2010.
- 83% of young people with mental health needs agreed that the coronavirus pandemic had made their mental health worse
- One-third of mental health problems in adulthood are directly connected to an adverse childhood experience (ACE)
- 83% of young people with mental health needs agreed that the coronavirus pandemic had made their mental health worse.
- Just over one in three children and young people with a diagnosable mental health condition get access to NHS care and treatment.

- In a Young Minds survey, three-quarters (76%) of parents said that their child's mental health had deteriorated while waiting for support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- In a Young Minds commissioned survey by Censuwide, two-thirds (67%) of young people said they would prefer to be able to access mental health support without going to see their GP but half (53%) said they didn't know how else to access this help.

Mental Health and Wellbeing promotes school success and improvements by:

- Promoting positive mental and emotional wellbeing by providing information and support.
- Creating a shared understanding of all aspects of mental health
- Enabling those with mental health related issues to self-disclose and seek support in a safe confidential manner.
- Offering guidance and strategies to support pupils and staff to be mentally healthy
- Creating a culture to support and maintain positive mental health and wellbeing.

DEFINING MENTAL HEALTH

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)

As teachers, we define mental wellbeing as children and young people's happiness, life satisfaction and positive functioning- "Children and young people feeling good, feeling that their life is going well, and feeling able to get on with their daily lives."

TEACHING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

At Ribble Drive we aim to influence pupil mental wellbeing, using a whole school Trauma Informed approach through:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and well-being
- Adhering to a positive, restorative and Trauma Informed approach to behaviour management.
- Helping children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries.
- Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better.
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world.
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

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.
- Enabling access to appropriate support.
- Mental Health and PSHE for all year groups

- Access to a Pastoral Team
- Wellbeing monitors
- Access to information around the school

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.
- Nurture groups to focus on mental health, resilience and wellbeing.

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, key staff supporting Mental Health at Ribble Drive Primary School are our Pastoral team

Named Mental Health Lead - Gemma Greenhalgh (Pastoral Lead)

Deputy Mental Health Lead - Jill Counce (Head Teacher)

Named Mental Health Governor - Katja Lenihan

Our Mental Health Leads:

- Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Work with the PSHE leader re: teaching about mental health.
- Provide advice and support to staff and organise relevant training and updates.
- Liaise with mental health services and makes individual referrals to them.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort but we will also use both the PSHE Association Guidance and Trauma Informed Schools materials to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues 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:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry monsters.'
- Managing emotions resources.
- Focussed Groups for specific interventions, e.g.: Starving the Anger Gremlin; Sailing the Boat of Anxiety; Starlight
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- The Boxall Profile

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.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND WARNING SIGNS

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including:

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

School staff may also 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 the Designated Safeguarding Leads

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking 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

ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with SLT, class teachers and SENDCO to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead for assessment.

To support parents and carers we will:

- Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Make our Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.
- Organise workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and steps to wellbeing.

When a concern has been raised, teachers or the Mental Health Lead and SENDCO will:

- Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (Although there may be cases, parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection issues.)
- Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies.
- Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
- Create a chronology of actions and events.
- Agree mental health care and protection plan where appropriate including clear next steps.

- Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.

WORKING WITH SPECIALIST SERVICES

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- Educational Psychology Services
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- School Nursing Service
- Children's and Family Services
- Therapists
- Family support workers
- Counselling Services

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. All staff, including staff new to school will receive training around the Trauma Informed approach.

Training opportunities for staff who require a 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.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

Links to other policies This policy links to our Child Protection Policy, Anti Bullying, SEND Offer, Staff Wellbeing Policy and our Positive Relationships (Behaviour) Policy.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Wellbeing Policy will be published on the school website - hard copies are available on request. The policy will be reviewed every three years

Revised: Autumn 2023

Review: Autumn 2026