



# Emotional Health and Well-being Policy



Ratified by Board of Governors:

As per statement on Website

## Aims and Ethos

Our school is committed to the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and wider school community. We understand that a pupil who feels happy, healthy, safe and connected to school is more likely to fully engage in learning. Improving long term outcomes for the whole population begins with ensuring that every child has the best possible start in life.

We wish to work towards this in all aspects of school life, and to provide an ethos, environment and curriculum that support and prepare pupils for coping with difficult experiences.

Acknowledging staff wellbeing is also vital for improving long term outcomes for our whole school community.

As a school, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all pupils, their families and members of staff and governors.

## Rationale

“We all have a responsibility to promote the emotional health and wellbeing of our children and young people. Increasing concern has been raised around the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, particularly among those working with them in Education and other organisations and settings, their parents and carers, and children and young people themselves. The “Elephant in the Room” report has indicated that 91% of participants in the research felt that mental health was a “huge issue” for children and young people in Northern Ireland, with 86% stating that large numbers of young people don’t know how to talk about their mental health.”

**(Children & Young People’s EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING in Education Framework February 2021)**

A Whole School Approach to emotional health and wellbeing involves a school leadership who:

- understand the links between mental health and achievement.
- champion and support emotional health and wellbeing for pupils and staff, both strategically and practically as part of improvement planning.
- rely on a staff team committed to helping all pupils develop the essential social and emotional skills they need to cope effectively.

We believe that emotional health wellbeing usually means that someone is **happy, healthy and safe**, but can also include factors such as, having good relationships with other people, a sense of purpose and fulfilment, and feeling in control of your life.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

While the responsibility to promote positive emotional health and wellbeing rests with every member of the whole school community, key staff have specific roles and responsibilities which include:

### **Principal and Senior Leadership Team**

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team will work with the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Lead to co-ordinate the school's approach to EHW and ensure the effective delivery of a meaningful EHW provision/programme.

### **Board of Governors:**

The Board of Governors have a responsibility to support the development of EHW within the school.

#### **Principal**

- Ensures that EHW for all is embedded in the school.
- Monitors the effective implementation of this policy.

#### **Emotional Health and Wellbeing Lead**

- Leads whole school activities to promote EHW.
- Leads the EHW Team.

#### **The Wellbeing Team**

- Supports the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Lead in implementing the EHW provision.
- Regularly reviews the school's EHW implementation process and progress.
- Is responsible for promoting EHW throughout the school.

## **Support for Pupils**

### **What support will be provided for pupils?**

Our whole school approach to EHW ensures the provision of a variety of services to support pupils' EHW. It includes the curriculum, extra-curricular provision, pastoral care, SEN provision, early intervention and targeted support.

We understand that by intervening early to provide support before difficulties escalate and by supporting the individual (pupil/staff) there will be a reduction in the number of EHW issues in our school.

#### **Examples of EHW strategies and activities:**

- Pupil-led activities.
- Transition support.
- Class and small group activities.
- External agencies providing mentoring and/or counselling, Roots of Empathy, NSPCC programmes, PATHS programme etc.
- Whole School assemblies, celebrations and events.
- Teaching children about Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing.
- Promoting participation in local/community projects.
- Promotion of Global/Regional Mental Health events, eg, Anti-bullying Week, World Mental Health Day, World Kindness Day etc.
- PSNI
- Barnardos
- NSPCC

*\*If a pupil is identified as at risk, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.*

## **Support for Staff**

### **What support will be available for staff?**

We believe that staff wellbeing is essential for cultivating an emotionally healthy school, supporting and championing the emotional health and wellbeing of the pupils.

Provision of Professional Learning opportunities for staff.

- Time given for EHW preparation/pedagogy.
- Team building activities for staff wellbeing – staff motivation.
- Celebration of success.
- Trusted colleague networks.

## **Resources and support**

EA Health Well Hub.

Inspire Workplace- free counselling for all staff.

## **Support for Parents/Carers**

### **What support will be available for parents and carers?**

We believe that Parent/Carer engagement is vital because working together has been shown to have a promising impact on the wellbeing of all.

- Parent events.
- Regular home-school communication.
- Consultation with parents.
- Parent workshops.
- Clear pathways of support and links to support networks.

Engaging with voluntary, community and statutory agencies.

## **External Support**

We recognise some children and young people will encounter emotional health and wellbeing issues.

Depending on the pupils identified needs, external support may be suitable, e.g., counselling, GP, community and voluntary support, CAMHS, Educational Psychology Service, Mindwise etc.

## **Links to other policies**

### **This policy links to:**

Safeguarding & Child Protection, Critical Incident, Bereavement and Loss, Pastoral Care, Integration and Inclusion, Religious Education, RSE, Anti-bullying, SEN, Positive Behaviour.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed inline with schedule of policies by the principal in consultation with the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Lead/Team, staff and pupils. Consideration will be given to any developments and will consider the learning from ongoing practice and experience. Any changes made will be shared with the staff and presented to the Board of Governors for approval.

October 2024