



West Rainton Primary School

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy



Date: September 2024

Approved by governors: October 2024

Due for review: September 2025

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing.

Policy Statement

At West Rainton Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. 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.

At our school we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better;
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries;
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships;
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count;
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different';
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

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;
- an extensive and diverse extra-curricular offer;
- providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others;
- providing opportunities to reflect;
- access to appropriate support that meets their needs;
- modelling care of adults' wellbeing too (see separate policy).

We pursue our aims through:

- universal, whole school approaches;
- support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement
- high quality training for staff such as Youth Mental Health First Aid and Relax Kids coaching;
- excellent working relationships with our families, community and external agencies;
- specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy and our SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and PSHE and SMSC policies. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Alison McDonough- Designated Safeguarding Lead / Wellbeing Lead / PSHE and RHE Lead / qualified Senior Mental Health Lead/ School Council Lead / YMHFA qualified and Relax Kids Coach.
- Susan Firth – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead / SENCo / Inclusion Lead
- Julia Struthers- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead / EYFS Lead
- Adam McDonough- PE Lead and AfPE Award Lead
- Laura Charlton- Staff Wellbeing Lead / EYFS Lead
- Christine Charlton- Governor Lead for Staff Wellbeing
- Michael Beck- Governor Lead for Pupil Wellbeing
- Jill Bissell & Sallyann Lloyd- Lego Therapists

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are an integral part of our curriculum provision. **One of our curriculum key drivers- Growing Healthily-** means we endeavour to consider children's physical and mental wellbeing in all subjects and wider curriculum. The specific content of lessons within our Relationships and Health Curriculum (RHE) is reviewed annually and takes into account the context of current cohorts, current guidance from the PSHE association plus latest advice within the Keeping Children Safe in Education documentation from the DfE.

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;
- targeted use of RHE resources;

- managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters';
- personalised resource boxes;
- mental health and wellbeing groups;
- relationship support tasks;
- therapeutic activities including art, Lego, yoga, self/peer massage and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

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.

Identifying needs and warning signs

All staff at West Rainton, will receive training on pupil mental wellbeing on induction and through regular refreshers. Through CPOMs, concerns will be noted and flagged to the DSL on (but not exhaustive to):

- attendance;
- punctuality;
- relationships;
- approach to learning;
- physical indicators;
- negative behaviour patterns;
- family circumstances;
- recent bereavement;
- health indicators.

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 DSL or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- changes in eating / sleeping habits;
- becoming socially withdrawn;
- changes in activity and mood;
- talking or joking 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.

Working with Parents

In order to support parents, we will:

- highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website;
- provide regular opportunities for them to come into school and talk to staff on an informal level;
- share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums;
- ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child;
- ensure parents are regularly reminded of the Local Offer website and how it can support;
- make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents;
- share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children;
- keep parents consulted and informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in RHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- the school nurse
- educational psychology services
- behaviour support and intervention teams
- paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- counselling services
- family support workers
- therapists

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about promoting and supporting mental wellbeing as part of their regular safeguarding training and through regular staff newsletter briefings.

The Durham Safeguarding Children's Partnership (DSCP) website 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 CPD planning, and in response to individual contexts.

The headteacher is a qualified senior mental health lead and youth mental health first aider.