



Thistly Meadow Primary School

EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

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Rationale

At Thistly Meadow, we promote a caring, supportive environment in which each individual is valued and respected. We have high expectations for all and aspire to achieve excellence.

We recognise that all children need the foundation of positive mental health to benefit fully from all of the opportunities available to them. Everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable. At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health. Currently:

- 1 in 10 children and young people aged 1 – 15 years have a clinically recognisable mental disorder in any one year
- 1 in 4 adults will experience mental health difficulties; at least half of these difficulties can be traced back to childhood

The mental health of children and young people, adults in schools, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and experiences.

All children and young people have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. We are committed to raising awareness, increasing understanding and ensuring that our school can and will make a difference by providing a place where all children feel safe, secure and able to achieve and experience success and well-being.

Emotional health and wellbeing promotes school success and improvement by:

- contributing positively to priorities such as enhancing teaching and learning, raising standards, promoting social inclusion and improving behaviour and attendance
- involving pupils more fully in the operation of the school
- helping pupils and staff feel happier, more confident and more motivated
- helping to meet legal, ethical and curricular obligations

Emotional health and wellbeing is central to our school ethos.

Guidance

In drawing up this policy Thistly Meadow has referred to considerable guidance available to schools from a number of sources. Please see the full list of references and sources of help at the appendices.

The Department for Education¹ have produced comprehensive guidance and a toolkit for schools which sets out the following key points:

- *In order to help their pupils succeed, schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy. There are a variety of things that schools can do, for all their pupils and for those with particular problems, to offer that support in an effective way.*
- *Where severe problems occur schools should expect the child to get support elsewhere as well, including from medical professionals working in specialist CAMHS, voluntary organisations and local GPs.*
- *Schools should ensure that pupils and their families participate as fully as possible in decisions and are provided with information and support. The views, wishes and feelings of the pupil and their parents/carers should always be considered.*
- *Schools can use a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to help them judge whether individual pupils might be suffering from a diagnosable mental health problem and involve their parents/carers and the pupil in considering why they behave in certain ways.*
- *There are resources available to help school staff support good mental health and emotional wellbeing. The PSHE Association has produced guidance and lesson plans to support the delivery of effective teaching on mental health issues. In addition, MindEd, a free online training tool, provides information and advice for staff on children and young people's mental health and can help to sign post staff to targeted resources when mental health problems have been identified.*
- *Schools should consider if their pupils would benefit from the offer of school counselling services. The Department for Education has published advice on how to set up and improve schools counselling services. Additionally, Counselling MindEd, which is part of MindEd, is also available to support the training and supervision of counselling work with children and young people.*
- *There are things that schools can do – including for all their pupils, for those showing early signs of problems and for families exposed to several risk factors – to intervene early and strengthen resilience, before serious mental health problems occur.*
- *Schools can influence the health services that are commissioned locally through their local Health and Wellbeing Board – Directors of Children's Services and local Healthwatch are statutory members.*

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508847/Mental_Health_and_Behaviour_-_advice_for_Schools_160316.pdf

- *There are national organisations offering materials, help and advice. Schools should look at what provision is available locally to help them promote mental health and intervene early to support pupils experiencing*

Aims

General

- Happier and more motivated pupils and staff who get more out of life

Teaching and Learning

- Pupils who are more engaged in the learning process
- Pupils who can concentrate and learn better
- Improved standards in all subjects, including literacy and numeracy.
- Improved attainment
- More effective teaching
- Parents and carers more involved in school life and learning

Behaviour and Attendance

- Pupils with high self-esteem and confidence
- Pupils who have a say in what happens at school
- Fewer disaffected pupils, disengaged from learning
- Improved behaviour and attendance
- Less bullying
- Lower rates of persistent absence

Staff Confidence and Development

- Improved morale
- Lower absenteeism
- Better recruitment level
- Positive and effective relationships with pupils

Vehicles for emotional health and wellbeing

The school promotes and provides a range of services to pupils:

- Hygienic toilets which ensure privacy and safety
- Pupil voice is a strength of the school
- Pastoral base staffed including pastoral staff and counsellor provision
- Co-ordinated support from a range of external organisations
- Staggered start to school and transition support for leavers

The school promotes an anti-bullying and inclusive culture through:

- A strong school ethos which empowers tolerance and respect, including respect for difference and diversity
- Our curriculum enables children to understand the benefits that exist in a society where diversity and difference are celebrated
- High profile of anti-bullying procedures and policy through posters, assemblies and events such as national anti-bullying week. Use of Cambridge Education PSHE materials and our ‘No Outsiders in Our School’ teaching the Equality Act in Primary Schools programme
- Active listeners, including assistants and adults other than school staff to whom the pupil may turn

The school promotes and strengthens the pupil voice through:

- A democratic process for the election of school council representatives
- Consulting pupils about change and school / policy development
- Allocating a school council budget
- Pupil led assemblies
- Pupil questionnaires

The school promotes the involvement of parents and carers in the life and learning of the school through:

- Parent questionnaires
- Regular meetings with parents with the SENCo / Pastoral support as required
- Regular consultation about change and development through questionnaires and special meetings
- Subject Curriculum evenings, Sports and Theme Weeks and Concerts/Music Events , PTFA and fundraising
- Involvement in school trips and extra-curricular activities
- Regular communication and involvement over pupil progress, behaviour and pastoral issues

The school facilitates a context for learning through:

- Enhancing school and classroom layout; facilities and resources
- Recognising the background of individual pupils and their physical, social and emotional needs
- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about behaviour for learning and social cohesion.
- Encouraging positive, caring and constructive relationships

The school enhances pupil motivation and learning through:

- Consistent support for vulnerable children and those with SEN from trained teams of pastoral, learning support, teaching assistants and other agencies where appropriate.

- Pupil passports/One page profiles for vulnerable children, including
- Mental health and wellbeing additional support
- A range of challenging opportunities for gifted and talented / more able pupils
- An exciting and varied range of extra-curricular events and trips
- A balanced curriculum with opportunities for intellectual, physical and expressive development
- Recognising a range of learning styles
- Encouraging independence in learning
- Encourage growth mindset and Building Learning Power within assemblies the wider curriculum
- Using a range of teaching styles such as Circle Time appropriate to pupils' age, ability and level of maturity
- Using PSHE materials to raise self-esteem and confidence levels.

The school enhances pupil self-esteem and personal development through:

- The Personal Development Curriculum which includes Citizenship and PSHE
- Information, advice and guidance on sex and relationships and drugs
- Careers and aspirational talks and visitors
- Opportunities for pupil leadership through school council, children librarians, children leading their own clubs and for sponsored charity events
- Year 6 pupil receptionists
- An emphasis on praise and reward
- Opportunities for reflection and spiritual development through art, literature and the RE curriculum

The school enhances staff motivation, learning and professional development through:

- Curricular planning time within the school week
- Whole school training events, including Safeguarding
- Access to appropriate external training
- Provision of PPA non-contact time to allow for planning, delivery and evaluation of healthy school/curriculum activities
- Consultation on training and support needs through regular review

The school will aim to identify and support pupils where there pupils display indicators of poor emotional wellbeing such as:

- Anxiety
- Low self-esteem
- Behavioural issues
- Anger
- Lack of resilience
- Worry

and/or where there is a known mental health condition or the school becomes aware of domestic issues /violence/bereavement etc.

A Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire will be completed for identified pupils and a pupil passport/profile for support will be drawn up with the pupil, class teacher, parents and in consultation with the SENCO and/or Pastoral Support LSA. External agencies and other support may be included according to the needs of the child.

Roles and Responsibility

The promotion of Emotional Health and Social Well Being and raising the achievement of all pupils is the responsibility of the whole school staff and governors.

- The Head teacher and Senior Leadership Team will demonstrate through their personal leadership the importance of this scheme, ensure all staff are aware of it and understand their role and responsibility in relation to it.
- Governors – The Governing body has adopted this policy and will assess and monitor its impact annually.
- Staff will be expected to know what their responsibilities are in ensuring the policy is implemented. They will be aware of the implications of it for their planning, teaching and learning strategies, management of activities, as well as behavioural issues.
- Pupils will be made aware of how this policy applies to them as part of the school aims, values and in the curriculum.
- Parents and carers will be encouraged to participate fully in implementing it in partnership with the school.

Measuring Impact

The Governors are committed to reviewing the impact of this policy taking into account the following aspects:-

- School Curriculum
- School policies
- The school's ethos
- Pupil and staff wellbeing
- Staff/Governor/class and school council meetings
- Feedback from the whole school community via questionnaires and verbally, formally and informally
- External referrals, School Nurse, CAMHS, Health Service, Social Care, Supporting Leicestershire Families etc.
- Training and development internally, for example 'Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing' and staff meetings
- Induction and professional development of staff

APPENDIX A

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain or the item seems daft! Please give your answers on the basis of the child's behaviour over the last six months or this school year.

Child's NameMale/Female

Date of Birth.....

| | Not True | Somewhat True | Certainly True |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Considerate of other people's feelings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Often complains of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shares readily with other children (treats, toys, pencils etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Often has temper tantrums or hot tempers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rather solitary, tends to play alone | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Generally obedient, usually does what adults request | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Many worries, often seems worried | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Constantly fidgeting or squirming | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has at least one good friend | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Often fights with other children or bullies them | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Often unhappy, down-hearted or tearful | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Generally liked by other children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Easily distracted, concentration wanders | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Kind to younger children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Often lies or cheats | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Picked on or bullied by other children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Often volunteers to help others (parents, teachers, other children) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Thinks things out before acting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Steals from home, school or elsewhere | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gets on better with adults than with other children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Many fears, easily scared | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sees tasks through to the end, good attention span | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SignatureParent/Teacher/Other (please specify:) Date.....

APPENDIX B

References

Social and emotional wellbeing in primary education 2018 [online] available [2018, 3 April], National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE)

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph12/chapter/1-Recommendations#comprehensive-programmes>

Mental health and behaviour in schools, Departmental advice for school staff, 2018 [online] available [2018, 3 April], Department for Education

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508847/Mental_Health_and_Behaviour_-_advice_for_Schools_160316.pdf

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire 2018 [online] available [2018, 3 April], sdqinfo.com

[http://www.sdqinfo.com/py/sdqinfo/b3.py?language=Englishqz\(UK\)](http://www.sdqinfo.com/py/sdqinfo/b3.py?language=Englishqz(UK))

APPENDIX C

Sources of support and information

Here are links to some national support and information services offering assistance for child mental health issues. These are national services but other services may be available locally through the Local Authority Local Offer.

ChildLine – A confidential service, provided by the NSPCC, offering free support for children and young people up to the age of nineteen on a wide variety of problems.

Counselling MindEd – Counselling MindEd is an online resource within MindEd that provides free evidence-based, e-learning to support the training of school and youth counsellors and supervisors working in a wide variety of settings.

Counselling in schools: A Blueprint for the Future - Departmental advice for school leaders and counsellors - This advice is non-statutory, and has been produced to help school leaders set up and improve counselling services in primary and secondary schools. It provides practical, evidence-based advice informed by experts on how to ensure school-based counselling services achieve the best outcomes for children and young people.

Education Endowment Foundation – The Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit is an accessible summary of educational research which provides guidance for teachers and schools on how to use their resources to improve the attainment of all pupils and especially disadvantaged pupils.

HeadMeds – website developed by the charity YoungMinds providing general information about common medications that may be prescribed for children and young people with diagnosed mental health conditions.

Mental health and bullying: a guide for teachers and other children’s workforce staff - Free resource produced by the Anti-bullying Alliance for schools, teachers and other professionals on supporting children with mental health issues who are bullied.

MindEd – MindEd provides free e-learning to help adults to identify and understand children and young people with mental health issues. It provides simple, clear guidance on mental health to adults who work with children and young people, to help them support the development of young healthy minds.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) – NICE's role is to improve outcomes for people using the NHS and other public health and social care services, including by producing evidence-based guidance and advice. Some of this guidance has been drawn on to produce this document and much of it is provided in non-specialist language for the public. This can be useful in understanding social, emotional and mental health conditions and their recommended treatments.

Place2Be – Place2Be is a charity working in schools providing early intervention mental health support to children aged 4-14 in England, Scotland and Wales.

Play Therapy UK (PTUK) - is a not-for-profit professional organisation with registrants located all over the UK, many working in primary schools, alleviating social, emotional, behaviour and mental health problems. Between 72% and 83% of children receiving play therapy to PTUK’s standards show a positive change. Accredited post-graduate training for school staff is available either in-house or at

10 venues in the UK. The Register managed by PTUK is accredited by the Professional Standards Authority, providing an assurance of the quality of the Registrant's work.

PSHE Teacher Guidance - Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing - Has been produced by the PSHE Association. It provides guidance for schools on teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing as part of PSHE and signposts to organisations that can provide support for specific mental health conditions.

Relate – Relate offers advice, relationship counselling, sex therapy, workshops, mediation, consultations and support face-to-face, by phone and through their website. This includes counselling for any child or young person who is having problems.

Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPSYCH) – Provide specifically tailored information for young people, parents, teachers and carers about mental health through their Parents and Youth Info A-Z. School nursing public health services – guidance produced by the Department of Health and Public Health England This guidance supports effective commissioning of school nursing services to provide public health for school aged children. It also explains how local school nursing services can be used and improved to meet local needs.

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - Statutory guidance and non-statutory advice for schools, governing bodies and others on supporting children with medical conditions related to mental and physical health.

Women's Aid – Women's Aid is the national domestic violence charity that works to end violence against women and children and supports domestic and sexual violence services across the country. They provide services to support abused women and children such as the free 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline and The HideOut, a website to help children and young people.

Young Minds – Young Minds is charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. They undertake campaigns and research, make resources available to professionals (including teachers) and run a helpline for adults worried about the emotional problems, behaviour or mental health of anyone up to the age of 25. They also offer a catalogue of resources for commissioning support services.

| Version | Date | Comment |
|---------|---|-----------|
| V1 | Date created: 3/4/2022 Review date: April 2025 | C Bowpitt |