



Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

May 2023

Approved by the Governing Body Strategy Group 18/05/23

This Policy is due for renewal in Term 5

2025–26

PUPIL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

OF

GODINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

SECTION ONE – AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Aims

At Godinton Primary School, positive pupil mental health and wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do. Happy, enthusiastic children who have positive self-esteem, who have good emotional regulation and are proud of their achievements will thrive at school. Our supportive and caring school ethos and our clear set of values where kindness and respect are valued, helps children to feel emotionally safe. At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support.

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across our school community
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a safe and happy atmosphere in school, where children feel able to discuss and reflect on their own feelings, mental health and wellbeing in a supported manner
- Celebrate the achievements of our children, both inside and outside the classroom and in their lives away from school
- Give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others, including in leadership roles such as a playground buddy, Kindness Ambassadors, or as a member of the Mini Management Team
- Spread awareness of the varieties of ways in which mental health issues can manifest
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues
- Provide support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them
- Provide support for our Young Carers

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 positive self-esteem and ensure that all our children know that they are important and feel proud of their achievements
- Encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.
- Encouraging 'Growth Mindset' in the children

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging (assemblies, whole school events, displays, letters to parents, house points and other rewards / incentives, class identity, black culture month)
- Integrating our 'Guiding stars' life skills into all aspects of our curriculum (perseverance, creative thinking, personal best, communication, self-confidence, independence, risk-taking, motivation, problem solving and teamwork)
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making (discussions about learning with subject leaders, SMT and Team Leaders, Mini Management Team, House Captains, Kindness Ambassadors, discussions with Headteacher at tea parties, class discussions, Sports Leaders)
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements e.g. through use of 'proud pegs'
- Providing a variety of opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and supporting others
- Giving children opportunities to discover their talents (wide curriculum, opportunity to participate in competitions and events outside of school, extra-curricular activities, enrichment opportunities e.g. music events, productions, sports day)
- Having safe spaces in school dedicated to the promotion of positive wellbeing (Wellbeing room, quiet corners in classrooms)
- Access to appropriate support that meets the children's needs

We pursue these aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement on a 1:1 basis or in a small group.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties such as attachment disorder.

1.2 Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour, discipline and exclusion policy
- Child protection (safeguarding) policy
- SEND policy
- Inclusion policy
- Medical needs and first aid policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Online safety policy
- PSHE and SRE policies
- SMSC policy

1.3 Legal Basis

This policy was written with regard to:

- Equality Act 2010
- The data protection act 2018
- Articles 3 and 23 of the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child

1.4 Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote and support the positive mental health of our children, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Jill Talbot (Headteacher) – Designated Safeguarding Lead, Senior Mental Health Lead
- Sarah Stein (Assistant Headteacher) – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO
- Jacqui McGibney (Family Liaison Officer) – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Rainbows Bereavement Coordinator, Emotional Learning Support Assistant (E.L.S.A) Lead

SECTION TWO – SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

2.1 Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in school

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, the school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies
- Clear and comprehensive Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) curriculums in place which are delivered during STAR week each term.
- Identifying children struggling with mental health through Pupil progress meetings
- Having open discussions about mental health and wellbeing during lessons
- Offering pastoral support from our FLO and other members of our support team e.g. groups supporting friendship issues, 1:1 check ins for individual concerns.
- Offering 1:1 support through ELSA sessions or drawing and talking therapy
- 'Squirrels' Nurture provision in place (4 afternoons per week)
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
 - Worry boxes / worry monsters
 - Circle time
- Providing weekly support to vulnerable children through learning mentors known as 'Godinton Superheroes,' and assigning a 'Superhero' to some children to provide regular light touch support.
- Empowering children to managing their emotions through resources such as 'the 5 point scale' or 'zones of regulation' and emotional literacy support
- Providing safe spaces in school where 1:1 or small group sessions can be delivered

- Providing a range of resources and books to support mental health issues, loss and processing ACE (adverse life experiences)
- Inviting external providers to deliver workshops to support mental health and wellbeing e.g. year 5 mentoring support, termly Young Carers lunchtime clubs and Kooth – online mental, emotional support.
- Having class kindness ambassadors and our termly kindness hamper award to recognise acts of Kindness across the school while upholding Godinton Values.
- Signposting children to sources of online support on the school website and through posters displayed around school.
- Playground buddies in place to support positive lunch and playtime experiences.
- Promoting an awareness of who the children can talk to if they have a worry
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing

2.2 Teaching about mental health and wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally safe are included as part of our PSHE and RSE curriculum. This includes areas such as developing health coping strategies, understanding emotions and challenging misconceptions about mental health.

Our policies for these subject areas provide more detail on the approach taken in delivering these lessons and the content taught.

SECTION THREE – IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND WARNING SIGNS

3.1 Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a child 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 one of the DSLs or the FLO.

Parents are encouraged to contact the school with concerns.

Warning signs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously

- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the DSL. If a child presents a medical emergency then the usual procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting first aid staff and contacting the emergency services.

3.2 Assessing pupil mental health and wellbeing in school

Three times a year, staff complete Leuven scale assessments for the children in their class. This is a 5-point scale that allows teachers to measure a child's emotional well-being and involvement. These assessments are discussed at pupil progress meetings.

Where deeper concerns are identified for individual pupils, the school may complete a Boxall profile assessment. This tool assesses the social, emotional and mental development of children aged 4–18, providing practitioners with a precise picture of a child's strengths, as well as any difficulties which could affect their learning. Based on these results, the Boxall Profile identifies what type of support each child needs, providing staff with practical strategies and techniques for the classroom or nurture group to help children achieve their full potential.

3.3 Concerns identified by children

We encourage our children to consider their own mental health needs and to talk to trusted adults in school when they have a concern. This may be that they are feeling sad, worried or over-whelmed. Children have opportunity to reflect with class staff and scale their week if struggling to connect with their learning.

Different classes have different ways in which the children can do this, all of which are developmentally appropriate. This includes feelings board in the classroom, where children can identify how they are feeling to the use of worry boxes or worry monsters. Some children may have individual arrangements in place e.g. putting a special card on their teacher's desk to indicate they would benefit from a chat or check in.

Staff work with our SENCO and FLO to identify other strategies to rate their learning through traffic light counters

Through our PSHE and RSE curriculums, children are taught about the management of feelings and emotions (see section 2.2).

We encourage all our children to look out for each other, and where children have concerns about a friend, these should be shared with an adult in school who will then act on information provided with sensitivity. Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis.

If a child makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the designated safeguarding leads. All disclosures are recorded on CPOMS.

Staff should not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality. Please refer to the school's Child Protection Policy and Confidentiality Policy for further information.

3.4 Concerns identified by parents

The school very much values the opportunity to work collaboratively with parents in supporting their child's mental health. If a parent has a concern about their child's mental health or wellbeing e.g. anxiety, friendship issues, or body image, they should discuss this with a member of staff. This may be the child's teacher, the FLO, Headteacher or Assistant Headteachers. This way the school can look at the most appropriate way in which we can help to support the child.

Further information is provided for parents on the school website.

SECTION FOUR – RESPONDING TO IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND CONCERNS

4.1 Providing additional support

Where assessment, observation or dialogue identifies that a child may require help to support their wellbeing, a range of pathways may be taken, in addition to those outlined in section 2.1;

- A referral may be put to the FLO for pastoral support who will identify engagement with a Godinton Superhero. The children may be put forward for a specific intervention such as pastoral group work, ELSA, Squirrels Nurture support or drawing and talking. Their needs will be discussed at pupil progress meetings and the support actioned will be outlined on their provision map.

- Tailored adjustments may be made to the school day or to a child's timetable to help support a mental health need e.g. reduced timetable, time out of class pass, or rest breaks.
- If a child's needs cannot be met by the internal support offer which our school provides, the school will make a referral to Early Help, or encourage parents to make their own referral for external support.

A child could be referred to:

- A GP or paediatrician
- The school nursing service
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- NEFLT
- Sign posted to Mental health support e.g. Kooth
- Young Carers support through IMAGO and Cross Roads
- Local counselling services
- Play therapy
- The school may also make provision for an educational psychologist assessment to be completed which may help to identify how learning needs may be best supported

In all cases of additional support, a clear plan will be in place identifying the needs and support in place. The effectiveness of the support offered will be reviewed on a regular basis. This information is shared with staff and parents.

4.2 Individual Healthcare plans

In some situations, an individual healthcare plan will be drawn up to support a child's need. It will contain the following details:

- The mental health issue (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)
- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- Who will provide the support
- Who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

4.3 Signposting to additional sources of support

Sources of support are displayed around the school and linked to on the school website, so pupils and parents are aware of how they can get help this includes a range of charities and local groups. These can be found on the wellbeing page of the school website.

Our family Liaison officer, Jacqui McGibney is able to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available. Regular communications are sent out to parents via ParentMail to advertise local initiatives, food

bank/pantry project help and holiday support. We will also signpost vulnerable families to Pneuma Church and gateway Church for specific family support.

The school actively promotes National Children's Mental Health Week, setting activities for children to join in with and signposting parents to websites which support families with mental health and wellbeing concerns.

SECTION FIVE – WORKING WITH PARENTS

We work with parents and carers to support children's mental health and wellbeing by:

- Asking parents to inform us of any mental/emotional health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child while identifying needs
- Providing guidance to parents on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent forums)
- Keeping parents informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face to face.

These meetings can be difficult, so the school will ensure that parents are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting. Any key information will be recorded on CPOMS.

SECTION SIX – TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR STAFF

6.1 Training

The school has an identified Senior Mental Health Lead (Jill Talbot – Headteacher). Appropriate training is provided.

Specific training is provided for staff relevant to their roles; this includes training around issues such as anxiety, attachment, body image and eating disorders.

General training is accessible for all other staff so that they have an understanding of mental health needs, warning signs and what processes to follow if they identify a child in need of help.

6.2 Useful Links for parents and staff

- Young Minds is one of the UK's leading charities for children and young people's mental health.
- Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families– is a charity dedicated to providing training and support for child mental health services
- Place2Be is one of the UK's leading children's mental health charities.
- Mind is the UK's leading mental health charity, offering a great deal of useful information on children's mental health.
- WeAreWithYou

6.3 Support for Staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Offer staff supervision sessions
- Staff counselling
- Provide additional training as required
- Involve external specialists
- Aim to create a pleasant and supportive work environment (more work needed here)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policy for Supporting the wellbeing of staff.

SECTION SEVEN – EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At Godinton Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all members of our school community irrespective of race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership or socio-economic background. We are determined to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality by challenging stereotypes and by creating an environment that champions respect for all. At Godinton Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

All school policies have an explicit aim of promoting equality and will be reviewed in terms of their contribution and effectiveness in achieving this aim.

SECTION EIGHT – CHILDREN IN CARE (previously known as Looked After Children)

As for all our pupils, Godinton Primary School is committed to helping every Child in Care (CIC) to achieve the highest standards they can and to support positive mental health and wellbeing. To this end, staff will ensure that in delivering the curriculum they set suitable learning challenges of CIC, respond to the diverse learning needs of CIC, and help to overcome the potential barriers to learning for CIC

SECTION NINE – MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored by the Governing Body and reviewed every two years.