# Mental Health Policy



SUTTON GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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| **Approved by: Full Govs** | |
| **Last reviewed on:** | |
| **Next review due by:** | |

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

**Policy Statement**

At Sutton Green 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
- 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

**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

## 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/RSE 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, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Jai Stark- Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher
- Christine Payne - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead / Pastoral Lead
- Stella Carter - Emotional Literacy Support assistant - ELSA
- Claire Reid - Learning Mentor and Senior Mental Health Lead
- Hannah Benson - SENDCO and Assistant Headteacher
- Helen Allmand - PSHE and RSE Coordinator
- Sam Bowen-Lewis - Specialist Bereavement TA
- Sue Bell - Mental Health First Aider
- Lauren Mooney - Behavioural specialist

## Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE/RSE curriculums and Self-Regulation activities in class throughout the day.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance 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
- Targeted use of PSHE Association and Self-Regulation activities through Zones
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters'
- Managing emotions resources such as 'the incredible 5 point scale'
- Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups such as Worry Warriors, Rocky's Resilience & Feelings Detectives
- ELSA support groups
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego,  and relaxation and mindfulness techniques
- Drawing & Talking therapy

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

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire

- Emotional literacy scales

## 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. We have a Tier system to identify what level of support a child should receive. This can be found on the school website. We also have a directory of local and national support on the school website, accessible for staff and parents, which easily identifies different needs e.g. bereavement, anxiety etc and how to access support. This is updated regularly by the Mental Health Team.

## Identifying needs and Warning Signs

All teachers will complete a termly 'Vulnerable Children Register' on the pupils in their class aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties including:

- Pupil Premium
- Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health
- Family Circumstances
- Negative Behaviour Patterns
- Relationships with Peers
- Sleep or Food
- Attachment Issues
- Recent Bereavement
- Parent Mental Health
- Attendance and/or Punctuality
- Parental Disengagement
- Health Indicators
- Approach to Learning

The number of possible indicators each child meets may lead to them being identified as 'Troubled' or in 'Crisis'. The school Mental Health Team will then formulate a whole school register of these children to monitor closely and prioritise need/support/intervention.

School staff may also become aware of other 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy or the Senior Mental Health 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
- 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 go about this, if they have concerns about their child
- Make our Mental Health Policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.  Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE, RSE and during Self-regulation activities through Zones, 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 through outreach support from local special schools
- Paediatricians
- MHST (The Mental Health Support Team)
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists

## 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 students safe.

The online learning portal  Schoot 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 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.