



St Edward's C of E Primary School

Exploring faith, life and learning



Pupil wellbeing policy

'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.'
John 10:10

Introduction

At St Edward's Primary School we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives, in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs during their school career and some face significant life events. The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy".

Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Describe St. Edward's approach to mental health issues
- Increase understanding and awareness of mental health issues so as to facilitate early intervention of mental health difficulties
- Alert staff to warning signs and risk factors and provide support and guidance to all staff

St. Edward's approach to mental health

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines mental health as 'a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.' This directly links with our school vision in supporting children to achieve their potential, be confident in themselves and be set on a positive path for life.

Emotional health and wellbeing promotes school improvement and success in various ways:

- Pupils are happy and engaged with their learning
- Pupils and staff have high self-esteem and resilience

- Improved standards in every subject area
- Effective teaching and learning
- Improved behaviour
- Improved attendance
- Positive respectful relationships between pupils and staff

Pupil identification

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health difficulties and to be a school where:

- All children are valued
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their difficulties
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- Bullying is not tolerated in any way
- PSHCE is taught regularly and consistently and gives children opportunities to understand emotions, feelings and learn key skills in how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.

Warning signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which may indicate a child is experiencing mental health or wellbeing difficulties. These signs will always be taken seriously and staff will always speak to the DSL or mental health lead about any concerns.

Possible warning signs may include:

- Changes in habits e.g. eating habits
- Increased isolation from friends and peers
- Change in activity or mood
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Talking about self-harm
- Secretive behaviour
- Changes in appearance/behaviour/attitude
- Repeated complaints of feeling poorly

This is not an exhausted list. If any member of staff or parent is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child they should speak to the class teacher, mental health lead or safe guarding lead.

Providing help and support

A child may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to a member of staff. The member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thought should be of the child's emotional and physical safety rather than exploring why.

If there is a fear that the child is in immediate danger then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed.

Where a referral to the single point of access or mental health support team is necessary, this will be managed by the inclusion manager.

St. Edward's is part of the mental health support team initiative in Rochdale. As part of this team we have a link mental health practitioner who can offer 1 to 1 or group sessions to children who are struggling with some mental health and wellbeing difficulties, for example, low mood or low anxiety.

Curricular and Extra-curricular support

We support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils through:

- A strong school ethos which empowers respect for differences and diversity
- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about behaviour
- Encourage positive, caring and constructive relationships
- Recognising the background of individual children and their physical, social and emotional needs
- Consistent support for vulnerable children and those with SEND through close links with outside agencies, for example, healthy young minds, education psychology, speech and language, Rochdale additional needs and mentally healthy schools
- A balanced curriculum with opportunities for intellectual, physical and expressive development
- Using a range of teaching styles such as circle time, resilience through play, targeted interventions
- Opportunities for pupil leadership through school council/ECO (Busy Bees), worship committee and other roles
- Nurture groups for general wellbeing as well as specific mental health such as interventions dealing with anxiety or emotions

Working with all parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health difficulties via the dedicated mental health and wellbeing page on our website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to speak to if they have any concerns about their own child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through the school website and coffee mornings

Parents and staff

If a pupil, parent or member of staff requires mental health support they should contact the mental health lead or designated safeguarding lead who will:

Remain non-judgemental

Listen

Give support, advice and information where necessary

Encourage appropriate professional support if necessary.

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Mental health lead: Jane Lee