

# Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy



## Believe in Yourself

“Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.” (World Health Organization 2014)



## 1. Introduction

Mental health affects all aspects of life and behaviour.

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and all pupils. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

## 2. Who is covered by this policy?

This policy applies to all pupils who attend, and all staff who work at Manford Primary School irrespective of role. This policy encourages the mental health and wellbeing for all staff and children.

## 3. Context and Rationale

Mental Health and Wellbeing promotes school success and improvements by:

- Promoting positive mental and emotional wellbeing by providing information and support.
- Creating a shared understanding of all aspects of mental health
- Enabling those with mental health related issues to self-disclose and seek support in a safe confidential manner.
- Offering guidance and strategies to support pupils and staff to be mentally healthy
- Creating a culture to support and maintain positive mental health and wellbeing.

## 4. Entitlement

In 1989, governments across the world promised all children the same rights by adopting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention says what countries must do so that all children grow as healthy as possible, can learn at school, are protected, have their views listened to, and are treated fairly.

As part of our school priorities this year, we proudly begin the process of becoming a Rights Respecting School. This policy underpins three articles taken from the convention:

**Article 27:** Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical, social and mental needs. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.

**Article 28:** Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available for every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity.

**Article 29:** Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

## **5. Safeguarding**

Manford Primary School support pupils in school and beyond. We are fully committed to safeguarding our pupils through prevention, protection and support. We are also committed to actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils are encouraged to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain. It is our duty to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent terrorism. Any concerns should be referred to the Designated Child Protection Persons who have local contact details for PREVENT and Channel referrals.

## **6. Aims of the policy**

The purpose of this policy is to have:

### **General**

- Resilient, 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 English and Maths
- Improved attainment
- More effective teaching
- Parents and carers who are 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
- More engaged learners
- Good concentration, behaviour and attendance
- Positive peer relationships
- Pupils who are resilient and can cope well with challenges

### **Staff Confidence and Development**

- High morale
- Staff with high wellbeing leading to lower absenteeism
- Stable, content and consistent workforce
- Positive and effective relationships with pupils

## 7. Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing (Prevention)

To promote mental health and emotional wellbeing, our school will:

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

We will:

- Encourage and support the whole school community to be positive in its approach to mental health wellbeing.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of both internal and external support services.
- Provide guidance and support to all those connected with the organisation to help them develop confidence in their ability to manage mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Provide appropriate training and information to staff on mental health and emotional wellbeing (MindEd).
- Have a named Wellbeing Ambassador on staff who will be the contact point at Manford Primary School and who will take some responsibility for the coordination and delivery of the school's mental health and emotional wellbeing strategy alongside the Designated Mental Health and Wellbeing lead.
- Seek to integrate mental health and emotional support across the curriculum and as part of the ethos of our school.
- Keep this policy under review and make changes when legislation and best practice requires.
- Addressing Needs (mechanisms to support children and staff)
- Promote a culture which supports and encourages self-disclosure – open and supportive leadership team, Schools UK provide access to 'Health assured Wellbeing Services that provide additional support for staff through an online portal which can be accessed through [www.healthassuredap.com](http://www.healthassuredap.com)
- Provide a framework for responding appropriately to mental health wellbeing – Miss Tracey Osei, designated Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead.
- Recognise that staff have the responsibility to alert others to potential and actual indicators of mental health needs and to take this action whenever necessary.
- Co-operate with other organisations involved in the delivery of mental health and emotional support services – 'EWMHS', GPs, School Nurse, a number of voluntary organisations such as RIASS (Redbridge Information, Advice and Support Service) 020 8708 8922, 'Education Support Partnership (08000 562561), London Borough of Redbridge Staff Counselling Service local charities such as Kids (Independent Support Services) 0208 551 7333, Barnardos, Young Minds and Positive People Company (0800 282 193) who provide a helpline for school staff.

- Observe the principles of confidentiality and data protection in respect of mental health and emotional wellbeing.

## 8. Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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 Miss Tracey Osei, our Mental Health First Aider and Lead.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

## 9. The Manford Wellbeing Test:

As part of the SWERL project this very simple test has been developed to aid staff in determining if a pupil may be in need of a wellbeing-style structured conversation. It is scored as follows:

Score Indicator	0	1	2
<b>Smiling</b>	Looks 'glum'	Occasionally smiles	Smiles readily
<b>Talking with peers</b>	Sits alone and talks to no one	Will talk when prompted	Talks readily with peers
<b>Appearance</b>	'Scruffy'	Generally well-kempt	Cares about appearance
<b>Talking with adults</b>	Barely engages with adults	Will talk with adult when prompted	Talks readily with adults
<b>Attendance and effort</b>	A persistent absentee, frequently late. Little or no effort in lessons/activities	Attendance rate of 90% - 94%, sometimes late. Little/below average effort in lessons/activities	Attendance 95% or better, rarely late. Good effort in lessons/activities

*A pupil who scores a 7 or higher is considered to have good emotional wellbeing, while a score of 3 or lower may indicate the need for a structured conversation with our Wellbeing Lead, Miss Tracey Osei.*

## **10. 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.

Support includes: 'EWMHS', GPs, School Nurse, New Rush Hall, a number of voluntary organisations such as RIASS (Redbridge Information, Advice and Support Service) 020 8708 8922, 'Education Support Partnership (08000 562561), London Borough of Redbridge Staff Counselling Service (find number ask Amanda), local charities such as Kids (Independent Support Services) 0208 551 7333, Barnardos, Young Minds, etc.

## **11. Supporting staff to positive mental health and wellbeing**

The Governing Body's 'duty of care' towards employees, legislation and case law, require them to manage and safeguard the physical and psychological well-being of the school's employees.

To help meet these objectives, the School has adopted:

- the LBR Sickness and Absence Policy which provides a framework with clear milestones enabling managers effectively to manage attendance;
- the health and safety policy which provides a framework for, and measurement of, safe places of work; and
- this Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy which focuses on the School's obligations to supporting staff's health and wellbeing.

It is vital that all staff are aware of these policies and the role all employees undertake to ensure we all work in healthy workplaces.

We need to have a clear understanding of the causes of absence in order to formulate strategies that address non-attendance (sickness absence).

The main causes of absence can be viewed as four distinct areas:

<b>Health and Lifestyle Factors</b> General illness /poor health Smoking Excessive use of alcohol Lack of exercise Body Weight	<b>Workplace Factors</b> Working patterns Health and safety concerns Travel times Excessive hours Safe place to work Relationships at work
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<b>Attitudinal and Stress Factors</b>	<b>Domestic and Relationship Factors</b>
Job satisfaction Career satisfaction Intention to leave Organisational commitment Stress Absence 'culture'	Divorce and separation Number of children under 16 Lack of flexible working arrangements Caring responsibilities Financial worries Bereavement

*Well teachers teach well*

*"In case of emergency, air masks  
 will drop the ceiling. If you are  
 travelling with a child, please put on  
 your own mask before helping the  
 child."*

The Governing Body will continue to promote and work towards performance improvement and efficiency, getting the very best from our staff, retaining and attracting the people who are best skilled and well-motivated.

Wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improved wellbeing at work. Addressing workplace wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce the risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health.

To fulfil this commitment the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team will:

- Make health and wellbeing a core priority. Value the strategic importance and benefits of a healthy workplace. We will encourage a consistent, positive approach to all staff health and wellbeing.
- Make clear the link between employees' health and wellbeing and improved performance.
- Ensure all leaders at Manford Primary School, including Senior leaders and Governors, are committed to the health and wellbeing of staff and act as good role models.
- Make communication clear to ensure that staff have realistic expectations of what's possible, practical and affordable.
- Be aware that a return to work from sickness does not necessarily indicate that an employee's health and wellbeing has improved. Return to work interview takes into account that aggressive return to work procedures can encourage presenteeism to the detriment of our school.
- Recruit staff who have the positive leadership traits associated with improved staff health and wellbeing. These traits include being open and approachable and encouraging new ideas.
- Ensure health and wellbeing policies are included in any induction, training and development programmes for new staff.
- Have a proactive and visible commitment to health and safety and its role in improving the health and wellbeing of staff, that is, view health and safety as part of the culture of a caring and supportive employer – not only a statutory requirement.
- Create a supportive environment that enables employees to be proactive when and if possible to protect and enhance their own health and wellbeing
- Seek to identify potential circumstances that may affect the wellbeing of staff and conduct risk assessments;

- Increase awareness and understanding of how to promote wellbeing at work and the avoidance of absence;
- Ensure advice and guidance is available to leaders in dealing with wellbeing concerns of staff;
- Ensure that there is a culture where there is no expectation that staff communicate about work outside of normal working hours (except in an emergency, eg child protection issues);
- Ensure that all staff take part in a supportive performance management process;
- Conduct an annual (anonymous) staff survey in order to collate information from all staff groups, which will inform future strategies to support the health and wellbeing of staff.

All staff are encouraged to take a responsible approach to health and wellbeing issues, including adopting a robust self-management to their own health.

## **12. Wellbeing Audit**

The protection and fostering of staff wellbeing is increasingly embedded in our management methods and systems. A staff wellbeing audit and a workload audit will be carried out during 2019/20 to assess and audit current level of wellbeing, so that an Action Plan can be developed - decide where we want to be and then work out how we are going to get there.

The Senior Leadership Team will consider the following suggestions for possible implementation during 2019/20:

- Cut down the meetings.
- Make fresh fruit available in the staffroom.
- Promote mindfulness or contemplative practices such as mindfulness, meditation, emotional freedom techniques, breathing exercises, stress reduction workshops.
- Provide ideas on how to raise a serious subject in a more accessible or fun way, e.g. Wellbeing Coffee Morning, Jeans for Genes, Race for Life, World Mental Health Day.
- Have an area where staff can rest and have some 'peace and quiet'.
- Empower staff through further training such as first aid, time-management, assertiveness, people-management, leadership development, self-esteem, decision-making, counselling.
- Signpost health events and occupational health support via teaching unions.
- Introduce a mentoring and buddy scheme.
- Say thank you through staff 'shout out' board.

### **Policy Links**

- This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following other policies and documents:
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- PSHE Policy