

MENTAL HEALTH – Whole School Approach

Southwick Community Primary School



Policy Statement September 2019

Whole-school approach

A mentally healthy school is one that adopts a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. It is a school that helps children flourish, learn and succeed by providing opportunities for them, and the adults around them, to develop the strengths and coping skills that underpin resilience. A mentally healthy school sees positive mental health and wellbeing as fundamental to its values, mission and culture. It is a school where child, staff and parent/carer mental health and wellbeing is seen as 'everybody's business'.

Our whole-school approach involves all parts of the school working together and being committed. We depend upon partnerships working between governors, senior leaders, teachers and all school staff, as well as parents, carers and the wider community.



Making A Difference

What is a whole-school approach?

A whole-school approach is about developing a positive ethos and culture – where everyone feels that they belong. It involves working with families and making sure that the whole school community is welcoming, inclusive and respectful. It means maximising children's learning through promoting good mental health and wellbeing across the school – through the curriculum, early support for pupils, staff-pupil relationships, leadership and a commitment from everybody.

Our whole-school approach involves our school leadership team, all staff and governors who:

- Understand the links between mental health and achievement.
- Champions and supports mental health and wellbeing for children and staff, both strategically and practically as part of improvement planning.

We rely on a staff team committed to helping all children develop the essential social and emotional skills they need to cope effectively with setbacks and remain healthy, through:

- Whole-school and targeted, small group curriculum activity and through strengthening broader protective factors which promote children's resilience and reduce risk factors both in the family, at school and more broadly in the community.
- Day-to-day contact and building healthy and strong protective relationships with children and families.

Adopting a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing is a process, not a one-off activity. To describe our school as 'mentally healthy' involves both planning and ongoing evaluation:

- Identifying and building on the strengths and good practice that already exist which contribute to good mental health in the school.
- Identifying external support and understanding how you might best use, build relationships with, and influence what is available outside the school.
- Consulting with children, staff, parents and carers so that everyone feels committed to positive school mental health and wellbeing.
- Making sure that the mental health and wellbeing of senior leaders, governors, teachers, all school staff and of parents/carers is as important as that of the pupils, and that staff model a positive approach to mental health and wellbeing.
- Encouraging openness in talking about mental health and challenging negative attitudes.
Enhancing pupils' and staff knowledge about how to maintain good mental health and wellbeing.

- Playing a key part in identifying emerging mental health needs of pupils by making sure staff can recognise signs and symptoms of mental health needs and know what to do should they have a concern.
- Referring pupils who need additional help onto health professionals for appropriate specialist support and treatment.
- Having a clear process to follow where a concern is raised about a pupil's mental health and developing links with specialist mental health services and other local and national support.
- Making sure that children and adults are protected by policies, values and attitudes (including behaviour, bullying, safeguarding and SEND) and feel safe in the school environment and in the wider community.
- Ensuring that what is provided in school dovetails with the particular needs of your children and families.
- Measuring the impact of what you do to promote and support children's mental health in school.

Parent/carers engagement (2018/19) (2019/20)

Our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, sees engaging widely with all members of the school community as essential and is a key part of our school's mission and values.

Parent/carers engagement is important because working together (with mothers, fathers and carers) has been shown to have a promising impact on the wellbeing, attendance, behaviour, sense of school belonging, intellectual development and attainment of children across a range of social and economic backgrounds. We encourage broad engagement with parents and carers – building important links between home and school, empowering them to voice their ideas and opinions, and communicating effectively with them to promote their child's learning and educational experience.

In school this year we have held:

- Parent workshops
- Afternoon Tea with your Grown up
- Arts and Crafts for Parents
- Fun days
- Half Termly Class Assemblies
- Community projects
- Lantern Festival
- Information Days
- Health Week Activities including Sports Day and Healthy Cooking

Our Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Provision

Our whole school Universal Offer is JIGSAW:

Jigsaw, the mindful approach to PSHE, is an integrated scheme of learning, for Personal, Social, Health Education, with emphasis on emotional literacy, mental health, SMSC and spiritual development.

With strong emphasis on emotional literacy and nurturing mental health as the necessary underpinnings for learning, Jigsaw equips teachers with detailed lesson plans and all resources required to deliver engaging and relevant PSHE incorporating a whole-school approach.

Jigsaw is a unique, spiral, progressive and effective PSHE scheme of work, aiming to prepare children for life, helping them really know and value who they truly are and understand how they relate to other people in this ever-changing world.



The Jigsaw Structure

Jigsaw consists of six **Puzzles** (half-term units of work) containing six **Pieces** (lessons) for each academic year. Every **Piece** has two Learning Intentions, one specific to PSHE outcomes and the other designed to develop emotional literacy and social skills.

Jigsaw equips children to thrive in today's world, building resilience and self-esteem and helping them understand real issues e.g. body image, cyber and homophobic bullying, and online safety.

Every Puzzle is launched with a whole-school assembly and an original song. Each year group studies the same Puzzle at the same time, at their own level, (sequentially building through the school year), facilitating whole-school learning themes.

All year groups participate in an end-of-Puzzle outcome, e.g. a display or exhibition (like the Garden of Dreams and Goals) shared and celebrated by the whole-school community. The teaching and learning activities are varied and mindful of different learning styles and the need for differentiation.

Jigsaw, the mindful approach to PSHE, has a unique lesson structure through the Primary Phase, designed to maximise the learning process.



Identifying the need for more support

Using existing pupil data and information

Not all pupils are the same or start from the same place. Our approach is about being smart with data not only to tell you about individual progress but also to tell us about individual risk.

Pupil data can tell us about our most at risk pupils – not just those who are on the radar now but those who might be in the future due to their needs and risk factors – depending on how resilient they are and what happens to them.

Risk in this context means someone potentially not making academic progress or reaching their potential due to barriers which are usually beyond their control. Risk can be cumulative. The more challenges a pupil faces the greater the risk. Indicators of risk can include poverty, learning disability, English as an additional language – all of which the school has data for. Neglect, abuse or being in care, is of course a priority for additional support around emotional wellbeing. However, poor attendance and behaviour is both a result of need and an indicator of further risk. ALL of these things can affect how a pupil feels and therefore how they perform and function within school and beyond.

Staff identify those at risk through collating individual pupil data and fostering positive relationships with their pupils, aiding in spotting the signs of any emotional or mental health difficulties.

We have a clear pathway and understanding of next steps for help as identified in our Mental Health Policy.

Some of our Additional Mental Health Provision within School: Wellbeing Manager, Maria Clarke (newly appointed September 2019)

Time to Talk - All pupils can find help with friendship issues and other worries by choosing to visit Maria in Time to Talk. These informal sessions are open to individuals and to groups to talk through any concerns or issues.

Friendship Intervention Groups – The Friends programs aim to increase social and emotional skills, promote resilience, and preventing anxiety and depression across the lifespan.

Nurture Groups - Nurture groups are an in-school, teacher-led psychosocial intervention of groups of less than 12 students that effectively replace missing or distorted early nurturing experiences for both children and young adults; they achieve this by immersing students in an accepting and warm environment which helps develop positive relationships with both teachers and peers.

Making A Difference

Play Skill Groups – Encourage positive peer interaction and appropriate play, sharing, turn taking.

One-to-one counselling - Our weekly one-to-one sessions provide support to children who have a sustained need for more intense work. Trained counsellor (Maria Clarke), tailors sessions according to each child's needs, in an age-appropriate way. For younger children our therapeutic approach encourages children to express themselves in non-verbal ways, for example through artwork or play.

Art Therapy (including Draw and Talk) - Drawing and Talking is a safe and easy to learn serial drawing technique for use with children or young people who have suffered trauma or have underlying emotional difficulties. It supports those who are not realising their full potential, either academically or socially.