

Four Marks Church of England Primary School POLICY FOR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

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1.0 Policy statement

At Four Marks CE Primary School we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all children, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows children's voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

2.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Four Marks CE Primary School approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies including RSHE, Safeguarding, Medical Needs, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, SEND and Equalities.

3.0 Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and children.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in children.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support for children with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst children and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and child welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

4.0 Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of children, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Inclusion Team Staff | ▪ SENDCO |
| ▪ Designated Safeguarding Lead | ▪ RSHE Coordinator |

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of child, in the first instance they should speak to the Inclusion Team/SENDCO.

If there is a concern that the child is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

5.0 Individual Care Plans

When a pupil has been identified as giving cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is recommended that an Individual Care Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals (including the Class teacher and LSA working with the child).

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

6.0 Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our children need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our RSHE curriculum.

We will follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing> Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote children's wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of children's own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we use RSHE lessons as a vehicle for providing children, who do develop difficulties, with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting children to help any of their friends who are facing challenges.

We use our school Self-Regulation Toolbox to help children to identify and practise strategies to manage 'big emotions'. Some children have an individualised version of this and are coached to develop these strategies as part of a wider picture of support.

See Section 14 for Supporting Peers

7.0 Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, Staffroom, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, social media, websites), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure children understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why they should access it
- What is likely to happen next

8.0 Sources of support at school and in the local community

School Based Support

Available for all children at any time:

- **Meet and Greet** with familiar staff: Extra Support from a familiar adult is available for all children, and those that find separation difficult. Inclusion staff will investigate worries and spend time unpicking things that parents share about their children feeling unhappy. This is followed up and monitored.
- **Rainbow Room:** This is available for all children. It is a safe place to go, away from their learning environment if they are feeling overwhelmed, worried or lost (for new children). The Rainbow Room staff will support children in talking through worries, putting strategies in place for them e.g. sticker charts, self-regulation strategies etc.
- **Self-Regulation Toolbox:** This is an approach used by the whole school. It teaches children to use a range of strategies to manage 'big emotions' and helps all children to recognise that these emotions are felt by everyone and that we can manage our feelings in different ways.
- **Forest School:** There is now much evidence to support the view that Forest School contributes to positive mental health and well-being for children (and adults). Being outside in a natural environment has been shown to relieve stress by reducing the levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, in the brain. Children are increasingly assaulted by stressful environments (media, increasing emphasis on targets and testing, screen time, ever busier urban environments), being out in the woods gives them a much needed time to relax, enjoy themselves and have some stress free time as well as learning wider life skills. All our pupils participate in Forest School sessions regularly throughout the year.

Support for Individuals:

- **Individual 'Volcano' charts:** These are based on the Self- Regulation Toolbox but are developed and personalised for individual children who may need to be coached in co-regulation strategies. These would be used for specific children who are having difficulty in managing 'big emotions' such as anger, frustration, anxiety.
- **FEIPS support:** for specific children who may be going through a difficult time, or who may need social and emotional support. Parents can request this, or staff may refer to the school ELSAs if they have concerns about a child and feel they need some extra emotional support. Sessions are approximately 15-20 minutes weekly with a trained adult. Normally the intervention will be for 6-8 weeks, but this is reviewed on an individual basis.
- **ELSA support:** for specific children who may need extra support to develop social and emotional skills. It involves developing high self-esteem and creating positive interactions with other people. Children are referred for ELSA support by their class teacher, senior leader or SENDCo. We then identify and prioritise which children require a weekly programme or if more appropriate put supported strategies in place within a class setting. ELSA programmes run for 6-12 weeks.

- **THRIVE:** Thrive is a therapeutic approach to support children with their emotional and social development by building positive relationships between a child and their peers. It helps them explore and understand their feelings through various activities. It is offered to individual children: Practical strategies and techniques built around online assessments that identify children's emotional development are developed. An action plan for their individual needs is produced. Thrive sessions are designed to help children learn to manage their feelings and teach them strategies that will help promote their learning at school.

Local Support

In Hampshire, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the **CAMHS partnership**, a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health wellbeing. These partners deliver accessible support to children, young people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention, training and participation.

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/>

In Hampshire we also have access to 'Social Subscriber' where a trained person is available to talk through Mental Health issues.

9.0 Warning Signs

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 alert (insert name of mental health first aider).

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

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

10.0 Targeted support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence. All of these can be 'Adverse Childhood Experiences' (ACEs) and cause emotional trauma.

We work closely with school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of children who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely with Hampshire Council Children's Services, Hampshire CAMHS, CWPS (Child Wellbeing Practitioners Service) and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Identifying and assessing in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers.
- Agree an Individual Care Plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach;
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs;
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, and signpost them to specialist services, including Hampshire CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;
- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

11.0 Managing disclosures

If a child chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on the child's personal file, including:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ▪ Date | ▪ Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation |
| ▪ Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made | ▪ Agreed next steps |

This information will be shared with the DSL and Inclusion Team.

12.0 Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a child to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the child. We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we're going to tell

We do not promise children that we will keep disclosures secret. Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns will always take priority. Ideally, consent should be gained from the child first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as children up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing as they can be affected by extreme emotional behaviour from a child, or by the nature of some disclosures. A trusted colleague (e.g. Team Leader) can offer support in these circumstances along with the inclusion team or Headteacher. Any safeguarding disclosures should be passed on to the DSL in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

Parents must always be informed, unless sharing with parents increases a risk of harm to the child (some safeguarding concerns). We encourage children to tell their parents themselves but will offer support to facilitate the conversation. If this is the case, a timescale of 24 hours is recommended to share this information before the school makes contact with the parents/carers.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

13.0 Whole school approach

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise.

This includes:

- Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, which everyone understands.
- Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Helping children to be resilient learners.
- Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health and practical strategies for managing 'big emotions' (e.g. through our Self-Regulation Toolbox).
- Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
- Effectively working with parents and carers.

- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

13.1 Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present – children, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the pupil's record and an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate.

13.2 Supporting parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems (for example through Early Help, parenting support;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

14.0 Supporting Peers

When a child is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the child who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

15.0 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 to enable them to keep children safe. We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal 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 developing situations with one or more children.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

16.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years as a minimum. The next review date is **xx/xx/xx**

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of **the DSL**.

Appendix 1:

For support on specific mental health needs

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk

OCD UK www.ocduk.org

Depression Alliance www.depressoinalliance.org

Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com

National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk www.selfharm.co.uk

Suicidal thoughts Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

For general information and support

www.youngminds.org.uk –
champions young people's mental health and wellbeing

www.mind.org.uk –
advice and support on mental health problems

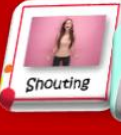
www.minded.org.uk –
(e-learning)

www.time-to-change.org.uk –
tackles the stigma of mental health

www.rethink.org
-challenges attitudes towards mental health

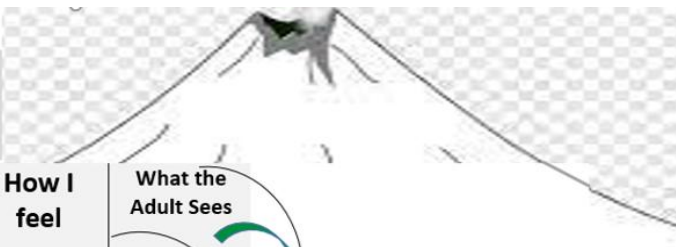
Appendix 2: Self-Regulation Tools

Whole school Self-Regulation Toolbox

How do you feel?	Self-Regulation Toolbox
Cold  	 X 10 TAKE DEEP BREATHS  SQUEEZE SOMETHING
Hot   	 X 10 STRETCH  DRINK COLD WATER
Wobbly   	 SORT, ORGANISE OR CATEGORISE  COLOUR IN A PICTURE
Fizzy  	 PUT YOUR HANDS IN WATER  TWIST, MOULD AND PLAY WITH SOMETHING
Calm   	 Tools to help you get back into the Calm Zone

Example of an Individual Self-Regulation Chart

NAME'S.....CHART



	Insert child's personal representations e.g. minecraft, star wars, marvel characters	What are my triggers?	How I feel	What the Adult Sees
Hot				Short cut strategies to get back to Green: My Escape Road • A • B • C • A • B • C • D • A • B • C • D IDENTIFY DIFFERENT STRATEGIES ABOVE
Wobbly				
Fizzy				
Calm				