John Perry Primary School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Last reviewed on: September 2024
Next review due by: September 2027

Rationale:

Mental health and emotional wellbeing are as important as physical health to lead a happy and fulfilling life.

We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. Within their school career, all children will experience ups and downs and some may face significant life events. The Department for Education recognises that: 'in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.'

'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 Organisation (Who)

1. Policy Intent

At John Perry Primary School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all children, their families and members of staff and Governors. We pursue this aim by using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable children. Pupils and staff will be taught skills to increase their awareness of mental health and emotional wellbeing. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, five children will have a probable mental health disorder. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for children affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

Our open culture allows pupils' 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.

This policy describes the school's approach to positive mental health and emotional wellbeing and it is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and Governors. It should be read in conjunction with the school's Bereavement policy, our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy, should a student's mental health overlap or be linked to a medical issue; our SEND policy , where a student may have an identified special educational need; the school's Behaviour policy, because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to unmet mental health needs; and the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, in relation to prompt action and wider concerns of vulnerability.

2. 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 to 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.
- Instil a culture of staff and children's welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

3. Key Staff Members

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils.
Staff with a specific, relevant responsibility include:
Miss Rajan-Weare: Designated Safeguarding Lead:
Deputy Safeguarding Lead:

- Mrs Langridge
- Mrs Buckle
- Mrs Walker
- Mrs Hart

Mrs Southall and Mrs Rose: Safeguarding Governors:
Mrs Walker: Inclusion Lead:
Ms Cabero: Mental Health Lead
Mrs Hart: SENCO
Mrs Corbally: Learning Mentor and Thrive practitioner
Mr Jobson: Trainee Thrive practitioner
Miss Darko: PSHE Lead

A number of members of staff are part of the school's Mental Health and Wellbeing Committee; new members are always welcome to join.

4. Pupil Identification

Wellbeing measures include:

- staff observations
- any changes in a child's behaviour, attention or presentation
- any communication from the pupils regarding their emotions, feelings or wellbeing.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, should record this on Safeguard in the first instance. We then implement an assessment of need to ensure that children get the support they need, either from within school or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

If there is concern that the child is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the safeguarding lead staff.

If the child presents with a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical procedures should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Inclusion Lead. Individual SEN support plans will identify any individual support needs for those pupils causing concern, or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health

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 the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Safeguarding Team/ named persons. Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Avoiding PE or getting changed secretively
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

5. 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 PSHE curriculum. Additionally, we will use such lessons to provide children who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting children to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

6. 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 and through our communication channels (Mental Health and Wellbeing newsletters, website), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

7. Support at School

Nurture support is available for children identified as being vulnerable to mental health issues. Children who are going through difficulties such as family illness, separation, bereavement, or other stressful situations are supported by the school's Learning Mentor, Thrive practitioners, Safeguarding Team and Inclusion Team through small group work (e.g. social skills) or one to one.

8. 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.

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

- Identifying children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working with Children's Services, CAMHS and other agencies services to follow protocols including assessment and referral

- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers (for instance, agreeing an Individual Care Plan)
- Providing a range of interventions
- Provide children with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns.
- Provide children with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it
- Where appropriate, a referral will be made to the Early Help Service, so that an assessment can be carried out and a Family Support Worker can be allocated.

9. 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. Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first priority should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety.

All disclosures will be recorded on Safeguard and dealt with the upmost confidentiality.

10. Working with parents/carers

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing concerns about their child 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 process the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. Lines of communication will be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns.

11. Staff Training and CPD

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 pupils safe. We will host relevant information on our school website for staff and parents who wish to learn more about mental health.

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

12. Staff Mental Health

We recognise that anyone can experience mental health issues for various reasons which may be out of their control. There may also be work related factors that could contribute to poor mental health such as work life imbalance, work load pressure, poor working conditions. To every extent possible, we aim to recognize and address cases of workplace pressures that contribute to mental health issues. We aim to:

- Treat staff mental illness seriously.
- Proactively support resolution of issues causing concern.
- Support staff members who face mental health problems.
- Create pleasant workplaces
- Encourage communication

All members of staff are encouraged to contact the Council's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) as a source of free and confidential support. The contact details for HEALTH ASSURED are:

Website link:	HealthAssuredEap.co.uk
Telephone number:	0800 028 0199
Phone App:	*My Healthy Advantage*

For website log-in details and employee code for the phone App, please speak with a member of SLT.