



## **Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy (Feb 2023)**

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### **Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing**

The Staff and Governors of Synergy Schools consider the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of all children and staff as being extremely important in our modern-day world.

Our school values and aims provide a caring and supportive ethos for all members of our school community, where each individual and contribution is valued.

We know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play within our whole school family.

### **Aims**

#### **At Synergy Schools we will:**

- support children and adults to understand and talk about their emotions and feelings.
- encourage children and adults to feel comfortable and able in sharing any concerns or worries they may have.
- help children and adults to develop emotional resilience and to manage challenging situations that arise.
- help children and adults to form and maintain appropriate relationships with others.
- promote confidence and self-esteem.
- teach children and adults that their views and thoughts are important and valued.

#### **Our schools promote a mentally healthy environment through:**

- Promoting our school vision and aims.
- Encouraging a sense of belonging to our whole school family.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating and valuing academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect and learn from experiences.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs when appropriate.



### **These aims will be achieved through:**

- Our Whole School agreed approaches.
- A whole school family team approach to supporting each other.
- Providing support for pupils going through recent difficulties e.g. bereavement.
- Accessing specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties e.g. attachment disorder.

### **Links to other areas of school:**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Child Protection Policy and SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs are supported in addition to other needs. This policy should also be read in conjunction with our school's PSHE, Anti-bullying and Behaviour Policies.

### **Responsibility:**

All members of staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of our children and staff. In addition, the following staff take a lead in monitoring, promoting and planning provision:

- Mr. Firmin – Brompton-on-Swale Head of School/Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead
- Mrs. Marino – Crakehall Head of School/ Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead
- Mrs. Rayner – Leeming & Londonderry/Pickhill Head of School/Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead
- Mr. White – Executive Headteacher/Deputy Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead
- Ms. Hayman – Federation SENDCO and Inclusion Lead
- Senior Leadership Team – Federation leaders for English, Maths, Science & Pupil Premium
- Class Teachers - support for children within own class (includes whole class, small groups and individual support)
- Teaching Assistants - intervention groups/individual support

### **Support and Provision:**

Synergy Schools will provide support for individual children or groups of children which may include:

- Whole class discussions / teaching time.
- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Use of Jigsaw resources to support curriculum teaching.
- PSHE lessons and class reflection times.
- Assembly focus.
- Strategies for promoting communication in raising issues, asking questions and sharing feelings, worry box, suggestion boxes.
- Approaches to managing children's worries e.g use of picture books.
- Managing emotions resources such as 'the 10-point scale' and 'five ways to wellbeing'.
- Intervention and support groups.
- Therapeutic activities including drawing, painting, Lego, listening to music and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Physical activities including regular movement breaks e.g. 'Cosmic Yoga', 'Go Noodle', 'Just Dance'

- Signposting and promoting before or after school clubs.

**Our schools will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:**

- Termly Leuven Scale assessments
- Informal pupil interviews/reviews
- Formal assessment audits as guided by support agencies.

## **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.

## **Identifying children's needs and warning signs**

Children are discussed by school staff at regular intervals in staff meetings/pupil progress meetings and during assessment tracking. Any concerns, changes of behaviour or queries about individuals are discussed as a teaching team and shared with senior leaders.

Staff wellbeing is promoted through regular opportunities to review workload and approaches to working within our school.

Warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.

**Possible warning signs include:**

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits.
- Becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity and mood.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness, or loss of hope.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.

## **Working with Parents**

Our schools will:

- Raise Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing as an important focus.
- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support for eg. Early Help, including virtual sessions.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

## Working with outside agencies

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The NYCC Prevention Team to access:
  - The School Nursing Service
  - CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
  - Counselling services
  - Family support workers
- SEN Hub NYCC
- Educational Psychology services
- Paediatricians
- Service Pupils' Champion
- Further therapists as guided by professionals

## Staff Training and Support

School staff will receive Mental Health and Wellbeing training such as Level 1 'Prevention and Promotion' training provided by Compass Buzz.

All staff and Governors complete regular Child Protection and Safeguarding training to ensure our children's safety and wellbeing.

Whole staff training around staff wellbeing and stress management is carried out as part of staff CPD. Staff wellbeing is reviewed during individual appraisals bi-annually.

All members of staff are supported via the Health Assured scheme while working for North Yorkshire County Council. The Health Assured confidential telephone number and details are displayed in the main school Office and staff room.

<b>Date of policy</b>	February 2023
<b>Member of staff responsible</b>	Tamara Hayman
<b>Review date</b>	February 2025