



Meeting Individual Needs

Child Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy

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This policy was written in consultation with staff, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing in Telford and Wrekin.

When we talk about the mental health of our children, we use the definition by the World Health Organisation.

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)

Policy Statement

At Haughton School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our children and staff. Our supportive and caring ethos is part of our culture and we believe that supporting emotional health and wellbeing is the responsibility of every adult working in school.

At Haughton School we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional support with their emotional wellbeing and mental health. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health provision, policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for children people affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

At Haughton School we:

- teach and support children's understanding of their emotions and feelings as we grow and change.
- ensure children feel comfortable about sharing concerns or worries about their emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- teach children that it is okay not to be okay.
- educate children about healthy relationships and support them to form and maintain relationships appropriate for their developmental age and stage in life.
- promote the importance of good self-esteem and ensure children know that they have equal value to anyone else.
- encourage children to be confident in themselves and have a sense of pride in being who they are.
- support and develop children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks in their lives.

We promote a positive mental health culture by:

- Talking openly about our emotions and mental health, so that we can begin to remove the stigma associated with it.
- Modelling healthy relationships with colleagues and actively listening to children so they know that they will be supported.
- Promoting our school values and ethos and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting the voice of the child and opportunities to participate in decision-making and democracy.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements in life.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through where possible taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect on the choices they make and the consequences of these.
- Supporting children to access the right support at the right time.

We pursue our aims through:

- A whole school approach to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all children. This includes a taught curriculum about mental health, through the statutory health education curriculum.
- Supporting children to ask for help with their emotions and to see this as a sign of strength.
- Teaching through health education and day to day life in school, the need to live a healthy lifestyle to keep our minds healthy.
- Spreading awareness about mental health to reduce stigma.
- Offering high quality in school support for children who are experiencing issues in their own lives that affect their wellbeing, including bereavement.
- Ensuring access to specialised, targeted approaches aimed at children with more complex or long-term mental health needs.

Scope of this policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with our safeguarding policy, behaviour and discipline policy, PSHE/Health Education curriculum, domestic abuse policy.

Emotional Health and Wellbeing lead members of staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of children, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Designated child protection / safeguarding leads: Gill Knox, Lynne McCormack, Ella Thomas, Helen Parry, Joedy Parton.
- Mental Health and Emotional wellbeing lead: Gill Knox
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant -ELSA: Chloe Lewis
- Future In Mind Representative: Joedy Parton

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our day to day life in school and part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons is determined by the needs of the children within the year group and school. The teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing is linked directly to the statutory guidance for Health Education (September 2020).

Raising concerns about mental ill health

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to a mental health lead / DSL in the first instance. If there is a concern that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection/safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated safeguarding lead. If the child presents as a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff / senior leadership team and they will contact the emergency services if necessary.

The referral route for BEE-U(Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) is via a GP or school based referral.

Targeted support

At Haughton School we offer support through targeted approaches for individual children or groups of children which may include:

- Managing feelings resources
- Emotion Coaching
- Developing wellbeing and resilience
- Managing emotions resources such as 'the incredible 5 point scale'
- 4 S's of Attachment – Seen, Safe, Soothed, Secure
- Therapeutic activities including art, Build to Express, relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Toolbox of Wellbeing
- Social Stories
- Calm Brain

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire - <https://www.sdqinfo.org/>
- The Boxall Profile – Nurture UK
- Emotional literacy scales – GL Assessment
- Engagement Profile – (2020 Rochford Version)
- Leuven Scale

Individual Medical Needs Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for children causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving where possible the child, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a child's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further appropriate support.

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

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

When assessing children's mental health we should take into account:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships between peers
- Approaches to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

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 about self-harm or suicide
- Children/young making comments about wanting to die, wishing they were dead

- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Managing Disclosures

A child may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a child chooses to disclose concerns the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the child's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be documented on CPOMS/ usual school procedures. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation in the child's words as much as possible
- Who the information has been shared with
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the mental health and designated safeguarding lead, who will store the record appropriately, contact Family Connect and/or other professional services if necessary, and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a child on then we should discuss with the child:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a child without first telling them

Disclosures should always be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to safeguard the child and the emotional wellbeing of the staff involved, it ensures continuity of care and it provides an extra source of support.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads must be informed immediately, they will then seek advice from Family Connect.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision Haughton School works with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- School Nurse
- Educational Psychology Services
- Paediatricians – if the child is registered
- BEE-U (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Future in Mind Telford
- Counselling services
- Early Help and Support
- Social Care
- Beam

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the child, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with fear or upset during the first conversation. Parents need to be given time to reflect.

It may be necessary to highlight further sources of information and signpost parents to where further information can be found. It is possible that parents may find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news about their child. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We will always provide clear means of contacting the school with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. We aim to finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Working with all Parents

Parents are very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their child's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents we will:

- Be open and honest about mental health and demonstrate a commitment to supporting all children and their families.
- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to access this support, if they have concerns about their child
- Involve parents in events that raise awareness of mental health in children
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children, through information sessions and the school website.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.
- Support parents with their own mental health needs by understanding what support is available locally.

Training for school based staff

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep children safe. Mental health Leads attending Future in Mind Telford, receive three full days of CPD each year, along with the resources and slides to cascade their learning to staff and parents.

In addition the school accesses additional support through the Education Psychology Service Through attending Future in Mind Telford sessions the school has access to a wide range of resources: