

**Moorside Community Primary
Academy School.**

**Back Lane,
Skelmersdale.
WN8-9EA.**



**Mental Health and Wellbeing
Policy**

September 2024

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1. Why mental health and wellbeing are important.

At Moorside Community Primary Academy School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs during their school career and some face significant life events. The [Good Childhood Report 2022](#) shows that children's happiness continues to decline. **Now, five children in a classroom of 30 are likely to have a mental health problem.** These can have an enormous impact on quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. In many cases it is life-limiting.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "In order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it – be it now or in the future. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children are valued.
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying is not tolerated.

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

2. Purpose of the policy.

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health.
- How we prevent mental health problems.
- How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems.
- Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support.

3. Definition of mental health and wellbeing.

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing "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".

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- Feel confident in themselves.
- Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- Be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- Cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.
- Learn and achieve.

4. Links to other policies.

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Medical Needs, Anti-Bullying and SEND policies. Links with the School's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise may be related to an unmet mental health need.

5. A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health.

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 encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
3. Helping children to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. 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.

6. Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility.

We believe that ALL staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure

that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as:

- Physical long-term illness.
- Having a parent who has a mental health problem.
- Death and loss, including loss of friendships.
- Family breakdown.
- Bullying.

They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as:

- Self-esteem.
- Communication and problem-solving skills.
- A sense of worth and belonging.
- Emotional literacy.

Our team for supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in school:

- Leads and works with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Leads on PSHE teaching about mental health.
- Provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
- Is the first point of contact with mental health services, and makes individual referrals to them.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

7. Supporting children's positive mental health.

We believe the School has a key role in promoting children positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Teacher-led activities in class. (Including relaxation/meditation and circle time to develop social and emotional skills)
- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health.
- Yoga and meditation.
- Planned nurture provision for targeted children.
- A whole school open door policy to ensure all children feel safe to talk.
- Worry monsters/worry boxes.
- Wellbeing weeks.
- Sensory afternoons.

Teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing

Through PSHE (Jigsaw), we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems.

8. Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs.

Our approach is to:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children are paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
- Involve children in the care and support they have.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.
- Ensure each child has an emotionally available adult available should they wish of their choice.

Early Identification

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- Analysing behaviour, exclusions, attendance and punctuality.
- Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons using a Wellbeing Cause for Concern form (Appendix 1). (These are distributed to each class and a copy is given to Mrs McSorley).
- Worry monsters/boxes in each class for children to raise concerns which are checked by the Class Teachers.
- Pupil Progress Review meetings – termly.
- Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns.

- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer.
- Parental meetings in EYFS.
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff. (Open door policy).
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff.

All staff at Moorside have had and will continue to have training on the protective and risk factors, types of mental health needs and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously, talk to a Mental Health Lead or the SENDCO and record their concern using a wellbeing cause for concern form (located in each classroom).

These signs might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
- Falling academic progress.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.

- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE.
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- Drugs or alcohol misuse.
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the School's child protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency then the School's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

9. Disclosures by children and confidentiality.

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead or the Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Lead and recorded. We then implement our assessment system, which is based on levels of need to ensure that children get the support they need, either from within the School or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

Intervention and support for the child will be discussed and decided with key members of staff, parents and the child in question.

Highest need

- CAMHS-assessment, 1:1 or family support or treatment, consultation with school staff and other agencies, other external agency support and other interventions e.g. nurture.

If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a statutory education, health and care assessment is required, we refer to the SEND policy and SEN School Information Report.

All children needing targeted individualised support will have an Individual Wellbeing Intervention record (Appendix 2) setting out:

- The intervention carried out.
- The date and name of provider.
- Any special comments.

Children and parents will be involved in the intervention if necessary. The interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the

The interventions will be overseen by the Mental Health Team.

Some need

Access to in school nurture group, 1:1 intervention, small group intervention, skills for life/wellbeing programmes, circle of friends.

Low need

General support E.g. class teacher/TA.

10. Working with specialist services to get swift access to the right specialist support and treatment.

In some cases a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Team or the SENDCO following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Main Specialist Service Referral process

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

Accessed through school, GP or self-referral

Educational Psychologist Accessed through the Mental Health Lead or SENDCO

SEND and mental health

Persistent mental health problems may lead to children having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age. In some cases the child may benefit from being identified as having a special educational need (SEN).

11. Involving parents and carers

Promoting mental health

We recognise the important role parents have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting children who do have mental health needs.

It is very helpful if parents can share information with the School so that we can better support their child from the outset. All information will be treated in confidence.

When a concern has been raised, the School will:

- Contact parents and meet with them (In almost all cases, parents will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting (on the Individual intervention record).
- Agree on interventions, including clear next steps.
- Discuss how parents can support their child.
- Keep parents up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

Parents will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and children may choose to tell their parents themselves. We give children the option of informing their parents about their mental health needs for themselves or of accompanying and supporting them to do so.

We make every effort to support parents to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the children, and in the rare event that parents are not accessing services, we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents to access support for their own mental health needs.

12. Supporting and training staff.

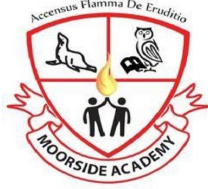
We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do and where to get help. Some of our Mental Health Team are qualified 'mental health first aiders'.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school office. All mental health professionals will be given a copy before they begin working with the school as well as external agencies involved in our mental health work.

The policy is monitored at an annual review meeting led by the Mental Health Team and involves staff with a responsibility for mental health.

Appendix 2



Wellbeing Concern Form



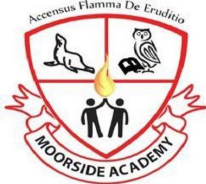
Name of child: _____

Class: _____

Teacher: _____

Concern:

Date logged: _____



Wellbeing Concern Form



Name of child: _____

Class: _____

Teacher: _____

Concern :

Date logged: _____

Appendix 3



Wellbeing Intervention Record

Name: _____

Year: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Teacher: _____

Picture

Date	Intervention