Wincanton Primary School

Mental Health Policy: Children

Approved by the Headteacher: December 2024

Proposed date of future review: December 2026

Signed Graeme Wilson **Headteacher**

Approved by Chair of Governors: December 2024

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

Policy Statement

At Wincanton Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.
We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.
At our school we know that everyone experiences life's challenges; that can make us vulnerable, so anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's responsibility and that we all have a role to play.

At our school we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- support children to feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help and encourage children to form and maintain positive relationships
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they are valued
- encourage children to be confident and individual
- help children to develop emotional resilience and be able to manage disappointments

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging e.g. river teams, uniform, TICC Year groups / classes.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making e.g. school council, Wonga jobs, committiees.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements e.g. medal assembly, star of the week, fish points, heart of kindness, Governors Award (Spirit Award)
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others e.g. Wonga jobs
- Providing opportunities to reflect e.g. mindful activities, circle time, PSHE curriculum assembly
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs e.g. ILI, ELSA, LSA's etc. Intervention Forest School, Social Groups

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches alongside class strategies and support
- Support for pupils going through recent emotional difficulties including parental separation or bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder.

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy and our SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour, Anti-bullying, and PSHE RSE. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Graeme Wilson – Deputy DSL protection / Senior Mental Health Lead and Head Teacher
- Samantha Clifton - Designated child protection / safeguarding officer and Deputy Head
- Luisa Richardson - SenCo
- Denny Verlander - Mental Health Lead and ELSA
- Chris Richards - Mental Health Team and Specialist LSA.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum (Jigsaw) and support by Assemblies.
We may tailor the specific content of lessons to the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching and can also use the PSHE Association Guidance (NSPCC) to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches or ‘circle of friends’ activities.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. ‘worry boxes’ and ‘worry eaters’
- Managing emotions resources such as ‘the incredible 5 point scale’ ‘Zones of Regulation’
- Primary Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups
- ELSA support groups.
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness and breathing techniques.
- Access to outside agencies such as Hopscotch (Balsam Centre), Victim Support Team.

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

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire

- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales
- The ELSA Assessment
- Other assessments as appropriate to individual need

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. This is on our website https://wincanton-primary-school.secure-primarysite.net/safeguarding-and-wellbeing/

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All staff know their children, and will be vigilant in noticing any changes in behaviour, attitude and appearance which may indicate need for further support, including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators
- Changes in eating /sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn/quieter
- 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

Staff may report/refer to a mental health team member as appropriate.

Working with Parents

In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. PFSA, TINT (Tuning into Teens)
- Signposting - 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

Working with other agencies and partners

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

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists
- Local support groups, community centres e.g. The Balsam Centre

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 in order to enable them to keep students safe. Weekly briefings give the opportunity to share concerns / strategies / support regularly.
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 to developing situations with one or more pupils.

<u>Useful Acronyms</u>

CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CPD	Continued Personal Development
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
ILI	Individualised Literacy Intervention
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
PFSA	Parent Family Support Assistant
PSHE	Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
RSE	Relationship and Sex Education
SEND	Special Education Needs and Disabilities
TICC	Teachers in Crisis Contexts
TINT	Tuning into Teens