



WIDNES  
ACADEMY

ASPIRING AND ACHIEVING

# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

**Ratified by Governors:** March 2023

**Next Review Date:** March 2024

**Link:** J.Brown and L.Kirchin

A GREAT  
PLACE  
**TO BE A  
PART OF**

MEMBER OF THE WADE DEACON TRUST

## **Aims**

Mental health and wellbeing is an important part of the pastoral care of our whole community – this includes both the children/young people in our care as well as our own staff and the families within our community.

This policy sets out our approach to mental health and wellbeing for all parties.

Those experiencing mental health difficulties should not face discrimination and the school are committed to helping to identify these difficulties and supporting people to overcome them.

## **Ethos**

We recognise that everyone will experience mental health difficulties at some point in their lives and have an ethos, which encourages support and respect for both staff and pupils. At our school we have an inclusive ethos, which encourages support and respect for both staff and pupils.

We aim to recognise those in need and will endeavour to support them as best we can, possibly signposting them to others who can help. We do not judge or blame, we act to provide a support network for those experiencing difficulties.

At the same time, we also recognise the importance of taking care of our own mental wellbeing, taking actions and encouraging others to include positive mental activities as part of a healthy lifestyle. Whether this is providing opportunities to talk to others, or take part in activities promoting mental health.

Our approach is to:

- Provide a safe environment to enable pupils to express themselves and be listened to
- Ensure the welfare and safety of pupils as paramount
- Identify appropriate support for pupils based on their needs
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support
- Involve pupils in the care and support they have
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with pupils and keep parents and carers updated

### **Role of the Mental Health Lead**

The school has a designated Lead for Mental Health. They act as a champion for mental health and wellbeing.

Their role is not to necessarily provide interventions but to have a whole school overview and to co-ordinate the school's approach to positive mental health and wellbeing.

As endorsed by the Department for Education, they will:

- Oversee the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, including how it is reflected in the design of behaviour policies, curriculum and pastoral support, how staff are supported with their own mental wellbeing and how pupils and parents are engaged;
- Support the identification of at risk children and children exhibiting signs of mental ill health;
- Have knowledge of the local mental health services and working with clear links into children and young people's mental health services to refer children and young people into NHS services where it is appropriate to do so;
- Co-ordinate the mental health needs of young people within the school or college and have oversight of the delivery of interventions where these are being delivered in the educational setting;
- Support staff in contact with children with mental health needs to help raise awareness and give all staff the confidence to work with young people;
- Oversee and monitor the outcomes of interventions on children and young people's education and wellbeing

The Mental Health Lead for Widnes Academy is **Mrs Kirchin**

The Wellbeing Team consists of **Mrs Kirchin, Mrs Williams and Mr Ed Poole**

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 pupils 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 a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

## 1. **Support for Staff**

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a health work life balance through our work with the Health Improvement Team.

Those staff with a specific responsibility will have the opportunity for more specialised training and, where required, will be offered supervision from someone who is not their line manager. The frequency and duration of supervision will be adjusted according to the complexity and caseload of the staff, in addition to other factors, which could affect their mental health.

Staff who are not allocated supervision but who feel they would benefit from support, should approach their line manager in the first instance, or contact the Mental Health Lead.

As employees, staff who feel they need support are able to access the following services:

- The Education Support Partnership – a free service for all those working in education in the UK, 0800 562 561, [www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk](http://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk)
- Access to a Counselling Service – [www.listening-ear.co.uk](http://www.listening-ear.co.uk)
- Peer Listening service offered by the School Counsellor
- Advice and support through the Halton Health Improvement Team

## Support for Pupils

### Identification

Pupils with mental health needs are often identified by those closest to them: their parents or the classroom staff. These concerns are discussed with either the SENDCo or the Mental Health Lead depending on their nature.

The school tailors its support to our children according to their needs. As a school we have access to the following services, provided by ourselves or externally:

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  - Sendco who help staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities including pupils whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision
  - Safeguarding Team
  - Wellbeing Team
  - Support staff
  - School Nurse
  - Mental Health Support Team
  - CAMHS
  - Specialist Behaviour Support Team

### 2. Raising Concerns

If a staff member has concerns about the mental health of a colleague, they should try and speak to them. If they remain concerned, they are able to talk in confidence to either the Mental Health Lead or their line manager.

If someone has a concern about the mental health of a pupil, they should initially speak to their class teacher, the SENDCo or the Mental Health Lead.

### Early Identification

We aim to identify children as soon as possible so that we can put in the right support at the right time. Our system involves a range of processes including:

- Early parent meetings when children enter our Foundation Stage, whether this is Nursery or Reception
- Analysing behaviour and attendance
- Using PIVOTS5 to track children
- Pupil surveys throughout the year
- Staff report concerns to either the SENDCo or Safeguarding Team

- Worry boxes in each class
  - Gathering information at key transition points
3. Parent meetings
  4. Ensuring pupils can raise concerns to either class teacher or support staff
  5. Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns through the class teacher or any member of staff through our 'Open Door' policy
  6. Drop-ins with School Nurse

All staff have had training on a range of topics linked to supporting and identifying pupils with mental health needs. 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.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the school's child protection procedures are followed. A risk assessment and plan will then be formulated and shared with all concerned.

### **Assessments, Interventions and Support**

Once a concern has been logged we then implement our assessment system based on levels of need to ensure that pupils 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.

1. POLICY TEXT.

<p><b>Need</b></p> <p>The level of need is based on discussions at regular meetings with key members of staff</p>	<p><b>Evidence based intervention and support</b></p> <p>The kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and pupils</p>	<p><b>Monitoring</b></p>
<p>Highest Need (Level One)</p>	<p>CAMHS assessment</p> <p>School Pastoral TA/Counsellor – 1:1 support</p> <p>Educational Psychologist involvement</p> <p>External Agency support</p> <p>Mental Health Support Team</p> <p>Behaviour Support</p>	<p>All pupils needing targeted individualised support will have a care plan in place provided by the service involved</p> <p>Support plans are formulated within school in consultation with parents and carers</p> <p>All plans are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact</p>
<p>Some Need (Level Two)</p>	<p>Access to quiet space within school</p> <p>Small group intervention provided by ELSA/pastoral team</p>	<p>Small group work sessions are reviewed and evaluated by the staff offering the sessions</p>
<p>Low Need (Level Three)</p>	<p>Check ins with class teacher or TA, adaptations to class provision</p>	