



Tenterden Infant School

'Together, we learn, grow and flourish'

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Tenterden Infant School

Last Updated January 2020

Review Date January 2023

Policy Statement

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 Organization)

We aim to provide a focus within our school community for social and emotional learning and developing personal resilience. This is underpinned by enabling spiritual opportunities through school life and the curriculum that will nurture our young people. Opportunities for reflection, intergenerational relationships and courageous advocacy are promoted. Pupil voice is a key element and we aim to ensure that pupils are involved in decisions that impact them, hopefully encouraging them to become agents of change and courageous advocates.

In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

Lead Members of Staff

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

Carol Day – Designated Safeguarding Lead and SENCO

Carol Day - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead

Sonya Sault - Pastoral Lead

Samantha Crinnion- Executive Headteacher with overall responsibility for ensuring the school provides an appropriate budget and resources for pupil and staff wellbeing including CPD, individual and/or group staff and pupil support.

Tina McIntosh- Head of Schools- Ensuring support and training for the Staff leading Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing is delivered

Tracy Burdett – Deputy Headteacher of Schools and Head of PSHCE

David Harding- Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Governor

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Team or the Executive Headteacher. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Carol Day Mental Health Lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in **Appendix I**

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents/carers and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil'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

Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHCE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PSHCE Association Guidance¹ to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in **Appendix 2**.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas including a pupil information board by the main pupil entrance, a staff notice board in the staff room and parent board outside. We regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum e.g. PSHCE lessons.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken

¹ Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing URL= <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and> (accessed 02.02.2018)

seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with Carol Day, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead. Please see **Appendix 3** for possible warning signs

Managing disclosures

A pupil or member of staff 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 pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, 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 pupil's and member of staff's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively see **Appendix 4**

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the mental health lead, Carol Day who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. See **Appendix 1** for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS.

Confidentiality

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

- 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 pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. Particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead Carol Day, this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the

pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Carol Day in the first instance and appropriate steps will be taken to safeguard the child.

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 pupil, 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 anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us 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. 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 often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents we will:

- 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 get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our 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

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

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 pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.²

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 developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

² www.minded.org.uk [accessed 02/02/18].

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Executive Headteacher, Samantha Crinnion or Head of Schools, Tina McIntosh, our CPD Coordinators who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in January 2023.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Carol Day our mental health lead via phone 01580 763717 or email senco@tpf.kent.sch.uk

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

Appendix I

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/news-and-events/news/primary/kent-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-service-cypmhs-and-eating-disorder-services-kent-and-medway>

Kent Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS) and Eating Disorder Services Kent and Medway

4 September 2017

Change of provider.

On **1 September 2017** all Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services previously provided by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust transferred across to North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT) as the new provider. The service is now known as Kent Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS).

Eating disorder services previously provided by Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust also transferred to NELFT.

Contacting Kent CYPMHS

There is a single point of access to the Children and Young People's Mental Health Services. Its purpose is to provide support, advice, and guidance to individual children and young people, their parents or carers, and health and social care professionals including those who wish to refer to a service and those seeking guidance or information.

Anyone who contacts the single point of access and is not eligible for a commissioned service will be signposted to alternative support.

- [CYPMHS referral form \(DOCX, 76.8 KB\)](#)
- [CYPMHS leaflet \(PDF, 107.2 KB\)](#)

Contact details for Kent CYPMHS single point of access

Telephone: 0300 123 4496

Email: nem-tr.kentcypmhs.referrals@nhs.net

For more information about the service, please visit the [CYPMHS website](#)

Operating Times

Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm

Saturday: 8am to midday

Our NELFT Mental Health Direct (MHD) team will provide additional support out of hours and weekends via telephone advice and triage to Crisis teams. The telephone number is 0300 555 1000.

Referrals to Eating Disorder Service

From 1 September there is a single telephone number for all referrals to this service, which is for children and adults. The minimum age for referrals to this service is eight.

- [Eating Disorder Service referral form \(DOCX, 88.5 KB\)](#)
- [Eating Disorder Service leaflet \(PDF, 892.7 KB\)](#)

Eating Disorder Service Contact Details

You can contact the Eating Disorder Service for Kent and Medway via telephone or email.

Telephone: 0300 300 1980

Email: nem-tr.eds.kentandmedway.referrals@nhs.net

For more information about the service, please visit the [Eating Disorder Service website](#)

Referrals by letter, with the appropriate information, will still be accepted by both services.

These services will work very closely with the School Health Team and with Headstart.

Support to improve pupils' mental health and emotional resilience is delivered by the School Health Team from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, with drop-ins at schools for advice and information, and also in youth clubs and other community venues: Visit the [NHS School Health website](#)

[HeadStart](#) aims to improve the mental well-being of at-risk 10 to 16 year-olds in Kent and specifically those who have been impacted by domestic abuse.

Appendix 2

At Tenterden Infant School we understand the importance of strengthening children's ability to cope with day-to-day difficulties and helping them to feel good about themselves. We do this by developing their social and emotional skills to help them understand and manage their feelings, develop empathy, establish positive relationships, set goals, build resilience and boost self-esteem and confidence. This approach is reflected in our PSHCE curriculum and through our vision and values however we also look to other agencies to help reinforce this message. These include:

- NSPCC and Childline
- The School Public Health Service which provides a single point of access for resilience and emotional wellbeing support
- Headstart programme which aims to help young people cope better when faced with difficult circumstances in their lives
- Kooth Counselling-Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people
- Bereavement counselling including: Holding on Letting go, Cruse bereavement care
- Play Therapy
- Additional school based interventions aimed at promoting positive interactions and emotional wellbeing

Appendix 3

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 or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Getting started

Teaching and support staff



Tips for teaching and school staff on supporting mental health and wellbeing

Promoting good mental health and wellbeing in schools relies on every member of staff playing their part. Every interaction between a child and a staff member has to help, because anyone can hold a part of the jigsaw that could support a struggling child to move forward.

Around three children in every primary school class has an identifiable mental health condition – and among this age group, boys are twice as likely as girls to have a mental health problem.

We know the factors that can put a child more at risk of developing a mental health problem can often be identified from an early age. If a child who is at risk isn't given early support, they may go on to develop a mental health problem.

As children spend so much of their time in schools, teachers and support staff are in a prime position to help children build strong mental health and wellbeing - and also spot if something is wrong.

There are lots of things that schools can do to support children's mental health and wellbeing. This is through strengthening children's ability to cope with day-to-day difficulties – and helping them to feel good about themselves. Schools can do this through developing children's social and emotional skills to help them understand and manage their feelings, develop empathy, establish positive relationships, set goals, build resilience and boost self-esteem and confidence.

We know school staff are stretched for time, and that when it comes to poor mental health the needs of a child can often be complex. To help get you started in promoting and supporting the mental health of the children in your school, we've provided 10 useful tips and pieces of

advice to help you feel informed in the decisions that you make, and also guided on where to seek support if needed.

1. Read our introductory pages on mental health and wellbeing

Read our pages on [social and emotional skills](#) and [risks and protective factors](#) to understand how to build the emotional foundations that children need to thrive, be mentally healthy and learn successfully. This includes having resilience and self-confidence, being able to handle difficult situations and manage their own feelings; as well as being aware of the kinds of things that affect - and improve - children's mental health, and the importance of identifying early children who are struggling.

2. Let pupils know you're happy to talk about how they're feeling

Encourage children to talk about how they're feeling and let them know that you are there to listen if they need to discuss anything. Build confident, open, healthy and trusting relationships with pupils to help them feel safe. Positive relationships with a trusted adult are an important protective factor for children helping them thrive, remain resilient and learn effectively.

Recommended resource: [Talking to children about feelings](#)

3. Help children know how to manage their emotions

Help children understand and manage their emotions by using concepts that get them thinking about how feelings and thoughts are linked to behaviour, and that some emotions may result in changes in their body, like a fast-beating heart if they're nervous or scared. Help pupils develop coping skills so they build resilience and also learn how to calm themselves.

Social and emotional skills should be developed from an early age and integrated across the curriculum and school life. This can be during PSHE and broader curriculum lessons, assemblies, through whole-school programmes, circle time or children's books focusing on aspects of mental health and wellbeing. Check out our resource library for hundreds of free, practical resources.

Recommended resources: [Six lesson plans on wellbeing](#)

[PSHE lesson plans](#)

4. Get children talking about mental health

Help children understand that mental health is something that we all have, and that we should be aware of it and learn skills to look after it. It's helpful for children to know that it's normal for their mental health to fluctuate - some days they may feel sad or struggle, and other days they may feel confident and calm.

Use the resources on Mentally Healthy Schools to help generate discussions about mental health in the classroom and around school, i.e. during assemblies, and focus on why it's important to listen to others and also seek support if they're struggling. If a topic triggers difficult feelings and thoughts for a child, make some time to listen to them and talk through their feelings - and link them up with any additional help they might need.

Recommended resource: [Talking Mental Health - animation and assembly plan](#)

5. Be alert to signs that a child may be in distress

It's important to intervene early if you think a child is in distress, struggling or becoming disengaged. Look out for those children who may need extra support; start a conversation to see how they are. If you are concerned, speak to your designated safeguarding lead and talk about what support may be helpful - this may involve giving them a buddy or providing peer support, counselling or other school-based help.

Recommended resource: [Conversation starters](#)

6. Feel confident about having a conversation with a pupil you're worried about.

Ideally conversations will be opened up by a classroom teacher, a sensitive teaching assistant or a playground staff member who is well-known to children. Every school should make sure that anyone working or interacting with children understands safeguarding procedures and has the necessary training.

Recommended Resource [A letter about how I'm feeling](#)

7. Know what to do if you're concerned about a child

Sometimes it may feel difficult to know if a child has a difficulty that might need further follow up and action. The resource below can help guide you on when more support might be needed. If you are worried that a child is at risk, involve your designated safeguarding lead as a matter of priority who will contact the parents or carers and other services as necessary. If the child is at immediate risk, make sure they are taken to their general practitioner (GP) or accident and emergency (A&E) as a matter of urgency, depending on the severity of the concern.

Recommended resources: [Should I be concerned?](#)

[List of helpline numbers](#)

8. Be patient and persist with children least engaged in school

Children with a mental health problem are more likely to be absent from school without permission - this is especially true for children with an emotional or behavioural problem. There are many reasons why a child might be absent from school, but where a child is struggling with being interested and engaged in school, think about more creative and interactive strategies for maintaining their interest. Help them feel that they belong, and work together with families to problem-solve solutions.

Recommended resource: [Childline toolbox - games and activities](#)

9. Support children who are more likely to be excluded

It is more common for children with mental health needs or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to be excluded from school, than those without. Be aware of which children in your class are more at risk of being excluded from school and screen early to explore whether they might have unmet mental health needs. Look at what additional support or alternative provision might be needed for those children. Repeating these screenings over time can also help you evaluate whether the child's mental health improves following any action you have taken. This can also be used as accompanying evidence to strengthen a referral made to local services.

The most common reason for children being excluded from school, either permanently or for a fixed period of time, is for persistent disruptive behaviour - and boys are far more likely than girls to be excluded from school. Studies show that parenting support strategies are often the most effective in helping children make progress when they are stuck in patterns of challenging behaviour. Help parents to link up with support programmes which can provide parents with techniques to support their child. Different local areas run different programmes - contact your early help team to find out what ones are available in your area.

Recommended resource: [Strengths and difficulties questionnaire](#)

10. Look after your mental health

When we have good levels of wellbeing we feel that life is in balance and that we can generally cope well. We feel motivated and engaged, we're resilient and able to deal effectively with daily troubles, as well as bounce back from life's challenges.

As school staff, you're likely be juggling a multitude of different tasks and demands. It's important that you're given the right emotional and practical support so that you can, in turn, best support your pupils. Good staff wellbeing can also improve performance and job satisfaction.

Recommended resource: [How to look after your mental health](#)

Read more:

[Concerned about a child?](#)

[Mental health needs](#)

[Whole-school approach](#)

Search and save your favourite resources in our library.

