Reedley Primary School Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Our school nurtures curiosity and creativity through an inspiring, broad and engaging curriculum, where learning is at the heart of all that we do. Children at Reedley learn to become resilient and self-assured in a safe environment where challenge is key. Team Reedley are encouraged to thrive and achieve as individuals, preparing them for their role as caring and active citizens in modern Britain. (Mission statement)

Policy Statement

At Reedley Primary School we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all pupils, families, members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows all voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for all affected.

At Reedley Primary School we define Mental Health and Resilience as:

Good Mental Health

- Individuals are mentally healthy when they have the ability to: develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually initiate,
- develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships
- use and enjoy solitude
- are aware of others and empathise with them
- experience happiness and can play and learn
- develop a sense of right and wrong
- resolve (face) problems and setbacks and learn from them
- develop a sense of self and identity.

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from the disappointments and difficulties we all experience. It is the ability to build protective factors in our lives which promote and protect our emotional wellbeing when faced with knockbacks and unexpected changes.

Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for our community
- Remove the stigma of mental health issues
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in pupils and each other
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support; both for themselves and pupils; who may have mental health issues

- Provide the appropriate support to pupils with mental health issues
- Develop resilience amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience building techniques, creating a safe and nurturing environment for all
- Raise awareness amongst our community of mental health issues and encourage staff to disclose any mental health issues in a supportive environment
- Encourage a mental health friendly environment where everyone is aware of the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and can effectively sign post pupils and families.

Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils and each other. However, key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Pupil Support Manager: Mrs Catherine Simmonds
- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Catherine Simmonds
- Designated Deputy Safeguarding leads: Mrs Sarah Bell (headteacher), Mrs Kerry Gorrell (Deputy headteacher), Miss Louise Cowell (SENDCO), Mrs Ambreen Iqbal (School Business Manager), Miss Ashleigh Hume
- SENDCO – Miss Louise Cowell
- Mental Health First Aider: Mrs Bell (headteacher), Mrs Simmonds (DSL)
- PSHE Coordinator: Mrs A Watson
- Mental Health Champion: Mrs Sarah Bell (headteacher)
- Mental Health Supervision for Staff: provided half termly by Phoenix Safeguarding

Section 1 – Health and Welfare of Pupils

Mental health problems in children

Some children experience a range of emotional and behavioural problems that are outside the normal range for their age or gender. These children could be described as experiencing mental health problems or disorders.

Mental health professionals have defined these as:

- emotional disorders, e.g. phobias, anxiety states and depression
- conduct disorders, e.g. stealing, defiance, fire-setting, aggression and anti-social behaviour
- hyperkinetic disorders e.g. disturbance of activity and attention
- developmental disorders e.g. delay in acquiring certain skills such as speech, social ability or bladder control, primarily affecting children with autism and those with pervasive developmental disorders
- attachment disorders, e.g. children who are markedly distressed or socially impaired as a result of an extremely abnormal pattern of attachment to parents or major care givers
- other mental health problems including eating disorders, habit disorders, post-traumatic stress syndromes; sleep disorders; and psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and manic-depressive disorder.

Many of these problems will be experienced as mild and transitory challenges for the child and their family, whereas others will have serious and longer lasting effects. When a problem is particularly severe or persistent over time, or when a number of these difficulties are experienced at the same time, children are often described as having mental health disorders.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil or parent, in the first instance, they should speak to the Pupil and Family Well-being Worker. If there is a concern that the pupil is a high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed. If the pupil presents as a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Individual care plans

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through ELCAS or another organisation, it is recommended that an Individual Care Plan should be drawn up.

The development of the plan should involve the parents, and relevant professionals.

Teaching and learning

For all pupils with mental health needs reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure full access to the curriculum.

These may include:

- Breaks from class when required
- Provision of stress relief toys
- Work broken into small chunks
- Individual behaviour plans.

Curriculum

We have developed our Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) that includes the statutory Relationships and Mental Wellbeing.

For more information, visit our PSHE page on the website.

In addition, we will ensure that:

- Opportunities to experience challenges in the outdoor environment are taken
- Pupils are encouraged to act as role models within the school environment
- A commitment to follow a healthy lifestyle is developed through participation in varied, relevant, realistic and enjoyable activities.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services. Within the school (noticeboards)

and through our communication channels (newsletters, website), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure staff, parents and pupils understand:

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

Warning Signs

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 seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should alert Pupil and Well-being Worker. Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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 secretively
- Lateness to, or absence from, school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absences.

Targeted support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to ELCAS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with the school nurse in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of our pupils.

We work closely with other professionals such as:

- Educational Psychologist
- Child Psychologist
- Mental Health Support Team (MHST)

- Inclusion Support Team
- Young Carers
- Child and Family Support Service
- Social Prescribers
- Barnardos
- School Nurse Team

In addition, we offer the following provision in house (subject to staff and resources):

- Individual Mentoring
- Use of Restorative Approach
- Zones of Regulation
- Resilience Group
- Friendship/ Socially Speaking/ Time to Talk Group
- School Based Play Therapy
- Lego Therapy
- Social Stories
- Mental Health Assemblies for Pupils
- Mental Health Workshops for Parents/Carers
- ELSA

When thresholds are met referrals may be made to:

- MHST
- ELCAS
- Young Carers
- Child and Family Well-being Service
- Children's Social Care
- School Nurse
- Behaviour Hub

In some cases, a multi professional meeting will be arranged to discuss the case further. Some children will neither meet thresholds nor be able to access individual therapies. As a school we attempt to offer one to one pastoral support for these pupils. This may be delivered by an individual behaviour plan.

Managing disclosures

Any disclosure must be recorded on CPOMS and verbally inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All safeguarding concerns will be treated in confidence and we will follow the safeguarding policy.

For more information about Safeguarding, including our policy, visit the Safeguarding page on our website.

Section 2 Health and Welfare of Parents and Carers

Welfare of Parents and Carers Parents and carers are valued and welcomed into school. We communicate regularly, consult and engage with parents/carers through newsletters, assemblies, parent meetings etc.

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing.

We work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Working closely with our local partners including the Child and Family Well-being Service, Health Care professionals and partner schools
- Meeting all EYFS parents in person to discuss their family circumstances prior to them starting school
- Encouraging parents into school for events like Eid, art week, special assemblies, parent groups
- Ensuring a member of Senior Leadership Team (SLT) attend events
- Offering 1:1 SENDCO Parent meetings
- Offering parents, the opportunity to meet Ed Psychologist, School Nurse or Speech and Language Therapist
- Ensuring all parents are aware of how to promote social and emotional wellbeing and prevent mental health problems
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.)
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills, for example workshops on routines
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their academic skills, for example Phonics, Purple Maths, SATS workshops
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing.
- This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions
- Providing an open-door policy with access to the Pupil Support Manager
- Working hard to develop a close relationship with parents and carers which allow us to offer support.

Section 3 - Health and Welfare of Staff

We recognise that a healthy and happy workforce is essential to delivering the best education for our pupils. Our expectation is that staff have a responsibility to support their own mental health by accessing appropriate support, looking after their own mental health and to develop resilience and coping strategies. As a school we are committed to encouraging staff to develop a good work life balance and lead healthy working lives.
We offer the following to support our staff's positive mental health:

- A dedicated staff room for relaxation and healthy eating
- A dedicated staff work room and conference room
- We are part of the Human Resources Service Level Agreement giving staff access to the Staff Wellbeing and Counselling Service
- We have a Staff Well-being notice board in the staff room that promotes mental health and how to access support
- We organise a number of social events throughout the year for staff to participate in
- We have a "Jacob's Join" lunch on INSET dates and on celebratory dates to promote good relationships and give time for staff to socialise
- SLT have an open-door policy for all staff
- SLT proactively support staff who are experiencing mental health difficulties
- Take staff mental wellbeing into consideration when deploying staff to various roles around school
- Reasonable adjustments for staff with recognised mental health issues
- Sign post staff to appropriate support mechanisms such as charities, GP, and Relate
- Staff meetings are held weekly
- A supportive non-sickness absence policy
- Celebrate staff special occasions
- Positive mentions in newsletters; individual and public thanks and praise; feedback from observations; learning walks
- Staff mental health First Aider and Champion – with an open-door policy who is a point of contact for all staff
- Encourage and support staff to put into perspective the everyday challenges of working with pupils
- Help staff to set professional boundaries for themselves such as not sharing their telephone numbers; not texting parents with personal phones and not having their phones out during Curriculum time
- Remind staff not to share personal details such as phone numbers and not to interact with parents on social media. Staff with children in school should be aware and take measures to protect themselves. For example, set high privacy settings on Facebook
- Flexible working applications are always seriously considered within the confines of what is best for the pupils
- No expectation to be at work outside of contracted/directed hours
- Annual Professional Development meetings.

Training

Annual training takes place for all staff as part of the safeguarding training. Other specific training will be utilised as appropriate.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our appraisal process and additional CPD will be offered throughout the year where it becomes appropriate.

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

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with headteacher or deputy headteacher, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

If a member of staff has concerns about themselves or a colleague, they should speak to the staff Mental Health First Aider and Mental Health Champions: Mrs Bell or Mrs Simmonds

Monitoring

The Headteacher, Mental Health Champion, Pupil Support Manager, SENDCO and Governors will monitor the implementation of this policy through safeguarding reviews, pupil voice activities, staff wellbeing surveys, learning walks, discussions with pupils, parents and staff, and analysis of referrals and support provided. The effectiveness of the school's mental health and wellbeing provision will be reviewed annually.

Policy revised September 2026

To be reviewed September 2027