

# Meadlands Primary School



## Mental Health Policy

Status	Non- statutory
Review cycle	biannually
Date written/last reviewed	October 25
Date of next review	October 27
Name of Co - Headteachers	Sarah Taunton-Johnson Jo Wreford
Name of Chair of Governors	Christina Powell and Melissa Shaw
Published on website	Yes

*“Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children by developing whole school approaches tailored to their particular needs, as well as considering the needs of individual pupils.” Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools*

(DFE, November 2018).

At Meadlands, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and community. At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We are aware that in the absence of good mental health, children are not able to learn and reach their full potential.

#### **Aims:**

- We are committed to making all children feel valued and safe at school.
- We strive to make each child feel that they belong here.
- We are a “talking school” – we provide all pupils with the opportunity to talk openly with trusted adults and to be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- We aim to instil a sense of resilience in our pupils in order to enable them to deal with changes, be able to make and maintain positive relations with their peers, and seek help from adults if that is not the case.

#### **Levels of support:**

- **Universal Support** - To meet the needs of all our pupils through our overall ethos and our wider curriculum.
- **Additional support** - For those who may have short term needs and those who may have been made vulnerable by life experiences such as bereavement.
- **Targeted support** - For pupils who need more differentiated support and resources or specific targeted interventions such as wellbeing groups or a key adult.

#### **Universal support:**

- All children are taught PSHE which is delivered weekly (please see PSHE policy and webpage for further information)
- Assemblies to promote belonging and to discuss mental health issues/highlight the work of mental health charities
- Dedicated space on the website for parents
- Wellbeing programme
- Meadlands work with MHST (Mental Health in Schools Team)

#### **Additional support**

At Meadlands we have a Mental Health Lead who works with individual children and groups. Referrals are made to the pastoral lead in a variety of ways: by staff or parents. Progress is assessed at the beginning and end of their sessions. Support is offered in a variety of ways: ELSA, Sand Tray therapy, Drawing & Talking, Social Thinking (1:1 or in small groups).

## **Targeted support**

For the majority of children, short-term additional support enables them to find strategies and techniques to manage the challenges they are facing. 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
- Education Inclusion Support Services (EISS)
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Family support workers

## **Identifying Needs and Warning Signs:**

- **CPOMS:** All staff are encouraged to use CPOMs liberally; an electronic safeguarding system where school staff can record any concerns. These are flagged to the Safeguarding Team or Mental Health Lead and appropriate action is then taken.
- **Weekly staff meetings and support staff meetings:** Children of concern are flagged. Minutes are logged on the system and distributed to all staff.
- **Worry boxes:** In all classrooms, which teachers check regularly.
- **Open Door Policy:** All pupils are encouraged to speak freely to trusted adults at all levels.

## **Lead Members of Staff**

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

- Leigh Chapman (Mental Health Lead)
- Jo Wreford (Co-Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Sarah Taunton-Johnson (Co-Headteacher)
- Sue Kelly (Deputy Safeguarding Lead)
- Jolene Gee (Deputy Safeguarding Lead)
- Laura Barson (Inclusion Lead and Deputy Head)
- Cacherel Jules (Family Support Worker)

## **Supporting Pupils**

- WBA (Wellbeing ambassador programme)
- Worry Boxes
- Calm Cabin
- Allotments
- Rabbits
- Mindfulness lessons for all
- Nature / wildlife area

## **Wellbeing Ambassador Programme**

We have a team of Wellbeing Ambassadors who have taken responsibility to be the point of contact for peers navigating the playground. They may help with squabbles, accompany a child who may be feeling lonely or left out, start up a skipping or ball game. In the summer, they open the calm cabin where children may go to have time out or engage in calming or quiet activities.

## **Staff Development, Health and Wellbeing**

We are aware that anyone in our community can experience mental health issues. To every extent possible, we aim to minimise the effect of workplace pressure. Staff wellbeing is high on the SLT agenda, the ethos of the school is very open with regard to mental health across the board. As with pupils, staff are encouraged to share their concerns. We have invested in the Educational Support Network, so that all staff can have access to a range of services, including counselling and life coaching.

### **CPD (Continuous professional development) opportunities for staff**

All staff are given training on INSET days and have attended workshops on Attachment and Self-harm. SLT continually identify opportunities to individual staff members including emotion coaching and mental health first aid.

### **What do Meadlands do to reduce teacher workload and increase teacher wellbeing?**

#### **1. PPA**

- PPA can be taken off site.
- Extra PPA time has been allotted to every teacher for subject coordinator activities and to take marking load into account. We always try to honour this.

#### **2. Wellbeing**

- Time in lieu for attending residentials
- INSET – half a day off for all staff / time given for classroom organisation
- No emails after 6pm or at weekends
- No teacher is expected to do lunchtime cover, even on their PPA days.
- Every class has at least one member of support staff – morning and/or afternoon
- Appointments are always authorised
- No teacher expected to run an after-school club
- Staff meetings are not held unnecessarily or finish before 5.15
- Education support **employee support network** available for all staff to access.
- Treat Fridays / Snackmass
- INSET - April 2025 - Meditation with Mrs Chapman

#### **3. Professional duties**

- Extra marking time offered if teachers become overwhelmed
- Planning Mid-terms are already written and just need amending/tweaking
- Science KOs - all re-written by JW for each teacher to relieve work burden
- White Rose, TESTBASE, Classroom secrets, Literacy Shed offer maths and reading planning, lesson sequencing and questions
- Assessment – is just 3 times per year. NFER and other schemes used to assess.
- TAFs produced to facilitate assessment of writing in Year 1,3,4,5.
- Data drop is only 3 times per year. Time out of class offered to teachers.
- New Progression document makes it easier to enter data.
- Time is set aside for moderation
- CPD is widely offered – SLT arrange cover
- Parent consultation reports were scrapped.
- PE is planned by PE leader
- Music is externally planned and taught
- PSHE is taught by Leigh Chapman - so no planning required
- Parent Book Looks have been stripped back to eliminate any burden on the class teachers
- No marking required in: spelling & vocab books, guided reading books.

- SLT attempt to remove unnecessary tasks and minimise additional drains on teacher time. eg reading curriculum evening, poetry slam, spelling bee etc.
- Attendance not expected at the majority of PTA events eg. disco, Ham Fair, Spring concert
- Reports have been condensed this year
- Subject leader action plans written and provided by SLT
- Subject pages for website completed by SLT

### **Working with Parents**

We pride ourselves on the warm and welcoming atmosphere of our small school and extend this to our parents and carers. When a parent expresses a concern about their child's emotional health, they will be offered the opportunity to meet with the class teacher and if appropriate, the Mental Health Lead. Parents and carers have access to information on the support available to them on the school website and in newsletters. Following an initial conversation, additional or targeted support may be offered, in the form of a referral to MHST or a series of sessions with our Mental Health Lead, either on a 1:1 basis or in a small group. We aim at all times to keep parents informed about the mental health topics children are learning about in PSHE lessons. When the class is being taught about Mindfulness, they are encouraged to take home resources to share with parents to spark discussion. Every day, SLT and the Mental Health Lead and other key members of the pastoral staff are present at the school gates at drop off and pick up, enabling parents to initiate conversations about any concerns they may have, in a very relaxed and low key way.

### **Equal opportunities and inclusion**

Early intervention to address underlying causes of challenging behaviour should include an assessment of whether appropriate provision is in place to support any SEN or disability that a pupil may have. School will also consider the use of a multi-agency assessment for a pupil who demonstrates persistent challenging behaviour. Such assessments may pick up unidentified SEN, disability, or mental health problems but the scope of the assessment could go further, for example, by seeking to identify housing or family problems. It is important to note that not all children with mental health difficulties will have SEN. But persistent or serious mental health difficulties will often meet the definition of SEN, in that they lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age.

### **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 to enable them to keep children safe. Training opportunities are also available for staff who require more in-depth knowledge.