Sibsey Free Primary School

Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy
(Including Stress at Work)

Approved by: Governors

Date: July 2022

Last reviewed on: October 2019

Next review due by: July 2024

SIBSEY FREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Support for Emotional and Mental Well-being

(When considering Mental Health Needs, the school will refer to the DfE publication 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'.)

The school Designated Lead for Mental Health is Mr. Graeme Wright.

We are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all of our children and the staff of Sibsey Free Primary School. We aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for the whole school community, recognising how important mental health and wellbeing is.

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils, and this includes preventing impairment of children's health or development and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Our role is to ensure that all of our school community is able to manage times of change and stress, and that all are supported to access help when they need it.

The culture, ethos and environment of the school promotes the health and wellbeing of pupils and staff. This includes the informal curriculum, and teaching, as well as partnerships with families and the community. Teaching can be through e.g. Relationships education, PSHE, counselling, developing social skills, and peer support.

The school has a role to play in promoting the resilience of their pupils, through providing a safe and affirming place where they can develop a sense of belonging and feel able to trust and talk openly with adults about their problems.

Sibsey Free Primary School has a supportive and caring ethos, and uses a respectful and kind approach, where each individual and contribution is valued.

The school's role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- Prevention: Creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos.
- Identification: Recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
- Early support: Helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions, and
- Access to specialist support: Working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

Disclosures by Children and Confidentiality
Where the school has a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken following the school's relevant policies.

Mental Health problems in children:

- Emotional disorders e.g. phobias, anxiety states, depression.
- Conduct disorders e.g. stealing, defiance, aggression, 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, bladder control.
- Attachment disorder e.g. children who are markedly distressed or socially impaired as a result of an extremely abnormal pattern or attachment to parents or major care givers.
- Trauma disorders e.g. post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic experiences or persistent periods of abuse and neglect, and
- Other mental health problems e.g. eating disorders, habit disorders, and psychotic disorders.

Key Points of school support:

- The school recognises that in order for pupils to succeed, the school needs to support them to be resilient and mentally healthy. Poor mental health undermines educational attainment.
- Where severe problems occur, a child will need support from other sources.
- The school will ensure that families and the child participate as fully as possible in decisions, and that they are provided with information and support.
- Where appropriate, the school may use the 'Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire' or Boxall Profile to help judge whether a child might be suffering from a diagnosable mental health problem.

Certain individuals and groups are more at risk of developing mental problems than others. These risks can relate to the child themselves, to their family, or to their community or life events. (See Table attached as an appendix hereto.) Risk factors are cumulative and can lead to children developing behavioural problems.

Difficult events that may have an effect on a child:
- Loss or separation (resulting from e.g. death, parental separation, divorce, family conflict)
- Life changes (e.g. birth of sibling, moving house, change of schools)
- Traumatic events (e.g. abuse, domestic violence, bullying, accidents)
- Adverse Childhood Experiences – traumatic events in a child's life.

The school may be able to support a child at such times, intervening before mental health problems develop, by identifying children with possible mental health problems, and working with parents/carers as well as the child themselves.

The school will work with others to provide a graduated approach to inform a clear cycle of support,
i.e. Assess – clear analysis of child's needs,
Plan – set out how the child will be supported,
Do – provide that support,
Review – assess provision and make changes where needed.

At Sibsey Free Primary School our approach aims to:
- Help children to understand and be able to express a range of emotions and feelings.

- Help children feel comfortable and confident to share any concerns or worries they may have.
- Help children to promote their own self-esteem.
- Help children to develop emotional resilience to be able to cope with stresses/anxieties and to be able to deal with change.
- Help children to form and maintain relationships.

Identification:

There are two key elements that schools can use to reliably identify children at risk of mental health problems:
- Effective use of data (changes in patterns of attainment, attendance), and
- Effective pastoral system (identification of unusual behaviour that needs addressing).

Children can be identified as a result of a change in their emotional state, behaviour, or interpersonal behaviours.

At Sibsey Free Primary School we have developed a Sibsey Scale, which is used to score children's emotional health, and can identify a child who is in need of support.

Strategies to promote positive mental health:

- Promoting resilience, through PSHE, SEAL, Circle Time
- Positive classroom management and small group work
- Counselling
- Involvement of outside agencies (e.g. GP, Healthy Minds Service, Mental Health Support Team, CAMHS, voluntary organisations.)
- Developing social skills
- Managing emotions, use of resources to support this.
- Working with Parents
- Peer mentoring
- Therapeutic activities – Lego, relaxation, mindfulness techniques
- ELSA Support

Where a child has more complex problems, additional in-school interventions may be required, including: Support for the child's teacher, Additional educational 1:1 support, 1:1 therapeutic work, Medication, and/or Family Support/Therapy.

Staff Training:

The Designated Lead will ensure that staff members receive appropriate training to ensure that they can offer the necessary support to children with mental health needs.

Additional Sources of Support and Information:

The school will refer to Local Authority resources for additional support. Additional sources of information are included in the DfE document 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'.

- Young Minds
- Kooth
- MindEd
- Plae2Be
- Here4You

- Children's Community Mental Health (nhs)
- Lincolnshire emotional wellbeing and mental health pathway
- Whole School SEND
- Young Carers
- Mental Health Support Team

(More detailed information relating to supporting children with mental health needs is available in the DfE publication, 'Mental health and behaviour in schools' – Departmental advice for school staff.)

Staff Wellbeing Support:

The Senior Leadership Team and the Governors are committed to providing all staff with support for their emotional health and wellbeing. This can be offered through:

- Discussion within performance management/appraisal discussions.
- Open-door Policy
- Information sharing.
- Work-Life balance support, flexibility for personal wellbeing appointments.
- Signposting to sources of support, including LA support.
- Raising awareness in staff meetings.
- Management of Inset Days.
- Support for staff working with children with complex medical needs/challenging behaviour.
- Signposting to suitable training courses for supporting mental health.

Appendix: Risk and protective factors that are believed to be associated with mental health outcomes

	Risk factors	Protective factors
In the child	• Genetic influences • Low IQ and learning disabilities • Specific development delay or neuro-diversity • Communication difficulties • Difficult temperament • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem	• Secure attachment experience • Outgoing temperament as an infant • Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour • A positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect
In the family	• Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships • Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs • Physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect • Parental psychiatric illness • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship	• At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord

	Risk factors	Protective factors
In the school	• Bullying including online (cyber) • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Deviant peer influences • Peer pressure • Peer on peer abuse • Poor pupil to teacher/school staff relationships	• Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct) • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Good pupil to teacher/school staff relationships • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences • Positive friendships • Effective safeguarding and Child Protection policies. • An effective early help process • Understand their role in and be part of effective multi-agency working • Appropriate procedures to ensure staff are confident to can raise concerns about policies and processes, and know they will be dealt with fairly and effectively
In the community	• Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Exploitation, including by criminal gangs and organised crime groups, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation • Other significant life events	• Wider supportive network • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities

Staff Stress at Work Policy

Stress is defined by the Health and Safety Executive as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demands placed on them". Everyone needs a certain amount of pressure to remain alert, motivated and productive and therefore not all pressure is bad. When demands and pressures become excessive or prolonged, some people find that their ability to cope is challenged. This creates a vulnerability which can manifest itself in a range of ill health effects for the individual and can have negative consequences for the organisation in which they are employed.

Sibsey Free School, in acknowledging that people are our most valuable resource, is committed to promoting a work environment that is safe and healthy, supports an acceptable work-life balance and recognises the mutual responsibilities and rights of employers and employees.

Therefore the school is committed to:

• Identifying potential sources of stress in the workplace and taking such action as is reasonably practical to eliminate or reduce their effect on people.

• Supporting individuals in managing effectively stress experienced by themselves and others, whatever the cause.

Aims

In order to realise this commitment, the school has identified the following aims for the effective management of stress in the workplace:

- To increase general awareness of stress and methods available to combat its damaging effects.
- To ensure that staff experience levels of stress that are acceptable to maintain good health.
- To give staff the opportunity to relax out of school hours without worrying about their own work and that of the school.
- To develop a responsible attitude and understanding amongst staff towards their own stress levels so that they can take action or seek support, long before stress becomes a critical issue within their lives.
- To develop a responsible attitude and understanding towards the stress levels of colleagues so that they can help and support those who appear to be suffering from undue levels of stress.

Organisation

Any strategy to manage stress effectively needs to be a partnership between management at all levels, individual members of staff, the LA, support services and the recognised staff associations. This involves looking at:

- The amount of work a person is expected to undertake.
- The satisfaction derived from that work.
- The way in which a person's work is valued by others.
- The amount of time given to a person in which to undertake that work.
- The esteem in which that person is held by others.
- The individual's self-esteem.

- An understanding of the stress involved in teaching.
- An understanding of how stress levels vary throughout the school.

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring a healthy and safe working environment for all staff.

Monitoring

In order to reduce the build-up of stress, the work of all staff both individually and collectively should be noted and appreciated through:

- Staff meetings in which achievements are noted and commended.
- Individual discussions between the Head Teacher and a member of staff.
- Meetings between Governors and staff members.
- Newsletters to parents.
- Local press releases and communications with the local community.

Stress does not go away and reviewing the stress levels within the school is a continuous process. This is done by:

- Open discussion of stress as an issue to be arranged in staff meetings and individual discussion.
- Every stress issue is taken seriously and a solution sought.
- Appropriate monitoring of sickness absence is recognised as an essential early warning measure of increased stress.

Sources of support

LA counselling services are available to all staff without charge and individuals may contact the services direct for a confidential appointment or, with the individual's consent, be referred by their manager. A short series of anxiety management sessions can be offered where this is appropriate. The LA provides an Occupational Health Service. Again this is a confidential service for staff.

If a referral is made by an individual's manager, a report may be made to that manager with the express permission of the individual involved. Staff Associations offer support to their members who are experiencing stress which is impacting on their working situation. As well as providing access to specialist services, they are able to assist an individual in raising with their manager the issues that need to be addressed to reduce the stress they are experiencing.

Staff Development

• Staff will be allocated jobs for which they are suited, supported by clear roles and objectives and appropriate training.

• Job descriptions will be clear and up to date.

• Training needs will be identified through the performance management system.

• All staff have a right to a programme of continuing professional development which will be monitored by the school.

• The views of all workers will be consulted through regular meetings at which all groups are represented.

• Decisions made by the management team will be clearly communicated to all relevant staff.

• There is a grievances procedure to deal with any conflicts and grievances.

• Staff are supported by the school's Behaviour Policy in dealing with any discipline problems.

Summary

Teaching is a high-risk profession in relation to stress overload. Each year the Head Teacher will prepare and review a set of measures which will allow the school to be operated in such a way that it minimises the level of stress overload which staff experience. The school has a policy of continual school improvement which involves all staff in school. The intention of this is not only to improve the school's achievements but also to lower the stress that staff might feel as a result of working with any specific problems in the school.