

Greenfields Federation

Littlehaven Infant School and Northolmes Junior School



Growing Together, Aiming High

Our vision at Greenfields Federation is that we will work together as a community to ensure all pupils achieve their best and everyone feels valued and respected. We will prioritise the well-being of our children and have high expectations for behaviour. We will create an inspiring and motivating learning environment where all children can deepen their knowledge, acquire new skills and develop as well-rounded, happy, confident individuals.

Positive Mental Health and Well-being for Pupils Policy

Review date: September 2022

Ratified by the Governing Body:

Next review: July 2023 (or before if guidance changes)

Introduction

Greenfields Federation firmly believes that schools have a central role to play in enabling their pupils to be resilient and to support good mental health and wellbeing. Our Federation strives to promote good mental health and wellbeing for every child, through developing a consistent whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing which is embedded throughout school life.

This policy promotes the positive mental health and well-being of our pupils, and should be read alongside our Staff Well-being Policy which promotes the mental health and well-being of our staff.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with our Medical Conditions Policy in cases where a pupil's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and our SEN Policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need. It should also be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policies should more serious issues arise.

It should be read alongside guidance 'Promoting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-being' (2021) and 'Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools' (2018).

Greenfields Federation is currently working towards the Mental Health and Well-being Award in conjunction with the National Children's Bureau in order to fully embed the ethos of the importance of mental health and well-being throughout the Federation.

Aims

Greenfields Federation promotes a positive ethos towards mental health and well-being, based on the understanding that all children need the foundations of positive mental health to be able to fulfil their potential academically, personally and socially. 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 well-being, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and well-being policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

We recognise that at this time, this is more important than ever as the impact of Covid-19 will be far-reaching and long-lasting. It is our responsibility as a school to ensure the positive mental health and well-being of all children following this unprecedented time.

This policy aims to:

- Remove stigma around mental health and raise awareness around positive mental health and well-being in our school community
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health and well-being issues that our pupils may face
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health that they may see in pupils
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and to their parents/ carers
- Provide guidance to staff working with young people with mental health issues so that they feel confident in how to best support these pupils

What does Positive Mental Health and Well-being mean to Greenfields Federation?

Mental Health is how we feel, how we think and how we behave.

It is about:

- Being able to form and maintain relationships with others
- Being adaptable to change and other people's expectations
- Being able to have fun
- Being open to learning
- Being able to develop a sense of right and wrong
- Being able to develop the resilience to manage ordinary setbacks

All children and young people need to:

- Be able to connect with others by participating in groups and teams
- Know they are capable and able to achieve
- Know that they count in their world and can contribute to their community
- Know they have courage and can manage risks appropriately, as everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable

Our Federation recognises that at times any pupil may need additional support to maintain or develop positive mental health and well-being.

Greenfields Federation believes that all children have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. We are committed to raising awareness, increasing understanding and ensuring that we can and do

make a difference by providing an environment where all people feel safe, secure and able to achieve and experience success and positive mental health and wellbeing.

A distinctive feature of our Federation is the positive, caring and supportive atmosphere we have created.

A consistent approach from our dedicated staff means that our school environment and school ethos all promote the positive mental health and well-being of our pupils.

Concerns about Positive Mental Health and Well-being

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

- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Kathryn Saunderson (Acting Headteacher)
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Lyndsay Woodland (Acting Deputy Headteacher/ Inclusion Lead) and Sue Geoghegan (Early Years Lead)
- Senior Mental Health Leads: Kathryn Saunderson and Lyndsay Woodland
- Inclusion Lead: Lyndsay Woodland

Kathryn Saunderson has completed Youth Mental Health First Aid training

Lyndsay Woodland has completed Senior Mental Health Lead training (through Creative Education)

The role of school staff

School staff may become aware of changes in behaviour which could indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

These changes may include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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
- 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

Any member of staff who has concerns about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to one of the Senior Mental Health Leads. The Senior Mental Health Leads will talk with the child and parents where needed to put appropriate support in place.

This support may include providing the child with a trusted adult they can talk to, providing strategies the child can use when they are feeling worried or creating social stories to support the child. Both schools have ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) who play a fundamental role in supporting these pupils. The ELSA at Littlehaven Infant School is Mrs Rayner and the ELSA at Northolmes Junior School is Mrs Miller.

Where appropriate, the Senior Mental Health Leads may also refer on to other agencies or suggest making an appointment with the child's GP. They will also signpost parents to useful websites and services who can provide further support.

At times, a referral to CAMHS may be appropriate. Any referrals will be led and managed by Lyndsay Woodland.

If there is a concern that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures must be followed with an immediate referral to the DSL or Deputy DSL. If the child 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.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our Jigsaw PSHCE curriculum and embedded throughout our school learning community.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of each cohort 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.

There are also assemblies throughout the year on talking about Mental Health and the Senior Mental Health Lead visits every class each term to make sure the children know where to go if they need someone to talk to. The message 'It's OK not to be OK' is embedded throughout the school so that children know that they can always talk about how they are feeling.

Managing disclosures

At times, a pupil may choose to tell a staff member concerns that they have about their own emotions or well-being. All staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

All staff should respond in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental way.

Staff should listen rather than advise and their first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMS and shared with the Mental Health Leads, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

Staff must be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. They should never promise the child that they will keep this to themselves, and should inform the child who they are going to talk to, what they are going to tell them and why it is important that they pass these concerns on.

Informing Parents/ carers

Parents will usually be informed if a child makes a disclosure and staff need to be sensitive when sharing this with parents/carers. It can be upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and staff should give the parent/ carer time to reflect.

When working with parents, staff should finish each meeting with agreed next steps and book in a follow-up meeting or phone call. A brief record of the meeting should be kept on the child's confidential record. Staff should always highlight further sources of information where possible to offer support to the parent.

However, if a child gives reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents may not be informed and a Safeguarding referral will be made.

Working with all parents/carers and the school community

In order to support parents/ carers and the school community, the school will:

- Carry out parent workshops to raise awareness of mental health and well-being
- Highlight sources of information and support on our dedicated Mental Health and Well-being page on the school website
- Provide information for parents through the school's newsletter.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child's mental health or well-being
- Make the school's Mental Health Policy easily accessible to parents (this is available on the school website)
- Keep parents informed about the topics their children are learning about in PSHE through half termly leaflets and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health and well-being issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep pupils safe. Staff have had a range of training on mental health, anxiety and emotionally based school refusal provided by the mental health charity Coastal Minds, and training will continue to be updated.

The school will also make information available on the school's website and the Mental Health Policy will be readily available to all staff.

All staff will be familiar with the document 'Mental Health Resources for teachers and teaching staff (June 2021)' which provides links to a wealth of resources to support mental

health.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/993669/Mental_Health_Resources_for_teachers_and_teaching_staff_June_2021.pdf

The Mental Health Leads will maintain an 'open door' policy for all staff who wish to discuss any concerns or questions they may have.

Reviewing the Positive Mental Health and Well-being Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually and contributed to by all stakeholder.