



Gwladys Street Community Primary & Nursery School

Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Gwladys Street CP & Nursery School

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1.0 Policy statement

At Gwladys Street CP & Nursery School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health concerns.

2.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Gwladys Street CP & Nursery School's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

3.0 Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and children.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health concerns.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in children.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young children with mental health concerns.
- Provide the right support to children with mental health concerns and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst children and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff. Ensuring they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and children welfare, where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

4.0 Key Staff Members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of children, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Inclusion Team
 - Designated Safeguarding Lead/Mental Health Lead
 - SENDCO
- SLT
- Mental Health Champions
- PSHE Coordinator

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, in the first instance they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or SLT.

If there is a concern that the child is at risk of danger of immediate harm, the school's safeguarding procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

5.0 Individual Healthcare Plans

When a child has been identified as having cause for concern and has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support through CAMHS, it is recommended that an Individual Healthcare Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals. Inclusion Team and SENDCO to support with this. All other support, using Seedlings or MHST will be completed and logged using CPOM's due to level of concern.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Signs and symptoms
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

6.0 Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our children need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum and our Calm Central programme.

We will follow guidance to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

This will be incorporated into our curriculum at all stages. Gwladys Street CP & Nursery School also use the 'Jigsaw' scheme of work for teaching PSED. This is an opportunity to promote children's wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of children's own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing children who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting children to support any of their friends who are facing challenges. **See Section 14 for Supporting Peers**

7.0 Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

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

The aim of this is to ensure children 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

8.0 Sources or support at school and in the local community

School Based Support

The Inclusion Team are available to support staff and children when required.

School have trained Mental Health Champions for children and staff to speak with.

Mental Health and Wellbeing boards are situated in both school buildings with photographs of Staff who can also support.

School provide therapeutic support in house using Calm Central. Children can attend weekly themed sessions to support with social and emotional well-being.

School have qualified staff to support with mental well-being.

School utilise partner agencies, YPAS, Seedlings, CAMHS, MHST. An extensive list of contacts for support is available for all staff, Parents and Carers.

Calm Central support is also delivered in class and within Calm Central base. Children are made aware they are able to talk in a safe space in school. All classrooms have mindful areas with space outside of classrooms, including a Calm Central space in KS1 and KS2.

School focus on social and emotional well-being through a variety of activities which include, lessons, sport activities, mindful relaxation, visual aids, ROAR, individual and group activities.

Local Support

In Liverpool, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the **CAMHS partnership**, a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health wellbeing. These partners deliver accessible support to children, young people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention, training and participation.

<https://www.liverpoolcamhs.com/>

School also deliver the ROAR programme to children. This enables school to support our children who may be experiencing anxiety, emotional, behavioural difficulties and enables staff to recognise and address the signs of mental health concerns. This helps to recognise the importance of building resilience in

children. We work closely with partner agencies also which include YPAS, Seedlings and MHST.

9.0 Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a child 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 SLT or DSL.

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
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Choosing not to join in 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

10.0 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 CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with School Health and collaboratively support the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children. We are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels, identifying concerns, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of children who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural concerns;
- Working closely with Liverpool City Council Children's Services, Liverpool CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Identifying and assessing in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Discussing options for tackling these concerns with the child and their parents/carers. Agree an Individual Healthcare Plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach;
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs;
- Ensure children have access to the Inclusion Team for support, as well as specialist services, including Liverpool CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural concerns can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide children with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;
- Provide children with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it.
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

11.0 Managing disclosures

If a child chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded following our Safeguarding procedures using CPOM's and white form:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation

This information will be shared with DSL and SLT and next steps will be agreed following our Safeguarding procedures.

12.0 Confidentiality

If a child is at risk of serious harm, staff must share this information immediately with DSL, SLT and record on CPOM's. It is important to remember that children are aware some information may need to be shared with somebody else.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. Further support and supervision time may be required to best support the staff member.

13.0 Whole school approach

13.1 Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents/carers, consideration must be made:

- Location to meet with the parents/carers in school or virtually.
- Who should be present – child, staff, parents/carers, partner agencies.
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes.

We are mindful that for a parent/carer, hearing about their child's concerns can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should

be prepared for and allow time for the parent/carer to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents/carers have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call may be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the pupil's record and an Individual Healthcare Plan created if appropriate.

13.2 Supporting parents/carers

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents/carers are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health concerns;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health concerns through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by Children's Centres. Work with School Health and Mental Health Service Teams including, Inclusion Team, or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners.
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing.

14.0 Supporting Peers

When a child has a mental health concern, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be

provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the child and their parents/carers with whom we will discuss:

- What 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 needs 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

Point to remember: Information is confidential and will not always be shared, unless agreed by Parents/Carers.

Supporting Staff with a mental health concern is also our priority. Staff have the support of SLT/DSL and Mental Health Champions to talk and discuss any concerns they may be experiencing. Counselling support is also available.

School also encourage staff to buddy up with colleagues to support each other in providing opportunities for reflective practice and problem-solving school-based challenges.

15.0 Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health concerns to enable them to keep children safe. A nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our CPD. Information may be shared where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more children.

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

16.0 Policy Review

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes.

