

Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy



Policy Statement

At RAMJS we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community. It is our vision that all children are entitled to develop to their fullest potential academically, socially and emotionally. We aim to enable each child to grow in confidence and be able to fully participate in everything that goes on in schools and the wider community. It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning, as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood. The department for Education recognises that, 'in order to help their pupils succeed: schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.'

"Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community." (World Health Organization 2014)

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every child, parent / carer and staff. We pursue this aim using both whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at identified vulnerable pupils and families. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. We endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to access help when they need it.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children are valued.
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
 - Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying is not tolerated

This same principle applies to our staff, where we aim to promote a healthy work life balance ensuring a happy staff with good mental health and wellbeing. Where additional support may be needed we have the option of a counsellor for staff that may need support above and beyond what their Year group leader and SLT link can offer.

Ethos

RAMJS aims to support and teach skills to pupils and staff to increase their awareness of emotional health and wellbeing. Two key elements to support good mental here are:

- Feeling Good – experiencing positive emotions like happiness, contentment and enjoyment. Including feelings like curiosity, engagement and safety.
- Functioning Well – how a person is able to function in the world, this includes positive relationships and social connections, as well as feeling in control of your life and having a sense of purpose.

To promote first aid for mental health and wellbeing RAMJS aims to:

- To develop a whole school approach for both pupils and staff.
- To work together with families with our dedicated Phase leaders, SLT, SENDCO and Mental health lead, to support parents and in turn support their child.
- To provide a holistic and multi- agency approach that is identified in the children's individual SEN support plans and Personalised plans.

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils. Staff with a specific, relevant responsibility includes:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing lead – Katy Copping
- Deputy Mental Health and Wellbeing lead- Helen Tugwell
- Designated Safeguarding Officers: Fran Nickson, Roxy Bleasdale, Mandy Gaitens, David Smith, Caroline Bloor and Louise Leeming.
- SENDCO- Roxy Bleasdale
- Play Therapists –
- Counsellor – Jackie Aadand
- Behaviour support- Helen Tugwell
- Family support worker- Louise Leeming

Our Mental Health Leads:

- Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Provide advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
- Liaise with mental health services and makes individual referrals to them.

Pupil Identification

Wellbeing measures include staff observations focusing on any changes in behaviour, attention and presentation will feed into the identification process as well as any communication from the pupils regarding their emotions and feelings. Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to their Phase leader, SLT, SENDCO or Mental health lead. If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures should be applied with an immediate referral to one of the DSL's. Referrals may need to be made to Early Help or school nurse initially via Parent support workers.

Individual support plans will identify support for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents, SENDCO and relevant health professionals.

Early Identification and Warning Signs

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstance
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Teaching about mental health

RAMJS take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. We aim to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a pro-active way to avoid problems arising.

We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and well-being.
- Adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management.
- Helping children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries.
- Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better.
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world.
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Enabling access to appropriate support.
- Mental Health and PSHE for all year groups
- Wellbeing week and access to information around the school

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters'.
- Managing emotions resources.
- Primary Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups/ELSA support groups.
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales

Assessment, interventions and support

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with SLT, class teachers and SENDCO to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

Working with parents and carers.

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead for assessment.

To support parents and carers we will:

- Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.
- Organise workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and steps to wellbeing.

When a concern has been raised, teachers or the Mental Health Lead and SENDCO will:

- Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (Although there may be cases, parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection issues.)
- Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies.
- Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
- Create a chronology of actions and events.
- Agree mental health care and protection plan where appropriate including clear next steps.
- Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.

Working with specialist services

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- Behaviour support through Golden Hill
- Educational Psychology Services
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- School Nursing Service
- Children's and Family Services
- Therapists
- Family support workers

- Counselling Services

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 in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Staff wellbeing

Staff wellbeing is paramount to us as a school. We believe for staff to be able to do their job effectively they need to feel supported and appreciated in their role. The leadership structuring of the school means that staff have a phase leader who is also a SLT, to go to at any time with worries or concerns. SLT regularly review workload for all to ensure that staff can have as much time as possible to do their role effectively without being bogged down with un-necessary tasks. Staff supervision takes place every term, this allows staff to speak to a counsellor on a regular basis and they also have access to counselling services outside of school.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy will be published on the school website - hard copies are available on request. The policy will be reviewed every three years.