

Park is an inclusive school where we focus on the wellbeing and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights' standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Park Primary's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Wellbeing Lead: Alys Newton Named Mental Health Lead: Natasha Ttoffali

Named Governor with lead on Mental Health:

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Member of Staff Responsible	Natasha Ttoffali
Position	Head Teacher



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Dated (approved by the Governing Board)	24th November 2021
Date of next review	November 2022

Policy Statement

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

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- Affirm our understanding of mental health and wellbeing as a fluctuating state
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health for themselves and pupils
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>

At Park, our strategies to support general wellbeing and positive mental health in children are:

- Whole education- a broad and balanced curriculum
- Positive relationships across the entire community
- PSHE Curriculum
- Wellbeing Walks
- Star of the Week Lunch
- Assemblies
- Focus weeks- anti bullying, mental health, kindness day
- Physical activity
- Outdoor learning
- Wellbeing Survey- Y1-6
- Relationships and Positive Behaviour Policy
- Partnerships with organisations such as Headstart- Resilience Project- Y3/4/5/6
- Pastoral groups and mentoring in Y6
- Focus on Confidence and Aspiration in order to create belief in empowerment
- Consent informed approach

Why the investment of time and energy in mental health and general wellbeing is



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fundamental:

At Park Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental and physical health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We recognise how important the maintenance of health and mental health, as well as general emotional and physical wellbeing, is to our lives.

This policy will focus on Mental Health whilst the Physical Education and Health Policy will focus on that aspect of wellbeing.

We recognise that mental health is a crucial factor in everyone's wellbeing and can affect performance, learning and achievement. We all go through ups and downs and some face significant life events which affect the balance. Without a concerted effort to maintain a regulated mental health equilibrium, these ups and downs can be debilitating.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to thrive or, in times of survival mode, access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to:



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- ❖ maintain positive mental health;
- ❖ understand what affects their mental health;
- ❖ reduce any societal stigma surrounding mental health issues;
- ❖ help and support themselves as well as where they might go to seek further help and support.

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

- relationships are strong;
- all are valued;
- all have a deep sense of belonging and feel safe;
- all feel able to talk openly with trusted people about their problems without feeling any stigma;
- positive mental health is promoted and valued;
- negative influences upon mental health are not tolerated.

In the use of 'all', in addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health.
- How we aim to prevent mental health problems.
- How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems
- Some key information about some common mental health problems.



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- Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support.

Definition of mental health and wellbeing

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing "*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*".

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all to:

- feel confident in themselves;
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately;
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others;
- cope with the stresses of everyday life;
- manage times of stress and be able to deal with change;
- feel empowered to thrive;
- aspire;
- self regulate or regulate through restorative coaching conversations;
- learn and achieve;
- care about themselves, each other and the relationships to which they complement;
- feel fully invested in Park and its community.

This policy has explicit links with others in the suites of:
Safeguarding, Behaviour and Curriculum.

A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health and encouraging a deeper understanding of it.



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We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health in the first instance through the provisions of effective and meaningful relationships. Such relationships aim to help children become more resilient, happy and confident; empowered to prevent problems before they arise or to tackle them effectively when they do.

This encompasses these aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
2. Helping the entire community to develop social relationships and interdependence in order to support each other and seek help when they need it.
3. Helping all to be resilient people and learners.
4. Teaching all social and emotional skills and an awareness of their own mental health and that of others.
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers through: increasing understanding; breaking down barriers and developing an understanding of modelling behaviours.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
8. Regularly revisiting the need for mental self care

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility



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We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand protective as well as risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff are regularly reminded to appreciate risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems (Attachment Theory) and have been developed in the appreciation of creating a climate of positive mental health and transparency. *(see appendix 1 on risk and protective factors).*

Specific responsibilities:

Our:

- ❖ Head Teacher, as the Mental Health Lead, is responsible for ensuring that the ethos and actions of our school are carried out with integrity and all relationships are meaningful, supportive and empathetic. She promotes and aims to personify looking after oneself and others;
- ❖ Inclusion Lead for Social, Emotional & Mental Health Needs leads, and works with other staff to coordinate, whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing. She is the first point of contact with mental health services and makes individual referrals. Additionally she provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates as necessary;
- ❖ Wellbeing Lead, leads on RSHE and the curriculum's teaching about mental as well as physical health.
- ❖ Safeguarding Team ensures that all information relating to community mental health is appropriately shared and responded to proactively.



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- ❖ Staff all lead on building meaningful relationships with the young people in their care and look for daily indicators of change in mental health in the children, in the community and in their colleagues.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

We work closely with:

CAMHS, Place2Be, BUPA, MIND

Supporting children's positive mental health

We believe that we have a key role in promoting children's positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

Our PSHE Curriculum

Our entire curriculum is underpinned by the Learning Power Approach which aims to equip our children with the skills to become lifelong learners.

[PHSE curriculum overview](#)

Whole school

- Wellbeing week – whole school focus on doing things which make us feel good



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- Displays and information around the School about positive mental health and where to go for help and support
- Staff mental health - Education Support Service
- Staff wellbeing days
- Wellbeing activities
- Wellbeing walks

Class activities

- Reflection area
- Circle Times
- Tree of Life
- Mood Meters

Pupil-led activities

- Campaigns, lessons and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health.
- Peer mediation
- Pupil voice - House Captains, School Council, Sports Leaders

Small group activities

- Nurture groups
- Resilience Training
- Zones of regulation
- Circus Skills
- Bounceback

Transition and Y6 programmes

- Transition Programme to secondary schools which includes all Year 6 children having



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a staff mentor to support a smooth transition to secondary school

- Year 6 transition series of lessons to get children prepared mentally and emotionally for Secondary School

Safeguarding

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the School's child protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency then the School's procedures for medical emergencies are followed. Refer to the [Safeguarding Policy](#) for further information.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Lead or Safeguarding Lead and recorded. We then implement our assessment system, which is based on levels of need to ensure that children get the support they need, either from within the School or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

What is our referral process?

Support for children after inpatient treatment

We recognise that some children will need ongoing support and the Inclusion Lead for Social, Emotional & Mental Health Needs will meet with children on a regular basis. We are



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careful not to “label” children with diagnoses without prior and sensitive consultation with family/carers and other relevant professionals.

We have a duty of care to support children and will seek advice from medical staff and mental health professionals on the best way to support children. We will carry out a risk assessment and produce an Individual Care Plan to support children to re-integrate successfully back to school.

When a child leaves an inpatient provision and is transitioning back to school, we discuss what needs to happen so the transition will be smooth and positive.

Working with specialist services to get swift access to the right specialist support and treatment

In some case a pupil’s mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders.

We have access to a range of specialist services and during the support will have regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the children’ Individual Care Plan.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Lead, Safeguarding Lead or the SENDCO following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and their parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil’s specific needs.

SEND and mental health

Persistent mental health problems may lead to children having significantly greater



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difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age. In some cases the child may benefit from being identified as having a special educational need (SEN).

Involving parents and carers

Promoting mental health We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting children who do have mental health needs.

On first entry to the School, our parents' meeting includes a discussion on the importance of positive mental health for learning. We ask parents to inform us of any mental health needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing, based on a list of risk factors pertaining to the child or family (see appendix 1). It is very helpful if parents and carers can share information with the School so that we can better support their child from the outset. All information will be treated in confidence.

To support parents and carers:

- We provide information and websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes and have produced leaflets for parents on mental health and resilience, which can be accessed on the School website. The information includes who parents can talk to if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child and where parents can access support for themselves.

Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs We are aware that



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parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available.

When a concern has been raised, the School will:

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them (*In almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.*)
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting.
- Agree a mental health Individual Care Plan including clear next steps.
- Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child.
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and children may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. We give children the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health needs for themselves or of accompanying and supporting them to do so.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the children, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

Involving children



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We train up a group of children as our Health Champions who lead on whole school campaigns on health and wellbeing.

We seek pupils' views about our approach, curriculum and in promoting whole school mental health activities.

We always seek feedback from children who have had support to help improve that support and the services they received.

Supporting and training staff

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do and where to get help. Our Mental Health Lead is a qualified 'mental health first aider' and a number of our staff have completed the one day course on mental health first aid.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school office. All mental health professionals are given a copy before they begin working with the school as well as external agencies involved in our mental health work.

The policy is monitored at an annual review meeting led by the Mental Health Lead and involves staff with a responsibility for mental health, including specialist services supporting the school and governors.



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Appendices

Appendix 1 Protective and Risk factors (adapted from Mental Health and Behaviour DfE March 2016)

Risk Factors Protective Factors In the Child

- Genetic influences
- Specific development delay
- Communication difficulties
- Physical illness
- Academic failure
- Low self-esteem
- SEND
- Being female (in younger children)
- Secure attachment experience
- Outgoing temperament as an infant
- Good communication skills, sociability
- Being a planner and having a belief in control
- Humour
- Problem solving skills and 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



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- 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

In the School

- Bullying
- Discrimination
- Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships
- Negative peer influences
- Peer pressure
- Clear policies on behaviour and bullying
- 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems

- A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health
- Poor pupil to teacher relationships
- Positive classroom management
- A sense of belonging
- Positive peer influences In the Community
- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Homelessness
- Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events
- Discrimination
- Other significant life events
- Wider supportive network



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- 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

Appendix 2 Specific mental health needs most commonly seen in school-aged children

For information see Annex C Main Types of Mental Health Needs Mental Health and Behaviour in School DfE March 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Annex C includes definitions, signs and symptoms and suggested interventions for

- Anxiety (including panic attacks, phobias and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder OCD)
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Substance Misuse
- Self Harm

Appendix 3 Where to get information and support

For support on specific mental health needs Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk OCD UK

www.ocduk.org Depression Alliance www.depressoinalliance.org Eating Disorders

www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk

www.selfharm.co.uk Suicidal thoughts Prevention of young suicide UK – POPYRUS:

www.papyrus-uk.org

For general information and support www.youngminds.org.uk champions young people's

mental health and wellbeing www.mind.org.uk advice and support on mental health

problems www.minded.org.uk (e-learning) www.time-to-change.org.uk tackles the stigma of mental health www.rethink.org challenges attitudes towards mental health



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develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others is at the heart of Park's practice and at Park this begins with positive, trusting and transparent relationships for all



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