Tidbury Green School
Dickens Heath Road
Tidbury Green
Solihull
B90 1QW

Policy Name

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Date of Review

Spring Term 2024

Next Review Date

Spring Term 2026

Agreed by Governors

Date

February 2024

Policy:	Mental Health & Wellbeing
People Authorised to make changes to this policy:	• Mrs. R Fitter • Miss. E Morgan
Committee responsible for approving policy:	Full Governing Body

Questions for the reviewer of this policy:	
Does this policy comply with statutory requirements and is relevant legislation and guidance referenced in the policy?	Non-statutory
Does the policy reflect current evidence-based good practice?	Updated following DfE training
Is the policy consistent with the vision and ethos of the school?	Yes
Does the policy reflect current practice in the school?	Yes

After policy review:	
Changes made:	Updated January 2024 .
Expected impact of updated policy:	Updated with current practices in place.
Updated policy sent to governors:	Spring Term 2024
Updated policy sent to staff:	Spring Term 2024
Updated policy put on website:	Spring Term 2024

Policy Statement

At Tidbury Green School, we promote positive mental health for all staff and pupils. We aim to do this by using whole school approaches as well as specialised targeted approaches, through our school values, culture and ethos.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental health needs. We recognise that in an average UK classroom, three children may be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly, by mental health needs.

Policy Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our safeguarding policy, behaviour and safety policy, equality statement and SEND and inclusion policy.

Policy Aims

To promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils by:

- Communicating a positive values-based whole-school approach that promotes openness and understanding to normalise mental health and its fluctuations throughout life.
- To promote resilience and support social and emotional learning.
- Connect local services to enhance the mental health and wellbeing
- Providing support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents

Key Staff Members

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

- R Fitter - Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Senior Mental Health Lead
- J Weston – Mental Health and wellbeing champion governor
- S Yilmaz – Thrive Practitioner
- P Beach – PSHE Lead
- E Morgan – SENCo, DSL
- D Ford – School Mentor
- E Smith – Mental Health First Aider, DSL

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the relevant member of staff listed above or the Headteacher in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the DSL. If the pupil presents with a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to SEMH team (Social, Emotional and Mental Health Services through SISS) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the SENCo.

Our School Values

At Tidbury Green school, our school values are:

T **Together Stronger** – where we promote and teach the value of teamwork and listening to others.

H **Honesty** – we promote and teach the value of honesty, to help us talk and listen openly about our mistakes and problem solve with integrity.

I **Independence** – we promote the importance of taking responsibility for our choices.

N **Never Give Up** – this value promotes resilience, flexibility and determination with the help of each other.

K **Kindness and Courtesy Counts** – we promote the behaviours that develop kind and courteous characteristics.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum; Jigsaw.

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

Through the PSHE and RSHE curriculum, the school's values and subject specific teaching staff ensure that social and emotional wellbeing is taught in a safe and open manner which helps to promote emotional resilience. This curriculum is available and provided to all children.

During the children's time in school, pupils at Tidbury Green School will learn:

- That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health
- That there are a normal range of emotions that we all experience
- How to recognise and talk about their emotions
- How to judge whether their feelings and behaviours are appropriate and proportionate
- The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors and community participation has on wellbeing.
- To understand emotional literacy which will include the ability to listen to others and empathise with the emotions of others and the ability to express emotions productively.

Signposting support at school and in the local community

We will ensure that staff, pupils, parents and governors are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. We share relevant information and sources of support on our social media and written communication with our school community. Support is provided in school through our Thrive practitioner, SENCo, school mentor and teaching and learning staff. These adults work together to understand:

▪ What is working well

▪ What additional help is available

▪ How to access it

▪ Why to access it

▪ What is likely to happen next

Identifying needs and warning signs

School staff may become aware of physical, social and emotional signs which indicate a pupil is in need of additional support. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the appropriate member of staff.

Possible signs for a pupil requires additional support:

- 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 about self-harm
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Avoiding PE or getting changed secretively
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Talking to children about their concerns

A pupil may choose to talk about their concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to the information shared. If a pupil chooses to share concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, open, supportive and non-judgmental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety. Staff will log any concerns using the school's internal 'My Concern' system. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the concern was made
- Main points from the conversation

- Agreed next steps - at each level of discussion

This information should be shared with the relevant staff team who can deliver the agreed actions including building and maintaining a positive relationship with the child in school.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we feel it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on, then we would normally, if age-appropriate, discuss this with the pupil which would include the following:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Headteacher, SENCo, Thrive practitioner and/or school mentor as this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing because we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil as well as ensuring continuity of care in any absence of key people and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. This should be explained to the pupil and discussed with them, as to who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

School staff will share with parents where appropriate and proportionate usually within the same day and work together with parents, sharing what is working well and what steps we would like to next take to improve the mental health and wellbeing of their child.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, this information will be reviewed by a DSL in school at the earliest opportunity. Similarly, if staff feel that a child may be at risk of harming themselves immediately after they leave our care, their parents would be informed immediately.

Whole-school approach

- **Working with families**
  We work together with families to provide support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional, social and mental health. In order to support families we will:

a) Highlight sources of information and support in school and at home. Highlight what is working well in school and at home.
b) Ensure that all those in families with parental responsibility are aware of who to talk to, and how to get help about this.
c) Make our mental health policy easily accessible to families.
d) Share ideas about how parents can support the positive mental health in their children by sharing the strategies and pedagogy in school.
e) Keep families informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and RSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

- **Working with other agencies and partners**

  In some case a pupil's mental health experiences require support from a specialist service.

  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. The SENCo will decide where a specific plan for support is required.

  School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the SENCO following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her 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.

Main Specialist Service	**Referral Process**
Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (SOLAR)	Accessed through SENCO, GP or self-referral
Educational Psychologist	Accessed through SENCO
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health (NHS Foundation Trust)	Accessed through SENCO, GP or self-referral
SEMH Team (Solihull)	Accessed through SENCO

SEND and Mental Health

Persistent mental health concerns may lead to children having significantly greater 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 (SEND).

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is experiencing mental health concerns, it can be a difficult time for their friends, who often want to support but do not know how to and can also be emotionally affected.

We will involve the pupil who is experiencing mental health concerns and their parents and consider what is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told, how they can best support, things they should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset and warning signs that their friend needs help. We will, where appropriate and proportionate share information with peers, always in agreement with families in the spirit of our together stronger school value.

We will also make information available about where and how to access information and support for themselves and healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling.

Training

All teaching and learning staff have received 'Thrive Approach' whole-school training to understand the Thrive Approach principles of playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy to support effective attunement with pupils.

All staff receive yearly child protection and safeguarding updates as well as time to read and understand statutory documentation including Keeping Children Safe in Education. 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 experiences early in children and know what to do and where to get help. One of our Mental Health Leads is a qualified 'mental health first aider'.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and within Tidbury Green School we encourage staff to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing by:

- Gathering the views of staff through wellbeing questionnaires during the school year

- Staff will be signposted to specific agencies or organisations for additional help if required as well as any wellbeing offers.
- encouraging an open dialogue between staff and ensuring open lines of communication
- building positive relationships within school
- establishing positive peer support
- taking time for themselves
- encouraging staff to look after their mental health by encouraging a work-life balance
- encouraging staff to look after their physical health by keeping active
- asking for help if they need it

We support staff by:

- Clear and kind communication with all staff
- Providing feedback that identifies the positive impact of their work with children, parents and colleagues in school as well as being specific about how we all each develop our own practice further.
- Being clear on job responsibilities and accountability
- Giving staff productive feedback and challenging work
- Providing individual, instructional coaching pathways for professional development where specific areas of professional development are agreed between staff members. These are delivered through a research-led coaching model
- Providing the right tools, equipment, resources and training to complete their establishing effective communication systems
- Encouraging, rewarding and praising initiative and creativity

We address the issue of staff workload by:

- Identifying and avoiding workload that is a repetition of information already gathered and understood.
- Streamlining admin by using technology such as electronic forms.
- Medium Term planning is provided by subject leaders
- Planning is not scrutinised by senior leaders.
- Encouraging staff to work together and to share the responsibility for, planning, resources, evaluations and assessments with their year group partner.
- Teacher release time together with their year group partner for better time management and sharing the workload across the year group
- Encourage staff to team teach in order to promote a coaching model of professional development.
- Rolling timetable of leadership time for subject leaders to promote subject specific professional development.

- Use of 'Teams' for quick messaging service instead of additional meetings.
- Positive actions taken from the staff's questionnaire analysis
- Meetings are minimised and information shared by email and informal conversations where possible.
- Open-door approach by staff and leaders to encourage timely informal conversations and avoid additional unnecessary meetings and admin.
- Minutes of meetings are taken during meetings to avoid additional workload.
- Reduce workload of marking by updating the feedback policy to reduce time commitment for written feedback to pupils including whole-class marking and use of self-marking quizzes.
- Ensuring adequate and realistic time is agreed in order for deadlines to be met.
- Ensuring that when new strategies are introduced that any unnecessary and outdated strategies are phased out to reduce workload where possible and in the best interests of the school.

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

Policy Monitoring Review and Evaluation

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to families 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 a bi-annual review meeting led by the Headteacher and staff with a responsibility for mental health, including specialist services supporting the school and governors.