



Thelwall Infant School

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Governing Body approval date: March 22

Monitoring, evaluation and Review: Every 2 years

This policy is based around DfE recommendations set out in 'Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools' (March 2016) and 'Mental Health and Wellbeing provision in Schools' (October 2018).

Here at Thelwall Infant School and Nursery, we recognise that in order to promote a positive ethos in school, all children and staff need the foundations of positive mental health to be able to shine both academically, personally and socially.

This policy aims to:

- Support the wellbeing of all children, staff and the wider school community to avoid negative impacts on their mental and physical health
- Provide a supportive work environment for all members of the school community
- Acknowledge the needs of all members of the school community and how these change over time
- Help members of the school community with any specific wellbeing issues they experience

Well-being can be defined as 'state of being comfortable, healthy and happy.' Mental Health is how we feel, how we think and how we behave. Mental Health and well-being promotion for children and staff is everyone's business.

It is about:

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

All children and staff need to:

- Be able to connect with others by participating in group activities

- 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 because everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable.

Everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable. At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health:

- 1 in 10 children and young people aged 1 to 15 years have a clinically recognizable mental disorder in any one year.
- 1 in 4 adults will experience mental health difficulties; at least half of these difficulties can be traced back to childhood.

Thelwall Infant School and Nursery recognises these needs and is aware of the risk and protective factors (see table below) and their relation to mental health.

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In The Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Genetic influences ● Low IQ and learning disabilities ● Specific development delay or neurodiversity ● Communication difficulties ● Difficult temperament ● Physical illness ● Academic failure ● Low self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Being female (in younger children) ● Secure attachment experience ● Outgoing temperament ● Good communication skills, sociability ● Humour ● Problem solving skills and positive attitude ● Experiences of success and achievement ● Faith or spirituality ● Capacity to reflect
Among staff and governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organisational culture ● Competence and requirements ● Lack of recognition ● Workload management ● Lack of positive communication with colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clear leadership and expectations ● Support and respect ● Growth and development ● Involvement and influence ● Good work-life balance ● Good communication with colleagues ● Time to socialise with colleagues
In The Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overt parental conflict including domestic violence ● Family breakdown (incl. children taken into care or adopted) ● Inconsistent or unclear discipline ● Hostile and rejecting relationships ● Failure to adapt to a child's needs ● Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect ● Parental psychiatric illness ● Parental criminality, alcoholism, or personality disorder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Death and loss (including loss of friendship) 	
In the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bullying ● Discrimination ● Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships ● Deviant peer influences ● Peer pressure ● Poor pupil to teacher relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clear policies on behavior and bullying ● 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems ● A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health ● Positive classroom management ● A sense of belonging ● Positive peer influences ● Opportunity for positive play experiences for all children
In the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Socio-economic disadvantage ● Homelessness ● Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming event ● Discrimination ● Other significant life events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wider support network ● 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

At Thelwall Infant School and Nursery, we are aware that certain difficult events may have an effect on a pupil's / staff's mental health including:

- **Loss or separation** – resulting from death, parental separation, divorce, hospitalisation, loss of friendships, family conflict or being taken into care or adoption.
- **Life changes** – Such as the birth of a sibling, moving house or changing schools, during transition between phases, or periods of home learning.
- **Traumatic events** – such as abuse, domestic violence, bullying violence, accidents, injuries or natural disaster.

All school staff 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 wellbeing. A distinctive feature of our school is the positive, caring and supportive atmosphere we have created and strive to maintain.

A consistent approach from our dedicated staff means that our school environment and school ethos all promote the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school community.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of Senior Leaders

Senior leaders are expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with the staff and governors and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies

- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that lead to their resignation
- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up-to-date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes
- Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections

Role of the Wellbeing Team (made up of staff and governors)

The wellbeing team are Lynne Hollingsworth, Simon Hoe, Sam Lomax, Jo Buteux

- Make sure the school is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the headteacher
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing (see appendix 1)
- Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly in regards to workload
- Promote information about and access to external support services
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations

The Role of the Wellbeing Champions

- To be the link between staff and the wellbeing team, ensuring staff know they can talk to wellbeing champions to share any concerns or ideas (including monitoring of staff suggestion box)
- To undertake regular surveys, questionnaires, workshops to monitor and support the wellbeing of children and staff and use the outcomes to develop school policy
- To promote staff cohesion through wellbeing initiatives, including social events, team building activities etc.

- To undertake relevant training
- To raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing in school through initiatives, events and any other strategies that will help to promote good mental health and wellbeing

Role of the staff and governors

- Monitor and support the well being of each other and help to ensure a supportive and non-judgemental work environment
- Respecting and listening to each other, understanding the practical needs of others, and working as part of a team.

The children

At Thelwall Infants, we aim to provide a mentally healthy environment where children:

- Have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging (PSHRE Curriculum)
- Have opportunities to participate in decision making (School council, voting)
- Have the opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements (Celebration assemblies, facebook)
- Have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed (celebration assembly-good work, extra- curricular clubs multi sports, tennis, dance, football celebrate sports stars of the week in assembly)
- Have opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others (Opal play leadership opportunities)
- Have opportunity to reflect (PSHRE sessions, celebration assembly, play assemblies)
- Have access to appropriate support that meets their needs (e.g. Teacher and TA support in class, SLT and external agencies where appropriate – see flow chart to follow)
- Have an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for.
- Are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours and interactions at all times.

Promoting Good Mental Health and Wellbeing through our curriculum

- At Thelwall Infant School and Nursery, we pride ourselves on the opportunities we provide to promote positive mental health for everybody, adults and children alike. Opportunities that arise from both within the PSHRE curriculum and the wider opportunities such as the School Council, all support our drive to raise awareness of Social, Emotional and Mental well-being among the pupils.
- Our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy as well as our link club provision, lunch-time activities, and after school clubs, all support and have a positive effect on the mental wellbeing of our children.
- Our esafety curriculum ensures children treat each other with care and respect online and understand the importance of thinking carefully about how to communicate online.
- We place a high emphasis on the importance of physical activity and exercise in promoting mental health. Alongside the PE curriculum, we also promote ‘the daily mile’ and Opal play promotes healthy and inclusive playtimes. Adult play leaders are used to encourage team-games and enrich play opportunities at lunch time breaks.
- A variety of sports clubs run throughout the year to promote physical and mental wellbeing.

Parents and Carers

At Thelwall Infants, we aim to provide a mentally healthy environment where parents and carers:

- Are recognized for their significant contribution to children's mental health.
- Are welcomed, included and work in partnership with the school and agencies.
- Are provided with opportunities to ask for help when needed and signposted to appropriate agencies for support (DHT/SENDCo, Family Support Worker, Early Help, Wellbeing page on school website, information shared during mental health week)
- Are clear about their role, expectations and responsibilities in working in partnership with the school (e.g. home-school agreement shared annually, parents' meetings, ping communications, reading diary communications, open door policy to discuss concerns).
- Opinions are sought, valued and responded to (e.g. parent questionnaire, parents' meetings, SLT on duty each morning at the door, sharing of policies).
- Strengths and difficulties are recognised, acknowledged and challenged appropriately.

Staff and Governors

At Thelwall Infants, we aim to provide a mentally healthy environment where staff:

- Have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way.
- Have a range of systems in place to support mental well-being (e.g. performance management, staff meetings, training, occupational health and access to counselling service- [click here](#) or see appendix 1).
- Have recognition of their work-life balance.
- Feel valued through opportunities to be involved and influence decision making processes
- Success is recognised and celebrated.
- Are provided with opportunities for growth and development, both personally and professionally.
- Can access support and guidance at times of emotional need in the short and long term

Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing for staff;

Communication with Staff:

As much as possible we ask that messages to staff are verbally communicated. Messages that need to be shared with all staff (or groups of staff) will be sent via whatsapp (quick messages) or via email (more formal messages and documents)

Communication through email:

We understand that everyone likes to work at different hours but there is no expectation to read or respond to school emails outside of working hours (Monday-Friday 7.30am – 4.30pm).

If you receive an email from a parent, there is no expectation that you reply out of school hours.

Office messages regarding pupils etc.

If it is possible Office staff will deliver messages that come in during the day to class teachers.

Messages in advance will be attached to the pupil in their register, and wherever possible this will be before the register takes place.

Meetings

Meetings, including staff meetings will only take place if there is a clear agenda and a need to hold the meeting. Staff meetings happen once a week (when necessary) and should not last more than 1.5 hours (unless they are a twilight INSET session which could last up to 2.5 hours). If there is a late event during the week, there will be no staff meeting.

Google Calendar

All meetings and events are booked through Google Calendar which all staff have access to. We will try as much as possible not to book meetings during a member of staff's PPA.

Parent consultations

These take place twice each year and are for 2 sessions. They run straight after school until 6pm.

School Fundraising Events

The school relies on the goodwill of all staff to support FTIS in raising funds for school. Having all staff helping at these events develops the sense of a 'whole school team' and ensures the well-being of all through shared responsibility. The major fundraising events of the school year are;

Christmas Fair

Summer Fair

Breakfast with Santa

Report Writing

Teachers are given 1 morning added onto their PPA day each half term for report writing. One INSET day is also used for report writing. The report format is reviewed annually to make sure that they are efficient and cover all the legal requirements.

School Productions

School productions take place during the school day.

Policies and Procedures

Policies are reviewed to reflect best practice and legal requirements but are also reviewed with the question, "How will this impact on wellbeing and workload?"

Supporting Staff

The school will support and discuss options with any staff that raise wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at school or in their personal lives.

Where possible, support will be given by line managers or senior staff. This could be through:

- Giving staff time off to deal with a personal crisis (leave of absence policy)
- Arranging external support, such as counselling or occupational health services
- Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified
- Reassessing their workload and deciding what tasks to prioritise

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.

Our school has a staff insurance policy with Schools Advisory Service. As part of this policy all staff have access to counselling. This is private and school does not need to be informed. It can be booked through SAS wellbeing app (see appendix 1).

Staff are always encouraged to discuss the need for time for family events e.g. Child's sports day, funerals, weddings with the Headteacher. If it is possible to support and accommodate you, we will.

The implementation of this policy for promoting mental health in schools:

- Should underpin all policies and practices currently used in schools
- Will strengthen and promote resilience throughout the school community and empower everyone to face life's challenges.

- Will raise awareness as to how the whole school community can look after their own mental health and that of others.
- Will provide our children with the foundations for lifelong learning.

Appendix 1



SAS
Schools Advisory Service

Support Your Physical & Mental Wellbeing

Confidential wellbeing support complimentary to your SAS insurance at no additional cost to you or your school.



SAS
Health & Wellbeing Services

The Latest SAS Proactive Physical & Mental Health Support

4 Week, NHS Approved Mindfulness Programme

Fitness & Nutrition Guidance for at Home & Gym Environments

NHS Approved Mindfulness Audio App for Staff & Teens

Ask the Experts: Advice from Leadership & Wellbeing Experts



How to Access

Download the Wellbeing App now at schooladvice.co.uk or via the Apple/Android store. Once downloaded click onto the relevant service you require to access more information.

Download our app from...




Medical Operations Enquiries - 01773 814403
Cancer & Nurse Support Service - 01773 814404
Counselling - 01773 814402
Physiotherapy - 01773 814403
24 hour GP helpline - 0845 4031037

Pupil Wellbeing Services
01773 814 095

Pupil Wellbeing Services are also complimentary to your SAS insurance. Contact your policy administrator to enquire accessing support for your pupils.



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For more information please speak to our wellbeing team.

