

Pupil Emotional Health and Well-being policy

“Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes 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.” (The World Health Organisation)

One in ten children and young people in the UK aged between 5 and 16 have a diagnosable mental health problem, and up to one in six young adults aged between 16 and 24 will be experiencing anxiety and depression at any one time. Children and adolescents with learning disabilities are over six times more likely to have a diagnosable psychiatric disorder than their peers who do not have learning disabilities. (BOND 2014).

Purpose and Principles

The emotional health and wellbeing of all members the School is fundamental to our philosophy and aims. We believe that emotional healthy people will be able to:

- Develop the skills to live a fulfilled and happy life
- Develop psychologically, emotionally, creatively, intellectually and spiritually
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships
- Become aware of others and empathise with them
- Develop a sense of right and wrong
- Face challenges, resolve issues and setbacks and learn from them
- Build self-confidence and self-awareness
- Develop inquisitiveness, love of learning and sense of fun.

Policy Scope

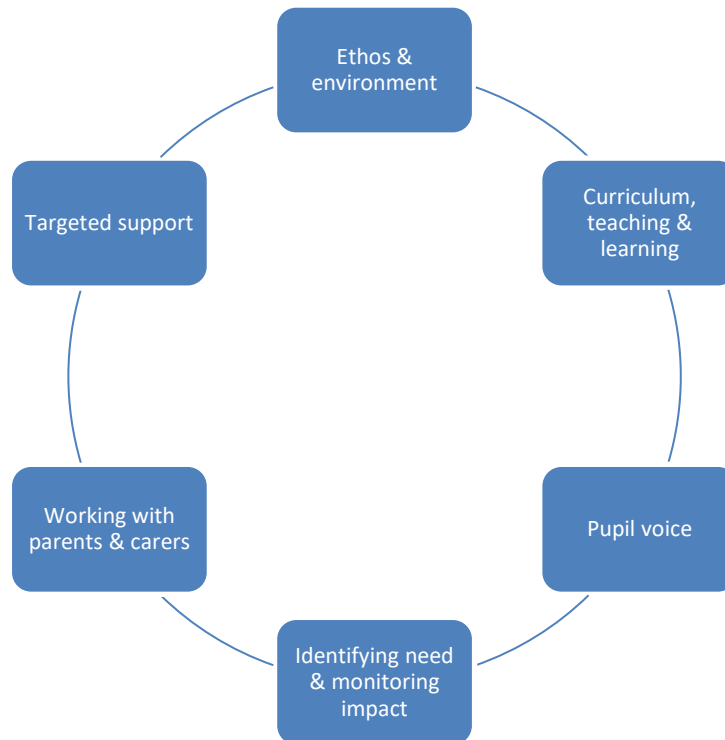
This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers, support staff and governors. It outlines our approach to promoting pupil mental health and wellbeing.

Policy Aims

To promote positive emotional health and well-being to help pupils understand and express their feelings and build their confidence and emotional resilience, thus increasing their capacity to learn, accept change and move forward.

To create an approach based on the principles identified in ‘Promoting Children and Young People’s Emotional Health and Wellbeing’ (2015).

Alfreton Park whole school approach to pupil wellbeing



Alfreton Park School believes that a whole school approach is essential to ensure consistency and effectiveness for all students. Our methods include:

- High quality in class support - All class teachers and TA have a key worker group and therefore all members of staff are responsible for the emotional well-being of pupils
- Additional support is provided by the Senior Leadership Team
- Recognising and responding positively to a child's emotional and/or behavioural needs
- Communicating with parents positively and realistically to create a partnership approach to their child's emotional health and well being
- Liaising with appropriate agencies to enlist advice and/or support.

Ethos and environment

The culture and ethos of the school is positive and proactive in its approach, and includes:

- Valuing the individual and ensuring that every child can learn and develop at their own speed
- Recognising and embracing individual learning styles, interests, strength and needs
- Promoting the "Fundamental British Values" of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance
- Positive behaviour support procedures such as use of Zones of Regulations and positive rewards for behaviour and achievement
- School and class rules which the pupils review annually

- Setting appropriately challenging tasks
- Providing a forum for listening and talking e.g. using circle time or individually with class staff with whom pupils develop trusting relationships
- Encouraging co-operation and collaboration
- Developing social competence
- Encouraging and developing coping strategies and resilience.

Curriculum, teaching and learning

Emotions play a huge role in a person's ability to learn effectively. We believe that positive emotions and thoughts are central to effective learning. We place high value on a child's emotional intelligence and positively seek to develop and enhance the emotional curriculum in a number of ways:

- Mutual Respect
- Teachers and support staff model the behaviour we expect from pupils, parents and carers
- Positive self-esteem is key to our learning and teaching and is developed through: Focus on positive praise and rewards and class rewards systems. Sanctions are rarely used and carefully considered.
- Positive strategies for responding to negative comments
- Trust exists between pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers
- Close links between other professional agencies who support our pupils
- Individualised support through targeted interventions such as Thrive session, nurturing sessions, Art therapeutic sessions, Music Therapy, Attention Autism.
- Integrated curriculum – RSHE/Circle time focus on emotion, self-awareness, relations skills and social awareness
- Creativity, innovation, developmental learning is highly valued.
- Opportunities to have their voice heard through School Council and during their annual reviews
- Achievement assemblies that take place weekly.

A range of extracurricular opportunities exist that enable our young people to extend interests and talents beyond the formal curriculum these include enrichment afternoon, choir and ukulele.

The delivery of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is fundamental to our promotion of emotional health. Through the planned programmes and informal curriculum, opportunities exist to explore issues appropriate to pupils' ages and stages of development. Staff deal sensitively with these issues and differentiate according to the changing needs of the pupils in their care.

The School actively promotes emotional health and well-being through the formal and informal curriculum. Staff use a variety of methods to ensure that emotional health and well-being is being addressed.

Forest Schools

Forest school activities allow children to be physically active, enjoying fresh air and new experiences outdoors. Forest Schools aims to promote the holistic development of pupils, encouraging resilient, confident, independent and creative learners. Forest school activities are flexible, enabling all children to achieve with a degree of challenge, building confidence and self-esteem.

Horticulture

Horticulture in school promotes pupils' social and emotional development. It forms part of the school curriculum, in particular for the post-14 cohort. It especially encourages:

- Physical activity
- Responsibility and independence
- Self-confidence
- Teamwork and communication
- Literacy and numeracy
- Healthy lifestyles
- Environmental awareness.

Horticulture is also used as a positive intervention for individuals or small groups as needed.

Attention Autism is an intervention model designed by Gina Davies, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist. It aims to develop natural and spontaneous communication through the use of visually based and highly motivating activities.

The aims of Attention Autism are:

- To engage attention
- To improve joint attention
- To develop shared enjoyment in group activities
- To increase attention in adult-led activities
- To encourage spontaneous interaction in a natural group setting
- To increase non-verbal and verbal communication through commenting
- To build a wealth and depth of vocabulary
- To have fun!

Pupil voice

The School Council consists of members elected from each class and represents the views of all our pupils. The School Council exists to ensure that pupils have a voice, are involved in decisions about the school that affect them, and feel part of the whole school community.

Regular School Council meetings are held to discuss a range of topics, and they contribute to Governors meetings by reporting back on their findings.

Identifying need and monitoring impact

Changes in patterns of pupil attendance, attainment or behaviour are noted and acted on. School staff, working alongside the Family Support Worker, understand how to identify those who need help or extra support and how to implement, or signpost to, effective interventions or targeted support.

Emotional health and wellbeing interventions are evidence based and have clear outcomes from which the impact and effectiveness of the intervention can be measured and evaluated.

Working with parents and carers

Alfreton Park School sees parental involvement as a vital part of emotional well-health. Opportunities exist to promote partnership with parents through:

- Parents' Evening in the Autumn Term
- Involvement in the Annual Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Review where targets are jointly set for their child's Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
- Parent consultation when ILPs are reviewed
- Home school Diaries shared daily
- "Open Door" Policy where parents can ring to speak to a member of staff with their concerns or arrange a mutually convenient visit Parental workshops e.g. Speakeasy (Sex and Relationship Education Course)
- Meeting with parents and other professional agencies to support them and their child
- Parent Group enabling parent to discuss concerns and school developments.
- Parents are connected with what happens at school through regular newsletters, volunteer help at school, social events organised by school and Friends of Alfreton Park, workshops and Parent Group.

Targeted support

Art as Therapy

The Art Group runs weekly sessions for small groups. It is a safe space in which to promote self-expression, self-esteem, confidence, wellbeing and emotional release. Creativity is used as a tool through which pupils can express their feelings.

Thrive

Pupils who are assessed as needing additional emotional support can access 1:1 Thrive sessions away from the classroom. These take place in the Thrive Room, designed to be a safe space where pupils can explore topics and emotions through tailored activities, or have some quiet time on an as-need basis.

Thrive interventions help pupils to:

- Feel good about themselves
- Know they matter
- Become more resilient and resourceful
- Form trusting, rewarding relationships
- Be creative
- Self-regulate
- Be compassionate and empathetic
- Be thoughtful and self-aware
- Be able to overcome difficulties and setbacks.

Music Therapy meets a variety of sensory needs as it provides multi-sensory stimulation: auditory, visual and tactile. Pupils who access music therapy may also develop skills such as:

- listening
- verbal and non-verbal communication
- use of fine and gross motor movements
- self-regulation.

External agencies

As part of our whole school approach, we also work with other agencies to support our students' emotional health and wellbeing.

- Pediatricians
- CAMHS
- Social Workers
- Changing Lives Service.

References

World Health Organisation (2014) 'Mental Health: strengthening our response'.

BOND (2014) 'Children and Young People with Disabilities – Understanding their Mental Health'.

Links to other policies

Behaviour Policy
Physical Intervention Policy
RSHE Policy
Curriculum and Assessment Policy

