



## **Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust**

**Company Number 10847279**

### **Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

**"Every child matters and no child is ever left behind..."**

**"Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them;  
for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs."**

**Luke 18:15-17**

## **Policy Statement**

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

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do; Egglecliffe CE Primary School where our children are at the heart of all we do. The needs of the children are always paramount in the life and decision making within a school. Through education, we have the gift of inspiring and instilling a 'love of learning' which is a life-long legacy. I strongly believe in providing the children with exciting, creative, inspiring and meaningful learning experiences.

In addition we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupils. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

## **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 academy councillors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

## **Lead Members of Staff**

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

Mrs Robertson - Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer

Mrs Holgate - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead

Miss Robinson – Pastoral/Personal Development Lead

Mrs McCarthy - CPD Lead

Miss Robinson – RSHE / PSHE Lead

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Child Protection Office staff or the head teacher. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Mrs Robertson and Mrs Holgate, Mental Health Lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in Appendix 1.

### **Individual Care Plans**

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

### **Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing**

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 RSHE and PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons is outlined in the DNDLT Programme of Study for RSHE. It will be adapted to the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching 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.

We will teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in Appendix 2.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at

- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

### **Warning Signs**

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with [insert name], our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

### **Possible warning signs include:**

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- 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
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

### **Managing disclosures**

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a pupil chooses to disclose 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, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the mental health lead, who will provide store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. See Appendix 1 for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS and Appendix 3 for the disclosure form. **This can include THRIVE**

### **Confidentiality**

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss with the pupil:

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

We should never share information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. Particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead, this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the DSL must be informed immediately.

### **Working with Parents / Carers**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents / carers we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school is preferable.
- Who should be present? Consider parents / carers, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents / carers to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent / carer time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents / carers can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents / carers often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

### **Working with All Parents / Carers**

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents / carers we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents / carers are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents / carers
- Share ideas about how parents / carers can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents / carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

### **Supporting Peers**

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend help (e.g. signs of relapse)
- Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:
- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

## **Training**

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health.

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 developing situations with one or more pupils.

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

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the wellbeing lead who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in **September 2025**.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis, in line with updated guidance.

## Appendix 1

### **Community mental health services in Teesside for children and young people**

Providing community mental health services for children and young people in Teesside.

Our child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) provides assessment and appropriate treatment or intervention for children and young people until they are 18.

Our services are for people who are experiencing mental health problems, with the aim of positive mental health promotion.

The service is available to anyone with concerns. This includes parents, carers, school staff, health professionals and GPs, as well as children and young people worried about their own mental health.

#### **Contact Teesside CAMHS**

Children and young people worried about their own mental health, an adult worried about a child or young person's mental health or a professional, with consent, can contact our single point of contact phone line.

You can call to talk to a mental health nurse about your concerns.

Phone: [0300 013 2000](tel:03000132000)

The line is open Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm, excluding Bank Holidays.

- Option 1 – CAMHS Training
- Option 2 – Middlesbrough CAMHS and learning disability CAMHS
- Option 3 – Redcar CAMHS and learning disability CAMHS
- Option 4 – Hartlepool CAMHS and learning disability CAMHS
- Option 5 – Stockton CAMHS and learning disability CAMHS
- Option 7 – Community eating disorders team

The team can also be contacted on [tewv.stspoc-camhs@nhs.net](mailto:tewv.stspoc-camhs@nhs.net) (South Tees) or [tewv.ntspoc-camhs@nhs.net](mailto:tewv.ntspoc-camhs@nhs.net) (North Tees)

Further information and mental health resources can be found at:

<https://footstepsteesside.co.uk/services/useful-resources/>



## Appendix 2

### **Children and Young People's Mental Health Services**

Increasing numbers of under 18's have been seeking NHS care for mental health problems, and sometimes are not sure what support is out there to help with their mental wellbeing.

**BYTES Primary Care Network** are proud to provide a mental health service for Children and Young People, addressing mental health needs across Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick, Yarm, Eaglescliffe and Park Lane surgeries with a fantastic mental health practitioner for patients under 18.

This service enables us to offer mental health appointments that are longer than a typical GP appointment, provide emotional and practical support as well as improving access to mental health services and sometimes enabling you to be seen sooner.

*Who is this service for?* **Please note this is not a service for a mental health crisis or emergency.**

#### **What can I expect?**

An initial appointment will be carried out to gain an accurate insight of your needs to provide advice and guidance regarding beneficial support/ assessment/ treatment services (as appropriate). During an assessment, the following points may be discussed (where appropriate):

- Mental health symptoms
- Physical health and wellbeing
- Relationships, thoughts, feelings, and behaviours
- Past experiences, especially of similar problems
- Issues relevant to your or others' safety

#### **What if I am 18 or over?**

Contact the practice to make an appointment with our [Adult Mental Health Practitioner](#).

This is for patients that are aged 18+ and are not currently receiving mental health treatment via a secondary service (e.g., hospitals, psychological wellbeing services, community mental health teams (CMHTs), crisis resolution and home treatment teams).

**Crisis Support** - If in an emergency, always dial 999

CAMHS Crisis Team: 08000 516 171

Childline: 080011111

Samaritans: 116123


The Mix: 08088084994

Papyrus Hopeline UK: 08000684141


Young Minds Crisis Messenger: TEXT YM TO 85258

Patients wishing to book should not already be in touch with community mental health teams (CMHTs) or other providers e.g., CAMHS.

Appendix 3



Eggescliffe C.E.  
Primary School



Butts Lane  
Eggescliffe  
Stockton-on-Tees  
TS16 9BT  
Tel: 01642 787945  
www.eggescliffeprimary.co.uk

**Date:**

**Name of child:**


**Worry box responses:**

**Referrer:**

**Reason:**

**Parental reflection:**

**Parental agreement:**



Durham and Newcastle Learning Trust is a company limited by guarantee (company number 10847279) and exempt charity registered in England and Wales at Cuthbert House, Stonebridge, Durham, DH1 3RY

*All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file (CPOMS). This information should be shared with the mental health lead, who will provide store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.*