



## ***Emotional Health and Wellbeing Statement***

**We know that the emotional health of children is the strongest predictor of happiness in adulthood and we want all of our children to grow up to be happy, confident, independent people who can contribute positively to society. Happier children learn better and generally perform better in school.**

**Conversely, poor mental health undermines educational attainment and life satisfaction. One in eight children and young people aged 5 to 19 have a diagnosable mental health disorder.**

**As importantly, the mental health of teaching staff impacts on children too, and teachers play a very important role in modelling positive emotional health. All staff also deserve to enjoy their job and feel supported.**

**Therefore, the emotional health and wellbeing of all members of Westfield Primary School and Nursery (including staff, children and parents) is fundamental to our philosophy and ethos 'wellbeing for all'.**

### **Aims:**

- To ensure that through the promotion of positive emotional health and wellbeing, children and young people are helped to understand, recognise and express their feelings, build their confidence and emotional resilience and therefore their capacity to learn.
- To increase the awareness, understanding and reduce stigma amongst children, staff and parents/carers of issues involving the emotional health and wellbeing of young people and to provide support at an early stage to any child who is or appears to be suffering from mental health issues.

### **Promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing:**

The culture at Westfield Primary School and Nursery promotes children's positive emotional health and wellbeing and avoids stigma by:

- Having a whole-school approach to promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing within an ethos of high expectations and constant support.
- Openly talking about and discussing positive mental health, in class and assemblies, and promoting the importance of sharing difficult feelings and emotions with people we trust.
- Having a committed staff community that sets a whole school culture of positive emotional health and wellbeing, support and values.
- Having a robust regime of continuing professional development (CPD) for staff.
- Working closely with children, parents and carers.
- Whole school promotion of building individual resilience and tenacity in all areas of the curriculum.

## **Supporting children:**

Emotional health and wellbeing is a very varied and complex area and there are no quick fix solutions. Maintaining every day, regular routines wherever possible, such as, attending school and lessons whilst working towards managing mental health is key. Our school offers a range of services to help our children develop positive mental health and wellbeing and support those experiencing mental health issues. These are:

- Build positive parent partnerships to enable early intervention to accessing mental health and wellbeing support and to allow for consistent strategy implementation within home and school to support the child - through clear communication systems including pink slips, teacher contact, pastoral support so that any changes can be identified and support given to child/parent / carers as required.
- The staff team lead and support positive emotional health and wellbeing across school.
- Teachers and support staff are well placed to spot changes in behaviour that might indicate a problem and offer support and guidance. Many things can cause a change in mental health including traumatic events (e.g. loss or separation, life changes, abuse, domestic violence or bullying).
- Our 'Protective Behaviours' trained staff can work 1:1 with children struggling in class with behaviour and/or emotional concerns.
- Our Learning Mentor can support children struggling with social, emotional, behavioural and mental health problems.
- Behaviour policy which helps create a positive school environment and support children in making the right choices which contributes to their own and others' emotional wellbeing.
- Weekly wellbeing-focussed assemblies in order to raise awareness and understanding of what contributes to positive physical and mental health, and to provide strategies for children to look after themselves and each other.
- The Daily Mile, fitness trail, adventure trail, table-tennis tables and Skip-2-B-Fit to boost children's physical fitness which studies show positively impacts on children's body-image, and physical and mental health.
- Mindfulness curriculum (Paws.b) delivered to Y4, Y5 and Y6, and regular daily practice across the school of mindfulness meditation, led by the class teacher, to help develop children's attention and emotional self-regulation.
- Resilience programmes delivered to Y3 and Y6 to support transitions into new key stages.
- Providing calming and restorative spaces for children to spend time in such as the sensory garden, Wild Wood (where our Forest School takes place), Inspirational Shed and 'calm room'.
- Constructive links with outside support and specialist agencies (e.g. school nurse, DESC, As One Counselling services, CAMHS) to provide interventions for those with additional mental health needs.

## **Promoting emotional health and wellbeing of staff**

The emotional health and wellbeing of staff is of paramount importance to effective running of any school. Not only does it directly impact the wellbeing of children but, as significant adults in children's lives, teaching staff must set a good example and model positive emotional health. More than that, all staff deserve to enjoy their jobs and feel supported so they can enjoy long and enjoyable teaching careers. To this end, we offer a range of interventions and support to help promote the positive wellbeing of Westfield Staff. These include:

- A 'duvet day' every year for staff to take a day's paid leave during term time.
- A report-writing day where class teachers can work from home for a day to write their summer reports.
- Reduced morning staff briefings- taking place only on a Friday, so that staff have more time in class to get ready for the day ahead.
- Mindfulness and yoga sessions offered on-site on a voluntary basis so any staff that want to can have access to classes that help them relax and de-stress.
- An annual staff wellbeing survey to monitor how our staff are doing, and then agreeing actions collectively to improve their working lives.
- A newly refurbished and spacious staffroom with comfy seating, fresh fruit, situated in a quiet location on the school site.
- A supportive SLT who regularly check-in with staff informally and through performance management.

- Realistic and manageable planning and marking policies that do not place too much pressure on staff or increase workload unnecessarily.

**Raising concerns:**

Any member of staff, child, parent/carer concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a child should speak to the class teacher in the first instance. The class teacher will monitor and support them, and refer to the Senior Leadership Team for additional support or for further intervention.