



## Stony Dean School

### Mental Health & Emotional Well-Being Programme

#### **Policy Statement**

*Mental Health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises 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. (World Health Organization)*

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

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental health. 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 ill health.

Please refer to Appendix 1, which shows what we offer as a personalised package for staff and pupil wellbeing.

#### **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.

#### **The Policy Aims to:**

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



## **Lead Members of Staff:**

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

- Mr. Strain - Head teacher
- Mrs Medland and Mrs Howsley – Designated Child Protection Officers
- Mrs Blackwell – ASD Specialist and Joint Mental Health Lead
- Mr. Brameld – L4L Curriculum Leader
- Mr. Brameld and Mrs Howsley – Staff Wellbeing Coordinators
- Mrs Wignall, Mr. Tutu, Mrs Watkins, Mrs Alili and Miss Glazebrook – Speech and Language Team
- Miss Phipps and Mrs McDaid – Behavior Team
- Mrs Kimber – School Nurse
- Mr. Boardman, Mr. Faulder, Mrs Howsley, Mr. Evison and Mr. Allen – Heads of Year
- Miss Hall – Head of Vertical Groups
- Mrs Scott – Head of Foundation

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should complete a 'Green form' and ensure it is passed onto a designated child protection officer. The DSL/DDSL or head teacher will then pass this onto the mental health lead if it is a mental health concern or issue. If the pupil presents 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 CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the mental health lead.

## **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physical and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of SULP (Social use of language) programme and L4L (Learning 4 Life).

We enable pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

Pupils are offered opportunities to self-regulate during various times throughout the school day these include registration (morning and afternoon) and at GOAL times. These strategies include;

- Anxiety Thermometer
- Breathing Squares
- Meta Cognition Strategies
- Use of the running track
- Time out cards
- Dog Walking
- Talk Time
- Outdoor Gym
- Peer on Peer social games
- Mindfulness



- Yoga
- Horticulture

We will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- Where to go?
- Who to ask for help?

## **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 the mental health 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 behavior
- 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 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 to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgmental.

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 on a 'Green' form and handed to a CPO. 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 - at each level of discussion

This information should be shared with the mental health lead who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next step if required.

## **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:

- 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 although an age-appropriate approach is required here. 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.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the mental health lead, as 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 must always be informed but pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours 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 may not be informed depending on the individual case, but the DSL must be informed immediately.

## **Working with Parents**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents 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? (We encourage this be at school)
- Who should be present? (All key workers involved)
- What are the aims of the meeting?



It can be shocking and upsetting for parents 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 time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them further information to read 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 can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

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

## **Working with All Parents**

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 we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website, Twitter and Vimeo.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get help 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
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in L4L 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, who often want to support but do not know how. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis what support is appropriate.

Pupils will develop the awareness of others and their emotional state through Sulp (Social Use of Language Programme)

## **Training**

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognizing and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe. We will host relevant information on our school network for staff to wish to learn more about mental health. We will host relevant information on our website/Twitter and Vimeo account for parents and 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 training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

## **Programme Review**

This programme will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this programme, this should be addressed to our mental health lead.

Date of Creation: September 2020

Date of Review: September 2022









