

REDDIFORD SCHOOL

Wellbeing and Mental Health policy

To be used in conjunction with:-

Safeguarding and Child Protection

SEND policy

Behaviour policy

PSHE

SMSC

RSHE policy

Character Education (DfE Framework Guidance

E-Safety policy

Introduction

At Reddiford School, we are dedicated to the wellbeing of our entire school community. We adopt a whole-school approach to fostering positive mental health, aiming to help our children build resilience, develop happiness, and achieve success, while proactively preventing mental health challenges from arising.

We embrace the World Health Organisation's (WHO) definition of mental health and wellbeing:

"A state of wellbeing 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 his or her community."

Mental health is not merely the absence of mental health problems. At Reddiford, we aspire for all children to:

- Feel confident in themselves.
- Express a range of emotions appropriately and build positive relationships.
- Cope effectively with everyday stresses.
- Manage times of change or adversity.
- Engage in learning and reach their full potential.

We aim to achieve these goals through a caring, supportive ethos that values respect, kindness, and inclusivity. Recognising that everyone faces life's challenges, we are committed to providing additional emotional support whenever needed. Promoting and supporting good mental health is a shared responsibility, and every member of our school community plays a vital role in this endeavour.

Our approach is underpinned by five key principles known to enhance mental health and wellbeing:

- A sense of safety.
- A sense of calm.
- A sense of control.
- A sense of belonging and access to support.
- The promotion of hope.

Aims

The Department for Education (DfE) states: "In order to help their children succeed, schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy." At Reddiford, we aim to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our entire school community.
- Recognize the critical role mental health plays in overall wellbeing and its influence on learning and achievement.

- Equip students with the skills to manage stress, adapt to change, and seek support when needed.
- Foster understanding of mental health, its impact, and strategies to maintain wellbeing.

Our specific aims are to:

- Ensure every child feels valued, safe, and a sense of belonging.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to openly communicate with trusted adults.
- Promote a culture where mental health is actively valued and supported.
- Recognise and support the mental health and wellbeing of staff.
- Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our whole-school approach incorporates:

- A supportive ethos: Encouraging care, respect, and inclusivity.
- Healthy relationships: Supporting children in forming and maintaining positive connections.
- Emotional literacy: Teaching emotional skills to help children understand and manage their feelings.
- Resilience and self-esteem: Helping children bounce back from setbacks and appreciate their value in the world.
- Early identification and intervention: Planning support for children experiencing mental health challenges, in collaboration with parents, carers, and specialist services.
- Staff wellbeing: Supporting staff with resources, training, and opportunities for self-care.
- A culture of openness: Normalising conversations about mental health.

We actively promote mental health and wellbeing through:

- Consistent school values that encourage a sense of identity and belonging.
- Celebrating achievements both academic and non-academic.
- Pupil voice: Providing opportunities for children to participate in decision-making.
- Reflective opportunities: Encouraging self-awareness and growth.
- A robust wellbeing curriculum: Incorporating in lessons a focus on resilience, self-esteem, reflection, and problem-solving.
- Broader experiences: Offering activities such as music, sports, cultural events, and mindfulness practices that foster emotional fulfilment and character building.

Identifying Concerns About Mental Health and Wellbeing

Staff should be vigilant and aware of signs that a pupil's mental health may be deteriorating. Indicators may include:

- Significant changes in mood or energy levels.
- Altered eating or sleeping patterns.
- Declining academic performance or engagement.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Social withdrawal or isolation.
- Poor attendance or punctuality.
- Expressions of hopelessness, anxiety, or low self-worth.
- Unexplained weight loss or gain.
- Secretive behaviours or changes in attire (e.g., covering parts of the body).
- Avoidance of physical activities, such as PE.
- Unexplained physical injuries.

Responding to Disclosures and Ensuring Confidentiality

When a pupil discloses a concern about their mental health:

- Do not promise confidentiality: Be transparent about the need to share the information to provide support.
- Explain the process: Reassure the pupil that the disclosure will only be shared with those who need to know to ensure appropriate help.
- Follow safeguarding procedures: Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL immediately.

It is essential to involve parents or guardians unless there is a child protection concern. This ensures a collaborative approach to supporting the child.

Wellbeing Champions

Each department at Reddiford has a Wellbeing Champion who:

- Promotes mental health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Coordinates whole-school activities, such as Mental Health Awareness Week and Odd Socks Day.
- Works with the Pastoral Lead to support staff and pupils.
- Liaises with external mental health services as needed.
- Wellbeing Champions meet termly to share ideas, align strategies, and ensure a consistent approach across departments.

School Activities to Promote Mental Health and Wellbeing

Reddiford School integrates a variety of activities to nurture mental health and wellbeing, including:

- PSHE lessons focused on emotional literacy and resilience.
- Wellbeing and mindfulness clubs.
- Yoga sessions to promote relaxation.
- Assemblies addressing mental health topics.
- Worry boxes for anonymous pupil concerns.
- Pupil voice initiatives and School Council activities.
- Gardening clubs for mindfulness and connection with nature.
- Annual wellbeing surveys for pupils and staff.
- Extracurricular activities such as music, sports, and teamwork opportunities.

Summary

At Reddiford School, we firmly believe that a positive, inclusive, and supportive environment is essential for nurturing mental health and wellbeing. Through a holistic approach that integrates awareness, education, and proactive support, we aim to create a thriving school community where every individual can flourish.