



# **MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING PROCEDURES**



**THORPE**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL



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 own community.’  
(World Health Organisation)

At Thorpe, we aim to promote positive mental health for our whole school community, using whole school approaches alongside targeted and specific approaches for the more vulnerable. We believe that children should be equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their life. They should be Aspirational, Inquisitive and Mindful, where mental health and wellbeing should not be a barrier. We aim to create a loving and nurturing environment, removing any negative stigma around mental health and wellbeing. We strive to harbour a positive mental attitude, resulting in happy, confident, resilient individuals from their early years all the way through life.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for our whole school community affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

## **Aims**

At Thorpe, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing of every member of our school community and recognise how important mental health and wellbeing is to our lives, as is our physical health. We recognise that children’s mental health and overall wellbeing can affect their learning and achievement: We aim to:

- Promote positive mental wellbeing in all pupils and staff.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues and the impacts this may have on daily life.

- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental health.
- Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues.
- Provide information for pupils and families about how to promote positive mental health.
- Reduce the stigma around mental health and wellbeing.
- Create a culture of understanding surrounding mental health to give the whole school community a safe and supporting environment in which to speak openly about any mental health issues.

### **Lead members of staff**

Mrs Fletcher (Deputy Designated safeguarding lead & Mental Health First Aider)

Mrs Brandon (Mental Health First Aider)

Mrs Armstrong (SENDCo)

Mr Mennell (Headteacher)

### **Putting this into practice**

Our whole school approach ensures that effective practise and provision is in place to promote and support emotional wellbeing and mental health in both staff and pupils. This is achieved by:

- Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and wellbeing, which is communicated clearly to the whole school community.
- Developing an open culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health awareness.
- Support and training staff to develop their skills and own resilience. Teaching and supporting pupils to be resilient learners who dare to dream big.
- Encompassing children with social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
- Helping children to develop strong relationships, support each other and to not be afraid to seek help when they need it.

- Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning to support their needs; seeking specialist service support where necessary.
- Effectively working with parents/carers and other outside agencies.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Regular time to talk sessions in each class.
- Celebrating children's academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promoting a culture of being aspirational.
- Promoting regular pupil voice across all areas of the curriculum, including specific reference to mental health and wellbeing.
- A dedicated area to provide a calm space for pupils and staff.
- Access to appropriate support – either in school or with support from outside agencies.

## **Curriculum**

Positive wellbeing is promoted through the curriculum and all school activities that we offer. Through a carefully planned approach to PSHE, our pupils are helped to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives; and to become resilient, informed and responsible citizens. In addition, whole school approaches such as assemblies, are used to further develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Assemblies are held by various staff members, encompassing different areas of the curriculum. Some examples include: our reading lead will tackle books centred around wellbeing, our PE lead highlights the links between physical activity and mental wellbeing, our ICT lead focuses on the impact that the internet and technology can have on our wellbeing. By involving the whole school community, pupils begin to understand that mental health and wellbeing is something that affects us all.

## Risk and Protective factors associated with mental health

As children grow and reach their developmental competencies, there are contextual variables that promote or hinder the process. These are frequently referred to as protective and risk factors. The presence or absence and various combinations of protective and risk factors contribute to the mental health of the individual. By identifying these protective and risk factors, prevention and intervention strategies may be adopted. A protective factor can be defined as “a characteristic at the biological, psychological, family, or community (including peers and culture) level that is associated with a lower likelihood of problem outcomes or that reduces the negative impact of a risk factor on problem outcomes.” Conversely, a risk factor can be defined as “a characteristic at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precedes and is associated with a higher likelihood of problem outcomes.”

### RISK FACTORS

- ✗ Genetic influences
- ✗ Low IQ and learning disabilities
- ✗ Specific development delay
- ✗ Communication difficulties
- ✗ Difficult temperament
- ✗ Physical illness
- ✗ Academic failure
- ✗ Low self-esteem

- ✗ Family disharmony, or break up
- ✗ Inconsistent discipline style
- ✗ Parent/s with mental illness or substance abuse
- ✗ Physical, sexual, neglect or emotional abuse
- ✗ Parental criminality or alcoholism
- ✗ Death and loss

- ✗ Bullying
- ✗ Discrimination
- ✗ Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships
- ✗ Deviant peer influences
- ✗ Peer pressure
- ✗ Poor pupil to teacher relationships

- ✗ Socio-economic disadvantage
- ✗ Homelessness
- ✗ Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events
- ✗ Discrimination
- ✗ Other significant life events
- ✗ Lack of access to support services



Child



Family



School



Community

- ✓ Secure attachment experience
- ✓ Good communication skills
- ✓ Having a belief in control
- ✓ A positive attitude
- ✓ Experiences of success and achievement
- ✓ Capacity to reflect

- ✓ Family harmony and stability
- ✓ Supportive parenting
- ✓ Strong family values
- ✓ Affection
- ✓ Clear, consistent discipline
- ✓ Support for education

- ✓ Positive school climate that enhances belonging and connectedness
- ✓ Clear policies on behaviour and bullying
- ✓ 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems
- ✓ A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health

- ✓ Wider supportive network
- ✓ Good housing
- ✓ High standard of living
- ✓ Opportunities for valued social roles
- ✓ Range of sport/leisure activities

### PROTECTIVE FACTORS

## Early Intervention

To identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school's role in supporting and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

**Prevention:** creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping children to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this through our ethos and other school initiatives and activities.

**Identification:** recognising emerging issues as early and as accurately as possible.

**Early support:** helping children to access evidence based early support and interventions.

**Access to specialist support:** working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

Graduated response School will respond to support in mental health using a graduated response:

**Stage 1:** Universal support This is what school offers all children to promote positive mental health. Support is embedded in all classroom and is part of the whole school approach. For example, Wellbeing Ambassadors, Jar of Achievements, Tree of Dreams, Time to Talk sessions.

**Stage 2:** Selected support This is where we put specific interventions into place. These are delivered in school by school staff, sometimes in consultation with other agencies. For example, LEGO therapy, social story groups, lunch club.

**Stage 3:** Targeted support This is where specific interventions are delivered in school or externally by external agencies. School remain involved. For example, CAMHS.

**Children may move around within the different stages depending on their needs.**



## **Working in Partnership with Parents**

At Thorpe, we understand and value the need to work closely with parents to ensure that the school's health initiatives meet the needs of our pupils. We value the important contribution made by parents and appreciate the needs to proactively engage parents and families in the health of the children. We seek to establish and maintain strong partnerships with families, outside agencies and wider community to promote consistent support for children's health and wellbeing. To support parents, we:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website.
- Aspects of some newsletters for parents and families focus on mental health and wellbeing.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our Mental Health and Wellbeing policy easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.
- Have an 'open door policy' with all members of staff.
- Hold Early Help Coffee Mornings
- Ensure a Parent Forum is held to discuss mental health and wellbeing

## **Working with Other Agencies and Partners**

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

Educational Psychology services

Behaviour Outreach support services

Paediatricians

CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)