

# TKAT

## Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

### The Mill Primary Academy

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#### 1. 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 The Mill Primary Academy we strive to ensure the highest level of support for the mental health of all members of the school - students; staff - both teaching and non-teaching, on roll and peripatetic; governors and parents/carers. We recognise that everyone has differing levels of need with regards to their mental health and that this can be a fluctuating picture. We acknowledge that we are all responsible for ensuring the well-being of all stakeholders and that everyone in the school has a role to play in promoting good practice with regards to mental health.

#### 2. Policy Scope

This policy is a guide for all staff to read and share in order to promote the mental health and well-being of all stakeholders and is to be read in conjunction with our other relevant policies.

This policy is based on the guidance and vision outlined in the Government document December 2017

## Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper

### 3. Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to make explicit and to share our commitment to promoting the mental health of our stakeholders, and to ensure the best possible provision is in place. We do this by:

Ensuring children

- have the vocabulary to talk about their feelings
- have a "voice" as an individual to express their concerns and opinions
- have a "voice" as a collective to express their opinions on school matters
- are represented and valued within the school community for their ethnicity, language, sexuality and religious denomination.
- are clear who they can talk to, and are confident doing so
- are encouraged and helped to build friendships with other children
- are encouraged to be confident interacting with all staff in the school
- are taught resilience
- have increasing confidence through their learning and achievements
- are celebrated for their achievements

Ensuring staff

- are clear as to who they can confide in about their own concerns for their well-being
- have a manageable workload
- feel supported and appreciated as a member of a team
- feel valued and included as members of the school community
- have a clear understanding of how to recognise signs of poor mental health in both colleagues and in children, and understand the pathways for recording and reporting these concerns
- have opportunities for professional development
- are supported by colleagues when they require help with their own mental health and/or wellbeing.
- Have professional supervision as required.

### 4. Key Staff Members

All staff members have the responsibility of promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing. However certain staff members have a specific role in the process of identifying, flagging up and aiding children with Mental Health concerns.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs):

Mrs Sophie Gosden (Head Teacher);

Ms Helen Plant (Deputy Head Teacher );

Mrs Jane Crockford (also Safeguarding and Family Liaison Officer SAFLO);  
Ms Julie Whittington (also Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator SENDCo  
and Designated Mental Health Lead)

Other key staff:

ELSA TA: Mrs Lakeman (also nominated as Mental Health First Aider)

Class Teacher: Miss Perkins (nominated as Mental Health First Aider)

Play Therapist: Ms Philomena Lydon

Art teacher: Janey Moffatt

## **5. Providing a Curriculum that promotes Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The curriculum at The Mill focuses on the core principles of **Identity, Community, and Opportunity**. The values taught and promoted through these strands of work help the students reflect on and make sense of, their talents, skills and opportunities. This in turn boosts self-esteem and promotes positivity.

Children's feelings of self-worth and community spirit are encouraged by the assemblies which take place weekly. During periods of Covid-related lockdown these happen virtually and can be accessed from home. They explore themes that promote well-being such as 'courage' or "resilience" and celebrate the achievements of individuals in the school.

Our school curriculum has PSHE woven throughout many subject areas.

Our PE curriculum focuses on 6 different core units which aim to build skills in our physical education values: social, creative, cognitive, personal, physical and health and fitness.

The school runs a Smart School Council which allows all pupils to express their opinion, engage in projects of their design and vote for the clubs available during and after school.

We have strong links to local clubs in our community allowing children to develop both physical activity and personal wellbeing.

Room 13 offers a safe space for students to explore and express their feelings whilst engaging in Art . The peripatetic Art teacher Janey Moffatt is also an experienced Community Artist and has experience working for a number of Mental Health Hubs leading Arts and Wellbeing sessions. She has had training in a number of aspects of safeguarding such as Suicide Prevention, Mental Health, Peer Support and Active Listening Skills.

Forest Schools promotes mental health allowing students to explore and engage with the outside environment, providing a balance to the academic work conducted indoors.

## **6. Training for all staff**

As a body of staff, we are fully committed to increasing our understanding of children's mental health needs. This may involve staff undertaking a course of study, either as a group during staff training, or individually online, or through webinars. The Designated Mental Health Lead is responsible for flagging up training opportunities for all staff.

## **7. Provision for children within the school.**

At the Mill we are committed to providing the support that children need for their mental health and wellbeing.

We have a Designated Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead (Ms Julie Whittington) who maintains links with the West Sussex and NHS Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) service.

The school is part of a launch initiative with the above service (MHST), one of 4 schools in Crawley, and therefore committed to fully engaging with providing the best possible mental health opportunities within the school.

We have 2 newly appointed Mental Health First Aiders (Mrs Lakeman and Ms Perkins) who will be trained by the MHST in Spring 2021.

We have an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) who is trained and supervised by the West Sussex Educational Psychology Service. Approx 30% of her FT post is devoted to providing emotional support across the school. Referrals are made through the SAFLO (for children experiencing trauma at home), through the SENDCo (for children who have difficulties associated with SEND) or who are flagged up by teachers.

We engage a Play Therapist for 1 day pw during the year who provides therapy in 1 hr blocks, for up to 5 children pw. The number of sessions per child ranges from 10 (minimum) to 30 (maximum) in any one year according to need. Referrals are made in the main by the SAFLO and SENDCo in conjunction and will often be children who are Looked After (CLA) , Child Protection or who are at risk of exclusion.

The peripatetic art teacher communicates concerns expressed by children during the Room 13 art sessions, to key members of staff. Room 13 is used but a small number of children at any one time and therefore provides a confidential space to work in. Teachers refer students to Room 13.

When required we engage other outside agencies to work within the school such as Fegans for trauma counselling, or YourSpace Therapies for children with SEMH needs.

Each classroom has a Worry Monster to encourage the children to express their worries. Teachers speak to children about their worries and pass this on to the SAFLO or SENDCo , where appropriate. The ELSA TA visits each class in the Autumn term to introduce the Worry Monster.

## **8. Support within the community**

### **Referrals for Early Help**

The SAFLO refers families for support from Family Support Workers. Families are monitored as to the level of need and if necessary the category of Early Help may escalate to involve Social Care involvement. The SAFLO updates and shares with the other DSLs a weekly record of the categories of need for all families receiving support.

### **Referrals to Social Care**

DSLs consult with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for advice when necessary before referring to Social Care. The level of need is ascertained by referring to *“The West Sussex Continuum of Need Threshold Guidance.”*

### **Referrals to Specialist Services**

The SENDCo makes referrals as needed to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) or the Child Development Centre (CDC) for West Sussex. Referrals are made to the West Sussex and NHS Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) service for children with mild to moderate mental health needs.

### **Other referrals**

Referrals are made to other outside agencies such as:

- Young Carers, for children with a family member with a significant disability
- JigSaw for bereavement support
- School Nursing Service
- Occupational Therapy Service
- Visual Impairment Service
- Hearing Impairment Service
- Educational Psychology Service
- West Sussex Social Communication Support Service
- West Sussex Educational Psychology Service
- Private Educational Psychologist
- Speech and Language Service

## **9. Support offered to families during periods of lockdown**

During periods when the school is closed for the majority of children, the school continues to work with families supported by Children’s Services; Children who are Young Carers; or families on the edge of receiving support from Social Care. Lockdown support continues via one or more of the following ways -

- Multi-agency conference calls, held by telephone with the SAFLO

- Children of vulnerable families are encouraged to attend as are children with an EHCP or significant SEND.
- Weekly or in some cases daily calls are made by the SAFLO to the families of non-attending to check on the mental health and wellbeing of the family and of the child or children.
- Details of contact or of lack of contact , are passed on to the Social Worker involved with the family.

Support for all children in the school is as follows -

- Teachers at the Mill call all children in their class approx. once every 2 weeks, to check that they are able to access learning online and this is verified by the child's log-in history.
- Teachers monitor the uptake of online learning and provide a point of contact for families struggling to log on or access work online.
- The SENDCo calls parents of children with EHCPs to encourage them to attend and to make contact with those that choose not to attend.
- The SENDCo offers online virtual meetings with parents who wish to discuss their child's wellbeing.
- The Deputy HT monitors families who do not have access to IT facilities for online learning and coordinates loans of chrome books.
- The school has a robust programme of online learning for each year group.
- Assemblies take place online as do whole class meetings with the class teacher

Reference should be made to:

***Safeguarding and Child Protection , Arrangements during School Closure due to COVID-19 reviewed January 2021***

## **10. Identifying needs and warning signs**

All of our staff are trained in how to recognise warning signs of the main categories of abuse as outlined in "***Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, September 2020***"

Staff are trained to look out for, and to report, signs of common mental health problems. Such signs might include:

- Changes in eating habits
- Ongoing tiredness - yawning, falling asleep or looking exhausted (e.g dark rings under the eyes)
- Increased isolation from friends or social groups
- Relationship difficulties
- Lack of enthusiasm for previously loved activities
- Self-harm or talking/joking about self-harming and-or suicide to peers or to adults
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Signs of feelings of low self-worth such as disparaging comments about self, unwillingness to "have a go"

- Secretive behaviour
- Negative behaviour (e.g disruption), or negative self-image
- Absenteesim
- Self-induced vomiting
- Feeling unwell frequently, e.g complaints of tummy aches for no apparent medical reason
- Changes in educational attainment - e.g unexpected poor performance or participation over a period of time

Although these signs may not be related directly to mental health , and may arise for a variety of other reasons, they must be taken seriously and communicated with the DSLs in order to be investigated.

### **11. Methods of communication of, and recording of , concerns**

At The Mill all staff use a “Blue form” to record concerns and this is passed directly to a DSL who then investigates further. Contact may be made with the family or further referrals made as necessary. The concern, actions and the outcome are logged onto CPOMS. Disclosures are recorded confidentially in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

### **12. Whole School Approach - working with parents, working with agencies**

It is our aim to support and work alongside parent and carers as much as possible. Referrals are made with the parent/carer’s consent and input, as appropriate, unless precluded for Safeguarding reasons. Parents/carers are updated as to the progress of referrals.

Input from the Play Therapist, the ELSA TA or with outside agencies such as Fegans, Jigsaw or YourSpace Therapies require contact and consent from the parent/carer, generally through either a face to face meeting, online meeting or phone call. Feedback after a fixed number of sessions is given directly by the Therapist.

Reports written by CAMHS or the CDC Centre are in general sent directly to the parent/carer who is invited to share this with the SENDCo. Parents/carers can choose not to share the result of the referral with the SENDco if they wish.

As well as regular contact with parents via phone or face to face parent meetings the school uses online Apps such as Tapestry and Marvellous me to ensure parents/carers are able to access information as to their child’s progress and achievements in school.

The website for The Mill provides information regarding the Curriculum, provision for children with SEND and policies relevant to safeguarding.

This policy is available online and a paper copy can be mailed, emailed or given in person as requested.

### **13. Support for Staff**

Supervision is provided for the SAFLO from an outside agency on a regular basis.

Staff new to the school are supported through an induction programme which highlights the ways the school is set up to encourage a healthy work-life balance. This also clarifies lines of communication should an employee need to discuss a concern. All new staff have a line manager and informal 'buddy'. As from Spring 2020 the school has 2 Mental Health First Aiders who are in place to support and signpost on, staff as well as children.

All TKAT staff have access to a free, 24hour confidential telephone counselling service.

### **14. A Wellbeing Approach for staff**

The school holds half termly open-to-all-staff wellbeing meetings, where suggestions can be made

The school is proactive in seeking ways to reduce workload and staff are asked to complete workload surveys periodically.

### **15. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every year. This is so that it remains up to date, useful, and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.