



Talavera Junior School
Mental Health Policy

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Signed: N.HEATON (Policy Owner)

Print Name: Naomi Heaton

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Signed: _____ (Governor Approval)

Print Name: _____

Approval Date: _____



Talavera Junior School
Mental Health Policy

POLICY CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Date	Status	Policy Owner	Governor Approval	Comment
1.0	November 20		LHB		Policy implemented
2.0	June 22		LHB		Updated to reflect current concerns and changes to Healthy Relationships Week
3.0	September 2023		NH		Mental Health Champions
4.0	June 2024		NH		Mental Health First Aiders
4.1	January 25		NH		

Talavera Junior School
Mental Health Policy

At Talavera Junior School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. At our school, we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and, at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

At our school, we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count.
- encourage children to be confident and to be themselves
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through by promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging. We promote a strong pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making, such as through our School Council. As well as celebrating academic achievements, we also ensure that non-academic achievements are valued too, within the scope of each child's journey through our school. We provide opportunities to develop a child's sense of worth through a wide range of responsibilities which children can take on. For those pupils who may find making progress in any area of their development, we provide opportunities to reflect. All children have access to appropriate support that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through a whole school approach, which includes support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement. In addition, we have specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

SEND policy

PSHE and SMSC

Behaviour

Anti-Bullying

Child Protection

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. We will ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include

- Philosophy-style discussions
- Managing feelings resources e.g., 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters'
- Emotional support literacy assistant-run programmes, including TALA and ELSA
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Referral to the MHST (Mental Health School Team)
- Wellbeing Champions training for the whole school.

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.

- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health 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.

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 support through pupil referral units
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists
- MHSTs

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe. 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 to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Current issues:

Nationally, there has been a rise in mental health concerns for all young people. These include depression, anxiety disorders, disordered eating and social difficulties.

As a result, we will be:

- adapting our PSHE and Healthy Relationships curricula in order to better reflect the needs of the school
- increasing the information regarding mental health and online safety support that we send to parents/ carers
- increased training for staff to ensure everyone feels able to provide support for pupils

Staff support:

Termly staff meetings are held to ascertain the concerns that staff currently have. These are then actioned by the strategic team who ensure that they are completed. This is feedback to staff at the following termly staff meetings. In this way, the team provides an ever-adapting and responsive culture for staff wellbeing.

Staff are also supported by the Mental Health First Aiders and the Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL), who receives regular training and is given adequate time to respond to staff needs. This process is confidential, and is primarily focused on signposting staff to more support where needed.

A Mental Wellbeing team which consists of a member of SLT, LSA and HR so there is a variety of approachable colleagues available to talk to. They meet on a termly basis to discuss any common issues and what we can do to help staff members. They will also meet with the Mental Wellbeing champions from years 4 & 5 once they are trained to get the view of the children also.

Staff are provided with the opportunity to take additional training to support their own mental health, and the health of their colleagues. Where training is available, this is communicated to them by the strategic team.

The level of workload is monitored by all of SLT and the culture of the school is to allow all staff to give voice to their concerns. The strategic team will always listen proactively to concerns and respond. The strategic team understand that staff may not feel able to talk to them and therefore will be alert to signs of mental health concerns and burnout.