



Tower Hill Primary School **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

Introduction:

“Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”
(WHO, 2022)

Our Main Aims:

At Tower Hill, we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing is just as important to our physical health. At Tower Hill we endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress. We aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Teaching about mental health:

At Tower Hill we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a pro-active way to avoid problems arising. We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands
- Following the Jigsaw scheme of work in PSHE
- Focusing on the NHS 5 steps to wellbeing
- Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it, for example using the friendship stop
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the World
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks
- Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers
- Supporting staff to develop their own resilience

- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision making through our School Council
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievement
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect through daily mindful sessions and Jigsaw lessons
- Enabling access to appropriate support

Small group/1:1 activities.

- Access to the sensory room focus on mental health, anxiety, resilience and wellbeing.
- ELSA sessions
- Access to a counsellor
- Play therapy
- Mental Health Support Team
- Therapeutic Art Sessions
- Therapy Dog - Archer

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility:

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote this in and out of their classrooms.

Supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school. At Tower Hill we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance. SLT operate an 'open door' approach for staff who wish to talk about any issues that may be affecting their mental health and wellbeing. Staff also have access to external support systems, and the school counsellor.

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and to understand the risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and staff have the skills to identify warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get the support they need.

Key staff supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing at Tower Hill Primary School:

SEND/CO: Christine Cartlidge

ELSA: Lee Bavastock

Named Mental Health Lead - Laura Ovenden

Deputy Mental Health Lead - Emma Ramsier

Our Mental Health Lead;

- Leads and works with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- Provides advice and support to staff

Our Deputy Head Lead:

- Leads on PSHE teaching

Our SENDCO:

- Is the first point of contact and will advise on relevant available services. Many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals.

Early identification:

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible. We do this in different ways including:

- Teaching resources including the use of SDQ (Social difficulty questionnaire)
- Giving advice on how staff can support children and young person's mental health.
- Identifying changes in patterns which may indicate warning signs that a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

Teaching and support staff are responsible for reporting concerns about individual children to designated adults within the school. Changes in the below need to be monitored:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstance
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

Possible warning signs include;

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking 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

Assessment, interventions and support:

All concerns are reported to the SENDCO within school and needs are assessed with SLT, class teachers and the SENDCO to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

Working with parents and carers.

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher or SENDCO if they have mental health concerns.

To support parents and carers we will be:

- Organising support packs on mental health, anxiety and resilience
- Provide information online via the Tower Hill website on mental health issues and local wellbeing support
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE

Working with specialist services.

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Your child may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- CAMHS
- Healthy Young Minds
- School Nursing Service
- Children's Services
- Therapists
- Family support workers
- Educational psychology services
- Counselling services
- Mental Health Support Team

This policy also operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Teaching for Learning Policy
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Confidentiality Policy

Review and Evaluation of Policy

This policy will be reviewed the Pastoral Care Manager with all stakeholders on a *three year basis or sooner dependent on statutory guidance*

Appendix 1

Below, is sign-posted information and guidance about the issues most commonly seen in school-aged children. The links will take you through to the most relevant page of the listed website. Support on all of these issues can be accessed via:

- Young Minds (www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Mind (www.mind.org.uk and (for e-learning opportunities)
- Minded (www.minded.org.uk)

Self-harm:

Self-harm describes any behaviour where a young person causes harm to themselves in order to cope with thoughts, feelings or experiences they are not able to manage in any other way. It most frequently takes the form of cutting, burning or non-lethal overdoses in adolescents, while younger children and young people with special needs are more likely to pick or scratch at wounds, pull out their hair or bang or bruise themselves.

Online support:

- SelfHarm.co.uk: www.selfharm.co.uk
- National Self-Harm Network: www.nshn.co.uk

Depression:

Ups and downs are a normal part of life for all of us, but for someone who is suffering from depression these ups and downs may be more extreme. Feelings of failure, hopelessness, numbness or sadness may invade their day-to-day life over an extended period of weeks or months, and have a significant impact on their behaviour and ability and motivation to engage in day-to-day activities.

Online support:

Depression Alliance: www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression

Anxiety, panic attacks and phobias:

Anxiety can take many forms in children and young people, and it is something that each of us experiences at low levels as part of normal life. When thoughts of anxiety, fear or panic are repeatedly present over several weeks or months and/or they are beginning to impact on a young person's ability to access or enjoy day-to-day life, intervention is needed.

Online support:

Anxiety UK: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Obsessions and compulsions:

Obsessions describe intrusive thoughts or feelings that enter our minds which are disturbing or upsetting; compulsions are the behaviours we carry out in order to manage those thoughts or feelings. For example, a young person may be constantly worried that their house will burn down if they don't turn off all switches before leaving the house. They may respond to these thoughts by

repeatedly checking switches, perhaps returning home several times to do so. Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can take many forms - it is not just about cleaning and checking.

Online support: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/mental-health-conditions/ocd/>

OCD UK: www.ocduk.org/ocd

Suicidal feelings:

Young people may experience complicated thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their own lives. Some young people never act on these feelings though they may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide apparently out of the blue.

Online support:

-Prevention of young suicide UK - PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

Eating problems:

Food, weight and shape may be used as a way of coping with, or communicating about, difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviours that a young person experiences day to day. Some young people develop eating disorders such as anorexia (where food intake is restricted), binge eating disorder and bulimia nervosa (a cycle of bingeing and purging). Other young people, particularly those of primary or preschool age, may develop problematic behaviours around food including refusing to eat in certain situations or with certain people. This can be a way of communicating messages the child does not have the words to convey.

Online support:

-Beat - the eating disorders charity:

<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/get-information-and-support/get-help-for-myself/i-need-support-now/helplines/>