



REIGATE ST MARY'S  
PREPARATORY AND CHOIR SCHOOL

## **Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy (including EYFS)**

**Policy Author:**

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**Date Reviewed by Author:**

01 January 2023

**Next Review Date:**

01 January 2024

## **Policy Statement**

At Reigate St Mary's 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 contribution is valued.

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 responsibility and that we all have a role to play.

At RSM we:

- Help children to understand their emotions and feelings
- 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 'dare to be different'
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks
- Identify children who have mental health challenges and plan support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents, and carers
- Support and train staff to develop their skills and their own resilience
- Develop an open culture where it's common 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
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Access to appropriate support that meets individual needs
- Mental health discussions and PSHE for all year groups
- Children's mental health week and access to information around the school

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties
- Nurture groups to focus on mental health, resilience, and wellbeing

## **Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, staff with a specific remit include:

- Andrea Gower – Assistant Head (Pastoral), Mental Health Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Sarah Page – PSHE Co-ordinator and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Sam Selkirk – Head of Lower School, Mental Health Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Lisa Masarati - SENCO
- Sue Newland – Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

- Katie Goldsworthy - Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)
- Jo Marshall - Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

These staff:

- Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Work with the PSHE Co-ordinator with regards the teaching about mental health
- Provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates
- Liaise with mental health services and make individual referrals to them

### **Teaching about mental health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but we will also use guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

### **Targeted support**

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

- School Counsellor
- Circle time approaches
- Mental Health First Aiders
- PSHE resources
- Managing feelings and emotions resources e.g. bubbles, worry monsters and zones of regulation
- Wellbeing groups including ELSA, Learning Space
- Therapy Dog – Luna Pets
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques
- Time spent outdoors in our extensive grounds – Forest School, Living Science Area, Digging Area and the Eden area for quiet time
- Designated Wellbeing room designed specifically for relaxation

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- Zones of regulation boards in classrooms

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils, and parents are aware of what support is available within the school and how to access further support.

### **Early Identification and Warning Signs**

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including;

- Attendance
- Punctuality

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

Indicators are logged on our record of initial concern or if relevant, staff would log the issues on My Concern (our safeguarding database).

Staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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 DSL or DDSL's as appropriate.

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

All concerns are reported to the designated staff within the school and needs are assessed through a holistic approach involving form teachers, DSL and DDSL's, SENCO and the Headmaster to ensure that 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 form teacher in the first instance if they have mental health concerns. The school has a confidential email address which is monitored by a very limited number of staff which parents can contact if unable to speak to a teacher. This will then be cascaded to the DSL for assessment.

To support parents and carers we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our parent portal
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.
- Organise workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and steps to wellbeing.

## **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. Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- School Counsellor
- Educational Psychology Services
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Children's and Family Services
- Therapists
- Family support workers
- External counselling services

## **Training**

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep pupils 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.

## **Links to other policies**

This policy links to our Safeguarding Policy, Anti-Bullying, SEND and Behaviour Policy.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually and made available on our school website.