



MALDON COURT
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

This Policy applies to all pupils and staff at Maldon Court Preparatory School including those in **EYFS**

Written by: J Wilkins
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School Aims

- Children develop a love of learning and come to appreciate the value of their talents and life experiences.
- Children flourish and become enthusiastic and independent learners reaching their full potential through a stimulating, broad curriculum and rich variety of experiences beyond the curriculum.
- Children embrace the traditional values of Kindness, Respect and Courtesy, becoming responsible, independent caring individuals.
- Children are confident happy individuals who are well prepared for their next step in education. This includes: 11+, scholarships and entrance to schools with Specialist Status.
- Children develop the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs: both in the local and wider community.

Rationale

The school is committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning, as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood. The Department for Education recognises that 'Schools have a central role to play in enabling their pupils to be resilient and to support good mental health and wellbeing.' (DfE Mental health and behaviour in schools, November 2018)

Everyone experiences life challenges that can make them vulnerable and at times anyone may need additional emotional support. Positive mental health is everybody's business and we all have a role to play. At Maldon Court, we believe that all children are entitled to develop to their fullest potential academically, socially and emotionally, enabling each child to grow in confidence and be able to fully participate in everything that goes on in the wider community with confidence. We aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. Our role is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their full 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.

We recognise as a school that by developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for children affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health
- How we prevent mental health problems
- How we identify and support children with mental health needs
- Key information about some common mental health problems
- Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support

It should be read in conjunction with our First Aid policy and our SEND policy in cases where a pupil's mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with our policies for Positive Behaviour and Anti-bullying, PSHE, Safeguarding and Child Protection policies. Links with the School's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

Mental health and wellbeing

According to the Mental Health Foundation "The emotional wellbeing of children is just as important as their physical health. Good emotional and mental health allows children and young people to develop the resilience to cope with whatever life throws at them and grow into well-rounded, healthy adults."

DfE research has found "Children with higher levels of emotional, behavioural, social, and school wellbeing, on average, have higher levels of academic achievement and are more engaged in school, both concurrently and in later years. Children with better emotional wellbeing make more progress in primary school and are more engaged in secondary school." (DfE The Impact of Pupil Behaviour and Wellbeing on Educational Outcomes, November 2012)

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- Feel confident in themselves and 'dare to be different'
- Have high self-esteem and know that they count
- Be able to better understand their emotions and feelings
- Be able to form and maintain positive relationships with others
- Cope with the stresses of everyday life
- Develop emotional resilience and manage in times of stress
- Be able to deal with change
- Feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Learn and achieve

Lead Members of Staff

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils. Staff with a specific, relevant responsibility include:

Child Safeguarding Team

Mrs Elaine Mason – DSL

Mrs Katharine Abrehart - Deputy DSL

Mrs Kim Callaghan – DSL Early Years

Mrs Jeni Wilkins – Child Mental Health First Aider

Ms Nicola Elswailer – Child Mental Health First Aider

Miss S Broadbridge/Miss A Vaughan – Head of PSHE

Mrs M Summers - SENCo

All staff understand about the possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown, life changes – such as the birth of a sibling, moving house or changing schools or during transition from primary to secondary school, traumatic experiences such as abuse, neglect, domestic violence, bullying, violence, accidents or injuries and other traumatic incidents such as a natural disaster or terrorist attack. They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication, problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy. (Appendix 2)

It should be recognised that school staff cannot act as mental health experts and should not try to diagnose conditions. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Non-professional diagnoses, however well meant, can exacerbate or promote mental health problems.

A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies where necessary. This might include liaising with Paediatricians, EWMHS, counselling services, therapists, family support workers and/or behavioural support workers.

The Public Health England document ‘Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing’, published March 2015, details eight principles to promote emotional health and wellbeing in schools:

1. Leadership and management that supports and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing
2. Curriculum, teaching and learning to promote resilience and support social and emotional wellbeing
3. Enabling student voice to influence decisions
4. Staff development to support their own wellbeing and that of students
5. Identifying need and monitoring impact of interventions
6. Working with parents and carers
7. Targeted support and appropriate referral
8. An ethos and environment that promotes respect and values diversity

These eight principles will underpin the approaches used to support the development and integration of wellbeing strategies at Maldon Court.

Supporting children's positive mental health

We have developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

Pupil-led

Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health.

Peer Mentoring – children working together to solve problems and older children supporting younger children.

Mental health week – Dare to be different, Odd Socks Day, Dress to Express.

School Council

Transition days – whole school transition day every Summer term.

Support for every Form 6 child to ensure a smooth transition to secondary school.

Class activities

Stars – a mechanism where children can be praised for certain duties and tasks.

Worry Monsters – children can anonymously record their worry. These are checked by the Form teacher every evening and action is taken as needed to address the worry.

Circle Times to help children learn personal, social and emotional communication and problem-solving skills.

Marble Jar – marbles in the tin for positive behaviour. Located in Mrs Mason's office.

Whole school

Celebration Assembly weekly – celebrating the children's achievements and rewarding them through certificates for Good Manners, Cool to be Kind, Headteacher's Award and the achievement tree.

Wellbeing week – we take part in the National Children's Mental Health week and World Wellbeing week with themed assemblies and activities throughout the week.

Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support, including in the wellness room.

Daily Wellbeing Club – running Monday-Thursday, a drop-in club where children can choose to relax or take part in various therapeutic activities which change daily.

Specific individuals supported in wellness room if they have worries or are upset.

Teaching about Mental Health

Through our PSHE curriculum we teach children the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems.

We will regularly review our PSHE curriculum and lesson content to ensure that they are meeting the aims outlined in this policy. We will also implement this into our curriculum at all stages to provide students with strategies to help keep them mentally well.

Identifying and supporting children with mental health needs

Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children is paramount
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support
- Involve children in the care and support they have
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated

Early Identification

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

- Analysing behaviour, visits to the first aider and attendance
- Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons
- Worry Monsters in each class for children to raise concerns which are checked by the Form Teachers and passed on if required
- Form Teacher at least weekly pupil comments emails
- Regular staff meetings with Safeguarding always the first item on the agenda
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff

All staff are aware of the protective and risk factors (see Appendix I). We are fortunate in being a small, family-run school with a low staff turnover, so all the staff know each child well. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the Mental Health first aider, the DSL or her deputy.

Possible warning signs that a child may be experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits
- Falling academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Secretive behaviour
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the school's child protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency, then the school's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health first aider and recorded. We then implement our assessment system, which is based on levels of need to ensure that children get the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating (assess, plan, do, review).

The child will be offered the chance to talk to the Mental Health first aider (but it can be any other trusted adult) in order for that adult to assess the child's needs and listen to the child. The adult will be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality.

The adult should use the ALGEE method

A – Ask, assess, act

Where a young person is distressed, the member of staff should ask them what support they need and want. Assess the risk of harm to self or others and try to reduce any risk that is present.

L – Listen non-judgementally

Give them time to talk and gain their confidence to take the issue to someone who could help further.

G – Give reassurance and information

Tell them how brave they have been. Gently explain that you would like to help them. Do not promise confidentiality – it could be a child protection matter.

E – Enable the young person to get help

Work through the avenues of support. Explain that you would like to share their thoughts with someone else so that they can get the best help. Encourage them to speak to someone – offer to go with them.

E – Encourage self help strategies

If the child's needs are deemed to be low risk, they will be given advice on techniques to address their worries before they escalate. The Mental Health first aider will record what has been discussed and the headteacher and Form teacher will be made aware. The mental Health first aider will always hold a follow up chat with the child at a later date to see if they need further help or advice. The Form teacher will also closely monitor the child for as long as is necessary. If the mental Health first aider feels it is relevant, contact will be made with the parents, either by phone call or a face-to-face meeting. The school will offer information to take away, discuss how the parents and carers can support their child and details of professional organisations that may be able to help.

If the mental Health first aider feels the child's needs are greater, focused, weekly intervention sessions will be recommended. This will be in consultation with the parents, Headteacher, Form teacher and the child. The mental Health first aider will meet with the child weekly to address their

worries/concerns in a focused, ongoing way for as long as that child needs support. If, at any time, the MHFA feels the child needs professional help, then parents will be consulted and a referral would be made. We always seek feedback from children who have had intervention sessions to help improve that support in the future.

We are aware that parents and carers may react in different ways to finding out their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available.

Full records of meetings and action taken are always kept including the date, the names of the members of staff involved, main points from the conversation and agreed next steps.

Disclosures by children and confidentiality

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health first aider or the Safeguarding lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil. Staff will also inform the child when and what they are going to disclose.

All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps. Disclosures will only be shared with the appropriate authorities if it is necessary to keep the child safe, in line with our Safeguarding Policy. It may not be possible to gain the pupil's consent first, such as in the case of pupils who are at immediate risk. If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the schools' child protection procedures are followed.

Disclosures by parents/carers

If a parent raises concern about their child or a friend of their child, we will always speak to the Form Teacher and consult with the Headteacher before approaching the child to assess their need, as detailed in 'Assessment, Interventions and Support'. Feedback and any advice or signposting to further help will be given to the parent.

Support for peers

We recognise that when a pupil is experiencing mental health problems it can be challenging for their friends, who often want to help them but are not sure of the best thing to do and can also be emotionally affected. We will consider on a case by case basis what support might be appropriate including one-to-one and group support.

Working with specialist services to get swift access to the right specialist support and treatment

In some cases, a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm or eating disorders, among other things.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the MHFA or SENCo in consultation with the pupil, his/her parents/carers and the Headteacher. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Main specialist Service	Referral process
Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS)	Accessed through school, GP or self-referral
Educational Psychologist	Accessed through the SENCo lead or parent referral

Working with Parents

In order to support parents/carers we will:

- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child or a friend of their child
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children
- Make this policy easily accessible to parents
- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school
- Share and allow parents to access further support
- Keep parents informed about the mental health training our school staff receive
- Working with other Agencies

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 in order to enable them to keep pupils safe. Training records are held on ScholarPack and in staff files.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff who wish to know more about a specific issue.

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.

Staff Wellbeing

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing. The school enhances staff motivation, wellbeing, learning and professional development through:

- Curricular planning time within the school week
- Whole school training events, including Safeguarding
- Access to appropriate external training
- Involving staff in decision making and proposed changes
- Consultation on training, personal health and emotional wellbeing support needs as part of the appraisal process
- An open-door policy to senior leadership is always available if a member of staff is in need of speaking to someone about any issues of concern

Appendix I

Risk and protective factors (adapted from *Mental health and behaviour in schools* DfE November 2018)

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic influences • Specific development delay • Communication difficulties • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem • SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure attachment experience • Outgoing temperament as an infant • Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour • A positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect
In the family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships • Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs • Physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect • Parental psychiatric illness • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord
In the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying including online (cyber) • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Negative peer influences • Peer pressure • Peer on peer abuse • Poor pupil to teacher/school staff relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct) • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Good pupil to teacher/school staff relationships • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive friendships • Effective safeguarding and Child Protection policies. • An effective early help process • Appropriate procedures to ensure staff are confident to can raise concerns about policies and processes, and know they will be dealt with fairly and effectively
In the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Exploitation, including by criminal gangs and organised crime groups, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation • Other significant life events 	<p>Wider supportive network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities

Appendix 2

EWMHS - Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service

Who are we?

The Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS) provides advice and support to children, young people and families who are in need of support with their emotional wellbeing or mental health difficulties.

The service covers Southend, Essex and Thurrock and is open to young people between the ages of 0-18, or up to 25 for those with special educational needs.

Any child or young person experiencing mental health difficulties as well as any parent, guardian or professional can access the service for help and guidance.

There are lots of ways to access the service.

- A child or young person can contact us directly
- Any parent/guardian or professional such as a teacher, school nurse or GP can contact us on the behalf of the young person

When the service can help?

Everyone goes through ups and downs, but sometimes feelings or behaviours can start to get in the way of day-to-day living. When this happens, it might be time to seek some help.

We can support people with a range of mental health difficulties faced by young people, which can include:

- Low mood
- Anxiety
- Obsessional thoughts
- Sleep problems
- Body image and eating difficulties
- Behavioural and emotional difficulties
- Trauma and loss
- Parenting and family difficulties

These are some of the things we can help you with. If we feel EWMHS is not right to help your particular need, then we can put you in contact with a number of different organisations who might be more appropriate.

Journey through the service

Waiting times may vary but we aim to see people within 12 weeks. However, if you find that things become more stressful while you are waiting to be seen, contact us as soon as possible so we are able to provide support.

Important Contact Details

To contact the service between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday, you or someone on your behalf can;

- Call EWMHS: 0300 300 1600
- Email: nelft-ewmhs.referrals@nhs.net

If you need urgent help or out of hours help;

Call NELFT out of hours: 0300 555 1201

EWMHS telephone helpline for all Southend, Thurrock & Essex Primary Schools

Bookable slots offered each Wednesday afternoon for any school staff with concerns about the emotional well-being of children they work with. The child does not need to be open to EWMHS. It offers confidential opportunities for consultation, cases discussion or sharing concerns in pre-booked 35 minute slots.

To book a slot email jonathan.large@essex.gov.uk

Appendix 3

Sources of support about common mental health issues

General information and support

Young Minds (www.youngminds.org.uk)

Mind (www.mind.org.uk)

Minded (for e-learning opportunities www.minded.org.uk)

Tackle the stigma of mental health (www.time-to-change.org.uk)

Challenge attitudes towards mental health (www.rethink.org)

Mental Health Foundation (www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

Samaritans (www.samaritans.org.uk)

Childline (www.childline.org.uk)

Parenting advice (<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/mental-health-wellbeing/>)

Shout (<https://giveusashout.org/>)

Report Remove – a tool provided by ChildLine to report a nude image or video and have it removed (<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/remove-nude-image-shared-online/>)

Local information and support

Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Service (<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/>)

Essex Effective Support (<https://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/>)

For support on specific mental health needs

Depression Alliance (www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression)

Anxiety UK (www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

Eating Difficulties in Younger children and when to worry
(www.inourhands.com/eatingdifficulties-in-younger-children)

Beat Eating Disorders UK (www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

OCD UK (www.ocduk.org)

Support for sufferers of panic attacks and OCD. Offers a course to help overcome your phobia or OCD (www.nopanic.org.uk)

National Self-Harm Network (www.nshn.co.uk)

Prevention of young suicide UK – POPYRUS (www.papyrus-uk.org)

Cruse Bereavement Care (www.cruse.org.uk)