Middleton School

Mental Health and Well Being Policy

Reviewed February 2022
Ratified by Governors March 2022
Due for Review February 2024

Mental Health & Wellbeing

What is Mental Health?

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. (World Health Organisation)

Supporting Pupils' Positive Mental Health:

Our aim is for all pupils to develop increased self esteem and emotional well being through a range of both formal and informal teaching opportunities. We aim for pupils to develop their own values and attitudes towards relationships through the guidance of our school's communal values

Policy Aims

- We promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all children and staff.
- Pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Pupils are supported by staff to feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Bullying is not tolerated

Whole school approach

At Middleton School our ethos of collective responsibility for ensuring a safe, happy, and supportive learning environment is promoted at all times. Tolerance of differences and valuing themselves and others as unique individuals is a priority. There is flexibility to respond to the changing needs of pupils.

- We help pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to.
- We support pupils to be resilient learners
- Work effectively with parents and carers
- We give support and training to staff to develop their skills and resilience

Links to other Policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Looked After Children, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Personal Social Health Education (PSHE), Sex and Relationships Education (SRE).

Roles and responsibilities

At Middleton school we believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, We aim to ensure that all staff understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some of our children will require additional help and support. Therefore all staff should have the skills to recognise any early warning signs of mental health problems. It is then the role of staff to ensure pupils with mental health needs access early intervention and the support they need.

The school's Mental Health Team (Mental Health Lead, Designated Safeguarding Team, Family Liaison officer):

- Work with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health
- Provides advice and support to staff. Organises training on Inset days and updates in Staff meetings each week.
- Keeps staff up-to-date with information about what support is available
- Contributes to the PSHE curriculum team and advises on the teaching of mental health.
- The Mental Health lead is the first point of contact and communicates with mental health services.

In addition, there is an allocated Governor with responsibility for Mental Health and Well Being within the Governing body. This governor liaises with the Mental Health and well being team within school, contributes to policies and actions and feeds back to the wider governing body.

The governor with responsibility for Mental Health and Well being is Melanie Tilbury.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times. We work with the MHST.

The MHST (Mental Health Support Team) in SEN (Special Educational Needs) Schools in Herts and West Essex, provides support for mental wellbeing. There are 3 main roles for the MHST in SEN schools:

- Directly support pupil's mental health through guided self-help interventions with children and parents/guardians. These sessions take place over 6 – 8 weeks and are based around proactive prevention and support for mild to moderate mental health difficulties and challenging behaviour
- Support the 'Whole School' approach to mental wellbeing, including staff wellbeing, day-to-day practices and school environment and assemblies.
- Signpost to the correct support if the MHST is not the most appropriate team.

Teaching

As with all areas of the curriculum, we believe in delivering an individualised and differentiated approach to learning for our pupils.

- We focus upon the 'Relationships' aspect of RSE from the moment a pupil arrives in our school, and relationships and positive interactions with others are central to the learning process throughout the school.
- We aim to provide an interactive learning environment, which is motivating and allows pupils to practise skills as well as to gain information and knowledge.
- We strive to deliver a practical, kinaesthetic approach to learning and offer pupils many opportunities to practise their skills in real situations, both in school, and within the wider community
- The development of decision making skills and assertiveness is promoted.

Extra Curricular Activities

Pupils are encouraged to join extracurricular activities, (such as Change for Life Club, Basketball Club, Cooking Club etc) where they have opportunities to work alongside peers of a range of ages and form new friendships and relationships. These activities also promote healthy lifestyles and support objectives taught through the PSHE and RSE curriculum.

Staff

We believe in supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of all staff. This is an integral component of a healthy school. We promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing, through offering after school clubs such as Dance. We have a Social events committee whose role it is to organise trips for staff.

As well as supporting our children, the MHST (Mental Health Support Team) also supports our staff.

One example of a workshop they offer is 'Space to Pause'.

This is a reflective space which provides an opportunity for staff to think about looking after themselves. Finding space to re-set, re-charge and re-commit will be crucial in encouraging us to leave the pressures of work behind, as we reconnect with family and friends at the end of a working day.

The sessions they offer include a variety of mindfulness exercises and the opportunity to share with others in the group.

We aim to:

- Create a pleasant workplace
- Encourage communication
- Proactively support staff health and well being

Support for Parents and Carers

At Middleton we recognise the importance of the role families play in influencing children's emotional health and wellbeing. Therefore we work closely with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by;

- Working with the MHST to offer workshops specifically to support parents or carers.. Some of the workshops we have been able to offer have included: Understanding & Supporting Anxiety, Understanding & Supporting Challenging Behaviour and Sleep Strategies.
- Supporting a parent or carer if they wish to seek additional support with their child/children through the MHST. In this circumstance the teacher can send a referral form home to a parent to complete. The teacher and MHST will discuss the referral with the young person/family and the family will be required to give consent to working with the MHST. The child can then be supported both in school and at home.

Inclusion Statement: Middleton School is committed to ensuring that the curriculum delivery is made relevant and accessible to all pupils, and that it is taught in a way which is age, stage and ability appropriate. Sensitivity, based on knowledge of the pupils and their family circumstances is demonstrated in the delivery of this subject. There is recognition that families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children and that peers may have differing structures of support in their lives around them.

Monitoring and Policy Review

This Mental Health Policy and Scheme of work is shared with governors and is available for all parents and carers to view on the Middleton School website. The policy will be reviewed every

two years as a minimum. The next review date is **February 2024.** In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes.

Appendix 1

Where to get information and support

For support on specific mental health needs

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk OCD UK www.ocduk.org

Depression Alliance www.depressoinalliance.org

Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com

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

Self-Harm www.selfharm.co.uk

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

For general information and support

www.youngminds.org.uk champions young people's mental health and wellbeing

www.mind.org.uk advice and support on mental health problems

www.minded.org.uk (e-learning)

www.time-to-change.org.uk tackles the stigma of mental health