



## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

At The Parkland Federation, we strive for excellence in all that we do while promoting optimum health, happiness and wellbeing within our school community. Learning is exciting, inclusive, dynamic and challenging. The highest standards of behaviour are promoted at all times. Here, the children are supported to succeed through taking risks and learning from mistakes. Pupils are prepared to become responsible, informed, respectful and creative global citizens who will contribute with insight, understanding, and compassion to the diverse and rapidly changing world they live in. (*School Vision Statement*).

| Approval Date | Policy Reviewer  | Title       | Chair of Governors |
|---------------|------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| 20th May 2024 | Ms Sally Simpson | Headteacher | Jolly Pett         |

# THE PARKLAND FEDERATION MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

## Rationale:

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organization)

At Parkland, providing the best possible education is paramount. We aim to develop the whole child and ensuring the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils, and their families, is key. Having this as a priority also allows us to develop pupils' resilience, which is one of our five core school values. We believe that each pupil is unique and will display different needs throughout their time with us. These needs may be influenced by circumstances outside of school and we believe that working closely in partnership with families will provide the best possible support for every child.

## Aims:

We pursue our aims using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. In addition to promoting positive mental health for all, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

We also aim to:

- ★ Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- ★ Offer a Behaviour Policy that has therapeutic thinking and restorative practice at its core
- ★ Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- ★ Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- ★ Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- ★ Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers

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## Teaching about Mental Health:

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. There will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner. [PSHE Guidance](#) Our chosen scheme for PSHE is Jigsaw.

## Signposting for the Whole School Community:

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. We will display relevant sources of support in school (such as in assembly slides and classrooms) and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. The school will signpost any available support for parents and families on our Facebook page and our school website <https://www.theparklandfederation.com/health-and-wellbeing> When we highlight sources of support, we will promote:

- ★ What help is available
- ★ Who it is aimed at
- ★ How to access it
- ★ Why access to it would be useful
- ★ What is likely to happen next

## Warning Signs:

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns to the relevant staff members. The school's Pastoral Lead and Mental Health First Aider will be available every morning during school entry times.

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Possible warning signs include:

- ★ Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- ★ Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- ★ Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- ★ Changes in activity and mood
- ★ Lowering of academic achievement
- ★ Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- ★ Abusing drugs or alcohol
- ★ Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- ★ Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- ★ Secretive behaviour
- ★ Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- ★ Lateness to or absence from school
- ★ Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- ★ An increase in lateness or absenteeism

### **Managing Disclosures:**

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen rather than give advice. This information should be shared with the Mental Health Lead who will offer support and advice about next steps.

### **Concerns about a child:**

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection officer. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical

emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

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### **Support for Parents:**

We will ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child or themselves. We will actively seek to share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our Facebook page, the school website and during parent consultation appointments.

### **Whole School and in Class Strategies:**

#### **Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling:**

Each classroom has a Worry Box for pupils to communicate with the teacher. PSHE lessons support the teaching of wellbeing and mental health as well as Circle Time and assemblies.

Further examples of our practice in school includes:

- ★ Organising whole-school or year group assemblies to discuss specific mental health and wellbeing issues
- ★ Arranging for external speakers to visit and discuss topical issues such as the use of social media or the impact of body image online
- ★ Using key dates such as Mental Health Awareness Week and World Mental Health Day as opportunities to raise the profile of mental health
- ★ Holding designated health and wellbeing days
- ★ Organising activities across the curriculum dedicating time to celebrate pupils' academic and extracurricular achievements
- ★ Including pupil wellbeing in lesson observations and Learning Walks
- ★ Daily use of Zones of Regulation within the classroom
- ★ Using displays and bulletins to signpost pupils to sources of support

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### Strategies Outside of the Classroom:

Examples of our bespoke provision outside of classrooms include:

- ★ Thrive group or individual sessions
- ★ Counselling with our school counsellor
- ★ Play Therapy provided by our Play Therapist
- ★ Animal Therapy with in house specialists
- ★ Art Therapy Sessions with in house specialists
- ★ Drawing and Talking Therapy with our Pastoral Lead

### The 5 Ways to Wellbeing:

1. **Connecting with others:** Lessons involve partner talk, and discussions. Children are encouraged to listen to each other with respect.
2. **Keep physically active:** Each class completes the daily mile and there is a number of after school clubs that promote physical activity
3. **Learn new skills:** Our broad and balanced curriculum complete with a vast array of after school clubs allow children the ability to try a variety of new skills
4. **Give to others:** Children participate in fundraising for charities, but also realise that giving does not always come at a cost and can help us feel good about ourselves.
5. **Take notice:** We strive to provide an environment where the children can appreciate the beauty of nature.

[Watch our video here](#)

### Training:

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their ongoing child protection training to enable them to keep pupils safe. Upon induction, staff will undertake training in supporting young people with Mental Health issues as well as Overcoming Loneliness and Bereavement and Loss. The Pastoral Lead and Mental Health First Aider provide regular updates to all staff regarding updates around Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools.

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Useful links:

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/> Young Minds is one of the UK's leading charities for children and young people's mental health.

<https://www.annafreud.org/> Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families- is a charity dedicated to providing training & support for child mental health services

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/> Place2Be is one of the UK's leading children's mental health charities.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/> Mind is the UK's leading mental health charity, offering a great deal of useful information on children's mental health.

[www.holdingspace.org.uk](http://www.holdingspace.org.uk) Provides Mental Health Support for East Sussex families

This policy should be read in conjunction with policies for:

- Behaviour and Attitudes Policy
- Anti-bullying
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Online safety
- PSHE Policy