**Willow Primary Academy**

**The Piper Centre**

**Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

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| Willow Primary Academy  The Piper Centre –  Taking PRIDE in *all* we do  Promoting Positivity, Nurturing Respect, Celebrating Individuality, Fostering Determination, Striving for Excellence  **Policy Review Schedule**  **Date agreed:** September 2023  **Next review due:** September 2027  **Distributed to staff:** September 2027  **Signed by SLT:** P Hales  **Signed by chair of governors:** W Ward |

**Policy Statement**

At Willow Primary Academy and The Piper Centre, we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We have a supportive and caring ethos, and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. We endeavor to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to 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. At our school 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 business and that we all have a role to play.

**Teaching about mental health**

At Willow Primary Academy and The Piper Centre 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 well-being.
* Adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management.
* Helping children socially to form and maintain relationships.
* Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries
* Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better.
* Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world.
* Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.
* Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers.
* Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and 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.
* Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
* Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
* Providing opportunities to reflect.
* Enabling access to appropriate support.
* Mental Health and PSHE for all year groups
* Access to information around the school

We pursue our aims through:

* Universal, whole school approaches
* Support for pupils going through recent difficulties
* Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder
* 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 students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Key staff supporting Mental Health at Willow Primary Academy and The Piper Centre:

* Named Mental Health Lead – Nikki Hendry
* Deputy Mental Health Lead – Debra Arthur

Our Mental Health Leads:

* Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
* Work with the PSHE leader regarding teaching about mental health.
* Provide advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
* Liaise with mental health services and makes 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’re teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association 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:

* Circle time approaches
* Targeted use of resources
* Managing feelings resources e.g. ‘worry boxes’ and ‘worry eaters’
* Managing emotions resources
* Primary Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups/ELSA support groups

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

* Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
* QCA Assessments
* ELSA Assessments

**Signposting**

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

**Safeguarding and mental health**

**All staff** should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

**Only** appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy

**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

School 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Mental Health Lead 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

**Assessment, interventions and support**

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with SLT, class teachers and 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 if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead for assessment.

To support parents and carers we will:

* Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programs.
* Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
* Make our Mental Health and Wellbeing 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.

When a concern has been raised, teachers or the Mental Health Lead and SENDCO will:

* Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (Although there may be cases, parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection issues.)
* Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies.
* Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
* Create a chronology of actions and events.
* Agree mental health care and protection plan where appropriate including clear next steps.
* Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.

**Trailblazer School**

Willow Primary Academy and The Piper Centre is a Trailblazer school - [Young Minds Matter (Trailblazer Programme) for Schools (ghll.org.uk)](https://www.ghll.org.uk/mental-health/trailblazer-programme/)

The Mental Health Support Teams' (MHSTs') main role will be to provide earlier care for children and young people who may be experiencing mild to moderate or early symptoms of mental health problems, which tend to be outside the scope of traditional NHS services. Providing this additional resource to support early intervention, appropriate signposting and delivery of focused, evidence-based interventions will improve collaboration between schools and mental health services and enable earlier and more effective mental health support for children, young people, their families and carers. The Trailblazer programme will link a number of approaches, including working across the system to deliver a comprehensive training programme to increase knowledge and understanding of mental health, trauma and implementation of restorative practice, building resilience.

**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.

* Educational Psychology Services
* CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service) offers a CAMHS Practitioner Advice Line where they can support all professionals working with children. Practitioners can call the CAMHS Practitioner Advice Line on 01452 894272 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays
* School Nursing Service
* Therapists
* Family support workers
* Counselling Services
* Gloucestershire Healthy Living Learning [www.ghll.org.uk/mental-health](http://www.ghll.org.uk/mental-health)
* **Teens In Crisis** [**www.ticplus.org.uk**](http://www.ticplus.org.uk/)
* [**www.youngminds.org.uk**](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/)
* [www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/mental](http://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/mental) health

**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 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 Offer, Staff Wellbeing Policy and our Behaviour Policy

**Monitoring and evaluation**

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy will be published on the school website - hard copies are available on request. The policy will be reviewed every four years