



Hetton Lyons and Usworth Colliery Nursery Schools

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Policy Statement

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)

The House Federation is committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and parents. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

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.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Develop a sense of belonging to the nursery community.
- Promoting opportunities for children, staff and parents to participate in decision-making
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support

At our school we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- promote self esteem and ensure all know that they count.

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches.
- Support for pupils, parents and staff going through recent difficulties.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at those with more complex or long term difficulties

Universal support

- The skills, knowledge and understanding need by children to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSE area of learning. We introduce this through small group activities using Jigsaw and through 1:1 interventions during their play.
- Staff “Check in” with their key children at the beginning of a session
- Use of wellbeing scales to assess where the children are throughout the year.
- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) operate an open door policy so that staff and parents can talk to the person they feel most comfortable with.
- SLT work alongside side staff to support them day to day.

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for children, staff and parents which may include:

- Targeted use of Jigsaw resources
- Emotion fans for those who struggle with emotional vocabulary
- Conversations with parents/carers if a child or parent seems to be struggling with their wellbeing
- Play Therapy sessions
- Access to Occupational Health for staff
- Staff 1:1 sessions with a focus on wellbeing
- Sign posting to other agencies specialising in mental health (Early Help, CAMHS, MIND)

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

All staff and SLT will be aware of children, parents and colleagues who may be displaying warning signs of poor mental health and to share their concerns with an appropriate person, these may include:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning and work
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking 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

We believe that good relationships are fundamental in being aware of a person or child's mental health and that all staff make time to develop relationships with their team, key children and their parents and carers.