



Reach for the Stars

Goldstone Federation
Together We Shine.



Hinstock Primary
School

*'Tomorrow's Success
Begins Today'*



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy (first written in June 2019)

Principles

We aim to create an environment where pupils and staff feel happy, safe and secure. Every member of the federation community is valued, respected and treated fairly and consistently and we foster positive and caring attitudes. We promote good relationships so that all can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone achieve their potential.

Mental health is how we feel, how we think and how we behave. Mental Health Promotion for children and is everybody's business. At Hinstock and Cheswardine, we recognise that all children and adults need the foundation of positive mental health to benefit fully from all of the opportunities available to them.

Policy Statement

At Goldstone Federation, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs during their school career and some face significant life events. In 2016, 1 in 10 children aged 5 to 16 have a diagnosable mental health need and these can have an enormous impact on quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. In many cases it is life-limiting. The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their 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.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children are valued.
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying is not tolerated

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing " 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". Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems.

Staff Responsibilities

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. All staff understand about 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 and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy

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, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

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. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but 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 RSE scheme of work, National PSHE Association schema and Shropshire Council's Respect Yourself Relationship and Sex Education programme to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

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 should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (Rachael Williams at both schools or Gemma Watkins at Hinstock or Sarah Jones/Georgina Bickerstaffe at Cheswardine) 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

Procedure for Concern in relation to mental health issues

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 advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring

'Why?' All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the relevant people and should be filed appropriately.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we think it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss with the child:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

In order to support parents we will:

- Ensure that all parents are aware of who they can talk to, and how to get the support they need if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child.
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular review meetings.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PHSE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Policy written by: Gemma Watkins (Hinstock's PSHE Co-ordinator)

Checked by Governing Body:

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