



## **EMOTIONAL HEALTH and STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Emotional health is seen as the emotional and spiritual resilience that enables us to enjoy life and survive pain, suffering and disappointment. It is a positive sense of wellbeing and an underlying belief in our own worth and that of others.

### **School Mission Statement**

Stokes Wood Primary School will personalise the learning journey of each child, supporting them to develop as a confident, independent learner who will achieve challenging aspirations and contribute widely to the society of the future.

We will celebrate each child as the valued and unique individual that he or she is and educate them within a caring, safe and inspiring environment.

The partnership, voice and contributions of the wider Stokes Wood community is essential in securing children who will become well rounded, responsible, resilient, fulfilled and happy individuals.

### **Policy Statement**

Pupils entering Stokes Wood Primary School are children who may have current emotional health problems, may have experienced them in the past and may develop them due to their increased risk factors. Many of our pupils may be vulnerable to emotional health problems and may show signs of emotional struggle at some point.

The possible effects of emotional ill-health can be at best disruptive/debilitating or at worst devastating, even fatal.

The range includes:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinterest in school work/social activities</li> <li>• Temper control problems</li> <li>• Lying</li> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Disruptive behaviour</li> <li>• Attention seeking behaviour</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defiance</li> <li>• Hyperactivity</li> <li>• Eating Disorders</li> <li>• Substance disorders</li> <li>• Substance misuse</li> <li>• Crime</li> <li>• Mental illness</li> <li>• Suicide</li> </ul>
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Consequently, at Stokes Wood we work towards promoting emotional health in all our pupils. Working with pupils with emotional problems can be difficult, exhausting and stressful and can lead to emotional health problems in staff. Therefore, we also aim to support all staff to ensure that emotional ill-health is avoided and a healthy work-life balance is maintained.

## Aims

All staff aim to:

1. Increase the **significance** of the child by:
  - Raising self-esteem and confidence of pupils by giving and acknowledging every possible opportunity for success including academic achievement.
  - Ensuring each pupil knows they are cared for, valued, understood, listened to, respected, informed.
  - Giving time for discovery, relaxation, creativity, expression and involvement in decisions.
2. Enable pupils to feel secure by providing clear and consistent guidelines and boundaries with high but realistic expectations of behaviour and work.
3. Enable pupils to develop a sense of belonging or connection by creation of a sense of identity, trust and acceptance.
4. Enable pupils to develop strategies for dealing with emotional problems.
5. Eliminate risk factors in school such as bullying/inequality.
6. Enable pupils who have specific emotional problems or who are at risk to receive the help/support needed to return to emotional health.
7. Encourage curiosity, motivation, creativity, problem solving, thinking skills and decision making.
8. Help pupils to develop social and co-operative skills and to develop relationships with staff and peers.

9. Educate pupils in the risks/consequences of drug misuse, smoking, poor diet, truancies, and other related problems.
10. Prepare students for leaving Stokes Wood and moving on to secondary school.
11. Enable students to evaluate and assess their own behaviour and progress.

**ALL ADULTS OVER 16 ARE DSB CHECKED TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF PUPILS AND OTHER VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS**

**Relation to School Aims**

This policy relates to the following aims of the school:

1. To provide a positive, safe, caring learning environment where every person is valued and respected as an individual.
2. To ensure that each person's needs are recognized and each has an equal opportunity, irrespective of colour, ethnic origin, religion, gender or disability, to realise their highest potential.
3. To promote self-esteem and awareness in pupils, staff and the school as a whole.
4. To encourage the exploration of values and moral issues in and out of school.
5. To develop a purposeful and trusting relationship between home and school, and to encourage families to be fully involved in the education of their children.
6. To develop links with the local authority.
7. To help pupils to overcome their emotional and behavioural difficulties to enable them to co-operate and relate positively with others.
8. To provide a broad, balanced, progressive, relevant and differentiated curriculum.
9. To encourage reintegration into mainstream schools and colleges where that is appropriate for a particular child.
10. To enable all staff to develop personally and professionally.

**Organisation**

The variety of emotional health problems encountered in Stokes Wood pupils means that a variety of procedures, approaches and activities are needed and are used when necessary/appropriate.

These fall into two categories.

- Maintenance of emotional health.
- Helping to solve emotional health problems.

Maintenance of emotional health problems is integral to the ethos and organisation of the whole school. It is approached in a number of ways:

- Building self-esteem and confidence in the child by continual recognition and celebration of success both curricular and extra-curricular, by providing a secure environment and by

clear and consistent expectations. See Good Behaviour Policy, curricular policies, Anti-Bullying Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, SEND policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Drug Education Policy, RSHE and PSHE Policies.

- Pupils take part in role-play and other activities.
- Activities aimed at developing social and co-operative skills in all curricular subjects but also additionally in team building exercises.

A variety of approaches are used to help our pupils maintain or regain emotional health.

- Counselling by chosen staff/mentors
- Yoga
- Physical activity
- Use of staff in bereavement counselling
- Circle time where a whole class has interaction problems
- Behaviour support
- Team building activities
- Anger management work
- Home visits
- Use of external agencies such as Social Services, Education Welfare, national sources of advice on offering support to children and their families
- Use of child protection procedures
- Availability of advice from leaflets and help lines from staff
- Input from Educational Psychologist
- Input from school doctor who sees Head teacher and SENCO before visits to prioritise pupil need
- Support in referral to/attendance at CAHMS e.g. Westcotes
- Time out of class with SENCO/Teaching Assistant head/mentors/head teacher or other senior staff.

## **Staff**

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution made by the staff to the school, and at the same time acknowledges that the occupational stress is a factor in schools, and that it is essential to tackle it both at the organisational and individual level.

## **Defining Stress**

Stress and Pressure – The HSE defines stress as ‘the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.’

Pressure, in one form or another, will be present in all jobs. Pressure and challenge, even when high, can be motivating and stimulating. Pressure that can be responded to effectively is a factor in achieving job satisfaction. However, pressure at a level and a time where an individual cannot cope can lead to stress, as can too little pressure or challenge.

It should also be noted that individuals do not have a predisposition to stress. An individual's response will depend on the amount of pressure and their ability to cope at the time, and will therefore differ from person to person. However, no one can be regarded as being 'immune'.

Governors and staff will adopt a whole school approach to stress management in an atmosphere in which: causes of stress are identified and addressed; support is given to staff experiencing debilitating levels of stress which it is recognised is not due to incompetence or weakness; and a preventative approach is taken towards potentially stressful policies for staff and pupils.

The Governing Body will monitor the following to give an indication of organisational stress levels:

(as appropriate)

- Absences due to sickness
- Staff turnover rates
- Early retirement/retirement on medical grounds
- Class size
- Incidents of violence
- Number of complaints
- Number of exclusions

Ways of identifying, tackling and monitoring causes of stress will be established, with all staff being encouraged to participate fully and frankly. Appropriate Action Plans will be initiated and it is recognised that stress management issues are a matter for on-going evaluation.

The Leadership Team and members of staff have responsibility in being vigilant and recognising stress in the following:

### **Recognising Stress**

- Persistent or recurrent moods – anger, irritability, detachment, worry, depression, guilt and sadness.
- Physical sensations/effects – aches and pains, raised heart rate, increased sweating, dizziness, blurred vision, skin or sleep disorders, frequent colds and infections, indigestion, diarrhoea or constipation.
- Changed behaviour – increased absence levels, difficulty concentrating or remembering things, inability to switch off, loss of creativity, making more errors, double checking everything, eating disorders, lying to cover up mistakes, an increased use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs, becoming insular, being easily bored or fatigued.

### **How Can I Help Tackle Workplace Stress?**

As an employee, you have a duty to take reasonable care of yourself and others with regard to health and safety at work.

You should:

- Familiarise yourself with the Stress Management Standards.
- Support the school's stress initiatives.

- Communicate openly and honestly with your manager and colleagues.
- Attend appropriate training which can help you recognise and manage pressure and stress in yourself and others.
- Support your colleagues if they are experiencing work related stress and encourage them to talk to their manager, HR or trade union representative.
- Identify causes of stress in the workplace and report them appropriately to your line manager.

The school aims to take positive measures to manage stress effectively and to create an environment where stress is prevented so far as is reasonably practicable; and that where it becomes an issue for individual employees, they are encouraged to seek support.

This policy is primarily concerned with stress arising from work, but it also recognises that events occurring in an employee's personal life may also lead to stress that may have an impact on an employee's work. Therefore, employees should be given appropriate assistance whatever the cause.

### **Supporting Principles**

The following principles apply to the school's approach to managing stress:

- The management of stress should be dealt with in a way that is non-discriminatory and in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Employees should be dealt with fairly and consistently across the school.
- There should be a positive and preventative approach to stress, rather than a punitive one.
- The management of stress should be conducted with respect for individual confidentiality.
- Open communication between managers and employees should be encouraged and promoted.

### **HSE Management Standards**

As part of the school's policy and approach to stress, the HSE's 'Management Standards' is recognised as being the desired goal for the prevention, minimisation and management of stress issues. Managers should work towards ensuring that the 'states to be achieved' identified in the standards are achieved within school.

Leadership management styles will take full account of the need and benefit to the school of preventing harmful stress. In determining and communicating management policies, management will be committed to identifying with staff problem areas in order that they can be addressed and changes be introduced where feasible.

Governors and management recognise the importance of effective communication with staff, keeping them involved and informed in relation to problems addressed, strategies adopted successes and failures.

Staff who may be suffering adversely from stress will be supported and treated sensitively and fairly, with encouragement to obtain counselling or medical treatment. Help and advice relating to underlying causes of stress will be offered in confidence.

Governors and management recognise the importance of procuring a good “person/job fit”. This will be borne in mind during selection procedures and personnel specifications and during interviews. The best match will be sought of individual skills to the duties of the post.

Governors and management recognise the importance of appropriate professional support for all staff, particularly those newly appointed or whose role has changed; and of the appropriate ongoing training and career development for all staff.

Full use of the appraisal and Performance Management interviews will be made to allow for the expression of concerns over job description, training needs and stress and to give recognition of achievement.

In addition, at the beginning of the academic year (Stress Management Survey) and in Performance Management meetings, all members of staff will be given the chance to answer questions, give feedback, give their views and make suggestions about their job; the environment they work in, the relationships they have, efficiency, job satisfaction etc.

Please see Performance Management Policy and feedback from surveys.

Appropriate consideration will be given to stress related poor performance in the school’s disciplinary policies procedures.

All staff will be able to attend INSET on Emotional Wellbeing for themselves and their pupils. Management staff will have the opportunity to attend leadership and management INSET .

Staff will be given access to counselling facilities and the school will consider other occupational health facilities as appropriate.

Violence at work - the Governing Body will adopt the approach suggested by the LA in the draft supplementary section to the Health & Safety Policy on Stress Management.

Staff will be supported in their actions and performance by the aims and objectives of the school and the Good Behaviour Policy.

Good relationships with the local community will be sought and established, and maximum use made of any resources the community has to offer.

The Governing Body is aware that stress related issues extend to the pupils, and seeks to address this through reducing stress in the school environment.

### **Relationship to other areas**

Emotional health relates to all areas of school both curricular and extra-curricular, both pupils and staff. It is particularly related to PSHE. Without good emotional health children are unable to learn to their potential.

### **Assessment and recording**

The emotional health of pupils is assessed continuously by all staff on an informal basis and recorded as necessary on a pupil's profile. It is also assessed before each Annual review for our SEN children.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The teaching team evaluates the success of the Emotional Health Policy and the PSHE curriculum as part of the ongoing evaluation for teachers and policy review. Governors are also involved in monitoring this aspect of the curriculum. The curriculum co-ordinator is responsible for informally monitoring PSHE delivery and coverage.

### **Responsibilities**

The PSHE/RSHE Curriculum Co-ordinator and Head teacher are responsible for leading development and INSET in this area.

The class teachers are responsible for delivering the curriculum as agreed. All staff are responsible for implementing the procedures and activities necessary to promoting pupil emotional health and for recognising changes in emotional health of themselves and their colleagues.

### **Resources available**

[Emotional Health and Wellbeing | Department of Education \(education-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/emotional-health-and-wellbeing)

[Improving children's mental health in schools – Place2Be](https://www.place2be.org.uk/)

Additional information available from: [www.hse.gov.uk/stress](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress) and [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](https://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

No Outsiders Project.

### **Relation to other policies:**

This policy relates to the Good Behaviour, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti-Bullying, Equal Opportunities, Inclusion, Race Equality, SEND, all curricular policies, PSHE/RSHE and Drugs Education Policies.