

SEMH Policy – Iveson Primary School



This policy was revised by the Inclusion Team in the Autumn Term 2017 and will be reviewed annually unless specific guidance or legislation supersedes this.

Introduction

We promote a caring, supportive environment in which each individual is valued and respected. We have high expectations for all and aspire to achieve excellence. Iveson Primary School recognises that all children and young people need the foundation of positive mental health to benefit fully from all of the opportunities available to them.

Everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable. At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health. The mental health of children and young people, adults in schools, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and experiences.

All children and young people have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. All adults have the right to work in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody.

Iveson Primary School is committed to raising awareness, increasing understanding and providing a place where all children and young people feel safe, secure and able to achieve and experience success and well-being.

A consistent approach means that the school environment and school ethos all promote the mental health of the whole school community. Healthy relationships underpin positive mental health and have a significant impact.

At Iveson Primary School we will provide:

A mentally healthy environment which has:

- A clear and agreed ethos and culture that accords value and respect to all
- A commitment to being responsive to children and young people's needs
- Clearly defined mental health links in school policies
- Clear guidelines for internal and external referrals
- Strong links with external agencies to provide access to support and information
- A named lead for mental health promotion with the expectation that there is support and involvement and an ethos that 'mental health is everyone's business'

A mentally healthy environment is where children and young people:

- Have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging
- Have opportunities to participate in decision making
- Have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements
- Have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed
- Have opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Have opportunities to reflect

- Have access to appropriate support that meets their needs
- Have a right to be in an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for
- Are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times

A mentally healthy environment where staff:

- Have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- Have a range of strategies that support their mental health, eg a named person to speak to, signposting
- Have recognition of their work-life balance
- Have the mental health and well-being of the staff reviewed regularly
- Feel valued and have opportunities to contribute to decision making processes
- Celebrate and recognise success
- Are able to carry out roles and responsibilities effectively
- Are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- Have their unique talents and skills recognised and opportunities are provided for development
- Have time to reflect
- Can access proactive strategies and systems to support them at times of emotional needs in both the short term and the long term

A mentally healthy environment where parents/carers:

- Are recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health
- Are welcomed, included and work in partnership with schools and agencies
- Are provided with opportunities where they can ask for help when needed
- Are signposted to appropriate agencies for support
- Are clear about their roles and expectations of their responsibilities in working in partnership with schools
- Opinions are sought and valued and responded to
- Strengths and difficulties are recognised, acknowledged and challenged appropriately

A mentally healthy environment is a where the whole school community:

- Is involved in promoting positive mental health
- Is valued for the role it plays in promoting positive mental health
- Contributes towards the ethos of the school

A healthy learning environment provides opportunities that promote positive mental health, through the National Curriculum and extended provision, e.g. Circle Time, SEAL, play, nurture group, differentiated learning activities, individual timetables, parents/carers events, challenging stereotypes, etc.

The implementation of the policy for promoting positive mental health in schools:

- Will give schools a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to mental health
- Should underpin all policies and practices currently used in schools
- Will raise awareness as to how the whole school community can look after their own mental health and that of others
- Will help to de-stigmatise mental health
- Will support people and provide opportunities that enable everyone to reach their potential
- Will strengthen relationships and provide opportunities for different ways of working
- Will provide foundations for life-long learning
- Will promote and strengthen resilience throughout the whole school community and empower everyone to face life's challenges

Integral to this is our recognition of equal responsibility to vulnerable staff, pupils and their parents/carers and those with Protected Characteristics (Equality Act, 2010) to promote positive mental health. The promotion of positive mental health for children and young people is everyone's business.

Rationale

Iveson Primary School aims to provide a whole school approach to SEMH, which is essential to ensure consistency and effectiveness for all pupils.

Additional practices to promote wellbeing and positive mental health include:

- A School Council with elected membership which represents all year groups, that meets every term.
- A school system of Class Dojo's which recognise: academic excellence, excellent effort, outstanding work and representing the school and other achievements.
- Achievement certificates are awarded weekly in Family Assemblies.
- Pride of Iveson celebration event each half term.

Aims

Iveson Primary School aims to recognise our responsibilities in supporting pupils with mental health and wellbeing needs.

- To increase the level of awareness and understanding amongst staff and parents/carers of issues involving the mental health of young people, in particular with low self-esteem, self-harm, emotional regulation, anxiety, depression, loss and bereavement.
- To detect and address problems in the earliest stages where they exist in thinking and attitudes to self/image, self-esteem and self-control.
- To implement the appropriate level of support in school available to pupils with mental health issues and also in partnership with outside health agencies and child support groups.
- To continue to promote positivity around mental well-being.
- To reduce the stigma associated with mental health.
- To ensure all staff are alert to their responsibility to ensure the well-being and welfare of all pupils, progress and achievement in school depends on this.

Supporting Pupils with Mental Health at Iveson Primary School.

Identification.

A staff team that knows every student well and can spot where poor or unusual behaviour may have a root cause that needs addressing.

Effective use of data so that changes in pupils' patterns of attainment, attendance or behaviour, are noticed and can be acted upon.

If the student has seriously self-harmed then staff should follow the normal procedures for medical emergencies, including alerting the School Office so that the appropriate first aid can be given and if necessary contacting the emergency services for admission to hospital.

All referrals or concerns will be a standing item on the weekly Inclusion Meeting Agenda.

Support

This includes:

- A whole school approach to promote the emotional health and wellbeing of all pupils.
- Clear policies on behaviour, bullying and nurturing.
- Culture within the school that values all pupils, allows them a sense of belonging and makes it possible to talk about problems in a non-stigmatising way.
- Continuous professional development for all staff.
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to help judge whether individual pupils might be suffering from a diagnosable mental health problem in accordance with DFE Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance 2015 OR the use of a 'screening tool'.
- Referral to the Inclusion Team.
- The Family Support Lead visiting homes and meeting families in school to support emotional wellbeing and aim to liaise with families about SEMH interventions and support available in school.
- School based counselling and peer mentoring.
- Working with outside agencies to provide interventions for pupils with health problems.
- Referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Supporting staff who are working with pupils with mental health issues.

Iveson Primary School acknowledges that staff who are working closely with distressed pupils exhibiting mental health problems issues can themselves be placed under emotional strain.

All staff are welcome to approach their line manager or other senior leaders where appropriate.