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84. Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

At Shapes Day Nursery, we aim to provide positive mental health and well-being 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.

Shapes Day Nursery is a place for children to experience a nurturing and supporting environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some it will be a respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help create a sense of belonging and community. Our role is to also ensure that children can manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential. 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 and who they can talk to for help and support.

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

- All children are valued
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Children feel able to talk with trusted adults about their feelings
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

Purpose of the policy

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health
- How we prevent mental health problems
- How we identify and support children with mental health needs
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems
- Key information about some common mental health problems
- Where to go for further advice and support

Definition of mental health and wellbeing

The World Health Organisation describes mental health as "**a state of well-being**" in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community".

Mental health and wellbeing are not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/adults to:

- feel confident in themselves
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately

- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- cope with the stresses of everyday life
- manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
- learn and achieve

Promoting positive mental health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
3. Helping children to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

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 and family breakdown. 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 (*see appendix 1 on risk and protective factors*).

Our Lead for Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs is responsible for:

- Leads and works with other staff to coordinate whole nursery activities to promote positive mental health and well-being.
- Provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
- Is the first point of contact with mental health services and makes individual referrals to them.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the nursery 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.

Sources of relevant support include:

- Our own Senior Leadership Team
- Our Safeguarding/Child Protection Lead

- Our SENDCo who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including children whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision.

Supporting children's positive mental health

We believe that the nursery has a key role in promoting children's mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. We have developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Campaigns to raise awareness of mental health
- 1:1 time with keyworker
- Emotional wellbeing charts where children can register how they are feeling
- Resources to help children to talk/share their worries or concerns
- Staff mental health notice board
- Staff training

Teaching about mental health and emotional well-being

We teach children about health, safety and wellbeing through our practices, policies and procedures. We endeavour to minimise hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment. We help the children learn:

- To recognise, name and describe feelings including good and not so good feelings.
- Simple strategies for managing feelings.
- How their behaviour affects other people.
- About empathy and understanding other people's feelings.
- To cooperate and problem solve.
- To motivate themselves and persevere.
- About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing family, pets or toys).
- Who to go to if they are worried.
- About different types of teasing and bullying, that these are wrong and unacceptable.
- How to resist teasing or bullying, if they experience or witness it, whom to go to and how to get help.

Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs

Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children are paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.

Early identification

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- Observing and analysing behaviour and development
- Monitoring attendance
- Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons.
- Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns

Appendix 1 Protective and Risk Factors (adapted from Mental Health and Behaviour DfE March 2016)

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In The Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genetic influences Specific development delay Communication difficulties Physical Illness Low self-esteem SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being female (in younger children) Secure attachment experience Outgoing temperament as an infant Good communication skills, sociability Problem solving skills and a positive attitude Humour Experiences of success and achievement Faith or spirituality Capacity to reflect
In the Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overt parental conflict including domestic violence Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) Inconsistent or unclear discipline Hostile and rejecting relationships Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect Parental psychiatric illness Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder Death and loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) Affection Clear, consistent discipline Support for education Supportive long-term relationship
In the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullying Discrimination Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships Negative peer influences Peer pressure Poor pupil to teacher relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear policies on behaviour and bullying 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems A whole school approach to promoting good mental health Positive classroom management A sense of belonging Positive peer influences
In the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-economic disadvantages Homelessness Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events Discrimination Other significant life events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider supportive network Good housing High standard of living High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying Opportunities for valued social roles Range of sport/leisure activities

Appendix 2 Where to get information and support

For support on specific mental health needs

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk OCD UK www.ocduk.org

Depression Alliance www.depressionalliance.org

Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com

National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk www.selfharm.co.uk

Suicidal thoughts prevention of young suicide UK PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

Autism www.autism.org.uk/about/behaviour/anxiety.aspx

Bullying www.antibullyingalliance.co.uk

For general information and support

www.youngminds.org.uk champions young people's mental health and wellbeing

www.mind.org.uk advice and support on mental health problems

www.minded.org.uk (e-learning)

www.time-to-change.org.uk tackles the stigma of mental health

www.rethink.org challenges attitudes towards mental health

www.crisitextline.uk provides free, confidential support 24/7 for anyone at crisis anytime, anywhere.

www.childline.org.uk provides confidential helpline for any child with a problem

www.themix.org.uk helps to find young people the best help, whatever the problem