

Newfield School Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy

The emotional health and well being of all members of Newfield School is fundamental to our aims, ethos and intent.

We believe that emotional healthy people will be able to:

- **Develop psychologically, emotionally, creatively, intellectually and spiritually**
- **Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships**
- **Become aware of others, respect and empathise with them**
- **Learn to the best of their ability**
- **Develop a sense of right and wrong**
- **Face challenges, resolve issues and setbacks and learn from them**
- **Develop resilience**
- **Respect others**

Emotional Health and wellbeing is fundamental to the work that schools do to develop and support children.

The department of Health's White Paper recognises that there should be more support for emotional wellbeing and resilience as it is *'fundamental to people's capacity to get the most out of life for themselves and for their families'*.

It also recognises that there is *'an inseparable link between good emotional and physical health and success in learning and achievement'* and that *'life skills and emotional resilience acquired in childhood and adolescence help people cope with challenges throughout their lives'*.

Intent of Newfield School

We want our learners at Newfield School to be:

- **Effective communicators**
- **Empowered & challenged to realise their individual potential**
- **As independent as possible**
- **Healthy in body & mind**
- **Happy, engaged & included members of their community**
- **Confident & committed to lifelong learning**

To this end, we promote positive emotional health and wellbeing to help pupils and staff to understand and express their feelings; build their confidence & emotional resilience and therefore their capacity to learn, accept change and move forward.

At Newfield the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff is something that we take very seriously. We work hard with our health colleagues to help our children be physically well,

through therapy programs, exercise and health support - and we also recognise how important mental health and wellbeing is for everyone.

We try to ensure that our children have opportunities to explore how they are feeling and develop strategies to understand themselves and reflect on who they are as people and what they can do ensure they are happy - and what they can do when they are not!

We view behaviour as a means of communicating, so when something is not going well, we try to understand what the cause may be and help children to address that.

We have a trained school counsellor, and as a school we are constantly developing and refining our mental health and wellbeing offer. We want to help our children be resilient and build on their strengths, and to support this, some of our staff have taken part in Mental Health First Aid training. We are also exploring innovative ways of supporting the wellbeing of our staff, in order for them to be even better equipped to support our children.

Specific links between the RRSA and Emotional Health and Wellbeing at Newfield School

Newfield School holds the Gold level of UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA). The RRSA recognises achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of a school's planning, policies, practice and ethos. A rights-respecting school not only teaches about children's rights but also models rights and respect in all its relationships, relationships between all adults and pupils, between adults and between pupils.

This emotional health and wellbeing policy links directly to the following articles from the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child:

- **Article 3:** All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.
- **Article 12:** Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.
- **Article 13:** Children have the right to get and to share information as long as the information is not damaging to them or others.
- **Article 15:** Children have the right to meet together and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.
- **Article 23:** Children who have any kind of disability should have special care and support so that they can lead full and independent lives.
- **Article 28:** Children have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

- **Article 29:** Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents and their own and other cultures
- **Article 39:** Children who have been neglected or abused should receive special help to restore their self-respect.

Curriculum Organisation

The ethos of Newfield School is positive and supportive – we consider ourselves a family. We are proactive in our approach to seek out opportunities to promote emotional health and wellbeing through our curriculum which incorporates a broad, rich and meaningful approach with highly personalised holistic teaching and learning.

Our staff use a variety of methods to ensure that emotional health and wellbeing are addressed in all aspects of school life. We are accredited by UNICEF as a Gold level Rights Respecting School and believe that emotional wellbeing is fundamental to protecting and promoting all children's rights.

Our approaches include:

- **Class Charters, and a Whole school Charter, which outline how we will behave towards each other, linked to CRC articles.**
- **Rewarding and celebrating positive behaviour and achievement**
- **Setting appropriately challenging tasks**
- **Demonstrating and expecting respect for others**
- **Providing a forum for listening and talking e.g. Time to Talk sessions**
- **Encouraging co-operation and collaboration through, for example, School Council meetings**
- **Developing social competence, for example, through the RRSA Steering Group meetings**
- **Encouraging and developing coping strategies and resilience**
- **A Buddies program which gives younger pupils and older pupils opportunities to spend time together, act as role models and promote positive relationships.**
- **Fortnightly Pets As Therapy (PAT) dog visits – we benefit from having a trained dog who spends time in school visiting classes and giving children opportunity to develop their communication, nurture skills and confidence.**

Emotions play a huge role in a person's ability to learn effectively. We believe that positive emotions and thoughts are central to effective learning. We place high value on a child's emotional intelligence and positively seek to develop and enhance the emotional curriculum in a number of ways:

- **Mutual Respect**
- **All adults model the behaviour we expect from pupils, parents and carers.**

- Positive self esteem development
- Care – our staff demonstrate care for all children and for each other
- Trust exists between pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers
- Close links between other professional agencies who support our pupils, for example, through the weekly meetings with our deputy head teacher with pastoral responsibility across school and social care, nursing and respite provider colleagues.
- Excellent systems of pastoral care
- Integrated personalised curriculum – PSHE/Circle time focus on emotion, self awareness, relationship skills and social awareness
- Creativity, innovation, developmental learning are highly valued

Communication

Children are supported to develop their ability to communicate as a priority. At Newfield we understand that being able to communicate basic needs, as well as make requests and choices is fundamental to a child's happiness and emotional wellbeing.

Newfield offers children a range of additional opportunities to extend their interests and talents and to encourage development of social and communication skills.

These include:

- Lunchtime clubs e.g. art activities, sports, singing karaoke
- School council
- RRSA steering group
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Community visits
- Link schools
- Buddies

PSHCE

The delivery of Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education is fundamental to our promotion of emotional health. There is a range of planned programs as well as informal curriculum opportunities which exist to explore issues appropriate to pupils' ages and stages of development.

We work closely with our nursing team who co-deliver sessions with school staff on body awareness, as well as sessions aiming to desensitise children who may be afraid of health interventions. Staff deal sensitively with these issues and differentiate according to the individual needs of the pupils in their care.

Pastoral Organisation

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'Newfield School is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults as it's number one priority. This commitment to robust recruitment, selection and induction procedure is shared by all staff and volunteers of Newfield School'

Newfield School believes that a whole school approach is essential to ensure consistency and effectiveness for all pupils. Our staff are skilled and take part in a wealth of training to ensure that they understand the needs and learning styles of our very special children.

All teachers and Education, Health and Care Assistants have a pastoral group and know their children very well – understanding their needs and ensuring that a bespoke approach is used at all time. All members of staff understand that we are all responsible for the emotional wellbeing of pupils.

Additional support is provided by the Senior Leadership Team who place a high value on recognising and responding positively to a child’s emotional and/or behavioural needs. All staff communicate with parents positively to create a partnership approach to their child’s emotional health and wellbeing.

Senior staff will liaise with appropriate agencies to enlist advice and/or support as necessary. We have a school nursing team on site at all times, who are available for any child, parent or member of staff needing advice, guidance or support with a health issue.

Parental Involvement

Newfield School sees parental involvement as a vital part of emotional wellbeing and health. Opportunities exist to promote partnership with parents through:

- **Working with parents – we hold the Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA) and work very closely with parents and carers to ensure that they are emotionally well and supported.**
- **Parents are connected with what happens at school through daily contact with staff, an open door policy, attendance at various clinic held within school, regular newsletters, curriculum and celebratory events**
- **Parent Consultation Fortnight each term**
- **Involvement in the Annual Review where targets are jointly set for their child’s Personalised Learning Plan, based on outcomes form their EHCP**
- **Open Door Policy - parents are very welcome in school and can visit or ring to speak to a member of staff anytime**
- **Parent Carer workshops – a termly program of sessions to support parents develop their skills or give them a forum for support, delivered by school staff as well as external professionals**
- **Meeting with parents and other professional agencies to support them and their child**
- **Signposting parents to external agencies who may be able to support with specific issues**

Staff Emotional Health and Wellbeing

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Newfield School recognises the importance of positive emotional health among its employees - the mental health and wellbeing of our staff is something that we take very seriously.

We know that looking after our staff ensures that they are able to provide the very best education, support and care for our pupils. Our staff receive training to ensure that they are highly skilled and confident in whatever their role is in school, including a robust induction programme for new staff.

We recognise the emotionally challenging nature of the work in school, and have a range of systems in place to celebrate our staff and to provide them with opportunities to reflect on their wellbeing and look after themselves.

- **Staff take part in regular wellbeing events such as the half termly 'Wellbeing Breakfast' and weekly Fitness classes.**
- **We have 'Staff Shout Out' boards outside both staff lounges, where colleagues can give each other a boost by saying 'thank you' for something – we believe that colleagues appreciate having their hard work or kindness recognised.**
- **We have a group of Wellbeing Warriors - staff who are mental health first aid trained, who any member of staff can speak to in confidence, and who will try to help - or who will just listen and give their colleague the time to reflect on whatever is going on.**
- **The Wellbeing Warriors also organise special events, such as Education, Health and Care Assistant Appreciation day, Mental Health Awareness day and social events.**

We also offer staff the Employee Assist Programme - a confidential support service where staff can phone and speak to a counsellor if they need advice or support.

The staff in the Newfield family benefit from our ethos of mutual respect and support for all - we try hard to make sure that everyone feels valued.

Teacher Workload

Newfield believes that it is vital to monitor the workload of our teachers and promote a good work-life balance in order to support the emotional health and wellbeing of our hard-working, dedicated teachers – workload and wellbeing go hand in hand!

The senior leadership team aims to support this in the following ways:

- **Teacher workload is always considered when introducing new initiatives and time is dedicated to allow for completion e.g. support staff appraisals, case studies etc.**
- **A calendar of all deadlines is given a year in advance to allow teachers to prepare and manage time effectively**
- **Where possible teachers work in 'planning pairs' to share resources and planning across an age phase**

- PPA time takes places in blocked time rather than spread across the week
- The internal school network is organised to allow teachers to save and share resources easily
- Parent consultation happens during the school day
- Regular meetings take place with line managers which include an element of self-reflection on wellbeing and open discussion is encouraged if any difficulties are encountered or identified

Safeguarding

Newfield School is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults as its number one priority

Full copies of Policies and Procedures related to all aspects of Safeguarding, and the Complaints Policy, are available on request from Rik Robinson, Head Teacher and Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Equal Opportunities

Newfield School is also committed to ensuring the equality of opportunity in line with the Equality Act and seek to show this through all aspects of school life and in particular through our commitment to every child fulfilling their potential, our work in the classroom, our recruitment and retention of staff and our work in the local and wider community.