

# Newton Poppleford Primary School

## Mental Health Strategy



*Supported by Devon's Early Help for Mental Health Programme and the Schools Development Support Agency 2018*

Policy Information  
Statutory/ Non Statutory: Non Statutory  
Approved/ Reviewd By:  
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## **Rationale**

### **National view**

“Evidence tells us that good mental health is essential for children to learn and achieve” *Heads Together ‘Whole School Approach’*

As a nation we are increasingly aware of the numbers of children young people and adults who experience periods of mental ill health, and the fact that this can limit their opportunities to reach their potential and contribute to society.

National NHS and Government policies are now being formed to begin to address this situation through improvements to education.

The National Institute for Health Care Excellence is clear in its advice to schools, that developing a ‘Whole School Approach’ to promoting mental health has shown clear benefits in contributing to the wellbeing of students. This approach goes beyond teaching and learning and pervades all aspects of the life of the school. ( Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing)

### **Local view**

When we asked our parents what they most wanted for their children at school we learned their overriding priority was for their children to be happy, safe and well educated through a love of learning with hope for their future.

When we asked our students they let us know that they would like to learn more about how to manage stress, difficult feelings, how to know about their mental health in the same way as they are learning about their physical health.

When we asked our teachers, they let us know that they would value learning more about how they can directly influence and impact on a mentally healthier environment within which young people can work, learn and thrive.

When we asked our stakeholders, which include Governors, they fully support this evolving strategy and its policy. They let us know that they are behind a whole school approach and this is a high priority and fundamental to any learning environment.

### **Definition of Mental Health and wellbeing;**

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”.*

## **The Aims and Intentions of our Mental Health Strategy**

### **We aim to;**

- Remain informed, inspired and influenced by national policy guidance within the DfE (Diocese if applicable) and Public Health England.
- Ensure a whole school approach to development and delivery.
- Ensure a whole community contribution to development and delivery, including, students and their families, stakeholders, partner agencies in statutory and charitable organizations and the local extended community.
- Connect with our partner schools in our Federations/MATS/local community to share good practice.
- To hold the Mental Health Strategy as a standard agenda item on Senior Leadership Team and Governor Meetings.

### **We will;**

- Ensure that this Mental Health Strategy and its Policies compliment all other current school strategies and policies.
- Review the Mental Health Strategy annually.
- Ensure there is clear learning on our curriculum regarding emotional wellbeing and mental health across all key stages.
- Produce a summary of implemented delivery, outcome and next step developments annually.
- Ensure our Mental Health Policy connected to this strategy is available on our website.

Here at Newton Poppleford Primary School we embrace our role, alongside our families, the community and with our wider partners, in contributing to the developing emotional wellbeing of our students and their learning about being healthy, from a physical and mental health perspective.

“Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school approach” suggest using an Eight Principles Approach.

We have chosen to use this Eight Principle approach to develop our school Mental Health Policy and evidence it in action.

However, in line with the EH4MH added value, our Eight Principles include our links with our community and national contributions to our children’s’ developing mental health and wellbeing.

We have chosen an additional section that aims to highlight our chosen forms of communication and information sharing.

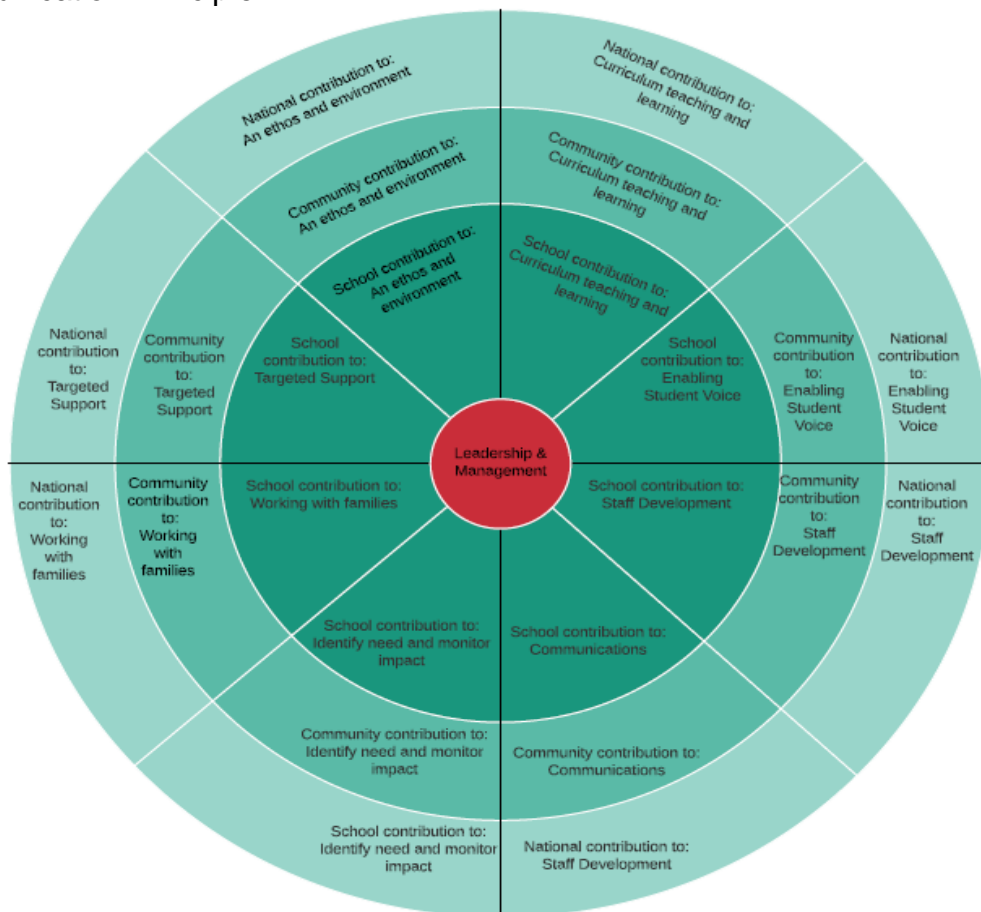
This policy is developed in response to our pledge in the Mental Health Strategy. It is guided by Public Health England’s key documents outlined at the end of this document.

# Principle 1: Leadership and Management

At the core of these Eight Principles is Leadership and Management. Their commitment and drive are key in embedding this policy at the heart of our school.

At Newton Poppleford Primary School, our SENCO Team (Harriet Coogan and Debbie Tollerfield), Metal Health Champion (Harriet Coogan) and Safeguarding Lead, (Stuart Vaughan) are leading the development of our Whole School Mental Health Strategy. They have established a Mental Health working group represented by both staff and students, with support and oversight by the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Governors. We have now appointed a specific role of Mental Health Champion within our Governing Team (Mr Ben McGowan).

Below is the EH4MH's 8 Principle approach including the added value of considering community and national contributions to each principle, there is also the additional Communication Principle.



## Community and National Support

Senior Management have been working closely with our partners in the specialist NHS & DCC funded **Early Help for Mental Health** team.

## Principle 2: School Ethos and Environment

At Newton Poppleford Primary School, children and young people come first, and our priority is to deliver high quality teaching and learning, within a culture of celebrating individual effort and progress. This is within an environment that celebrates diversity and promotes respect for all. We want every child to be successful, and to reach for success from the first day they join us, leaving the school with a love of learning that lasts throughout life.

We recognise that in order to embed this ethos, we need to promote an environment that focuses on the whole school's emotional wellbeing. We have considered this through both the physical environment of the school and the emotional culture that is promoted throughout the school.

**Wellbeing:** At Newton Poppleford Primary School we work together to create an environment that is caring, inclusive and celebrates learning for life.

**Community:** We are kind and caring, coming together to celebrate differences, where everyone has a sense of belonging.

**Skills for Life:** We have curiosity and motivation to become active, independent thinkers who are not afraid to make mistakes and embrace opportunity.

**Curriculum:** We foster the love for learning for a lifetime equipping our children with the skills and knowledge for the future through a rich, diverse and creative curriculum.

Our policies reflect this including Behaviour, Anti-bullying, Inclusion, Safeguarding.

### **This is how it looks within our school:**

- Mental Health Champion
- Promotion of Ten a Day for Mental Health and enable students learning to foster resilience and self sufficiency.
- Normal Magic training for all staff
- Whole School mental Health Week
- E safety and anti-bullying week
- Mentoring
- Thrive based support
- Forest school and outside learning, residential trips in Year 4 and Year 6 and day trips in other classes. We believe this supports confidence self esteem, community and team building, a sense of achievement, pride and fun all of which impact positively on mental health.
- Games and clubs at lunchtime and after school
- Wow Weeks in the curriculum
- Friendship Fun Days
- School counselors
  
- Sensory room,

- Calm down spaces,
- Lego and play therapy
- Therapy dog visits
- buddy system, mentoring system;

## **Community**

These are some examples of how it looks within our school that we are proud of;

- We invite parents into school to watch class assemblies and help us celebrate special days.
- We have made links with local elderly members of the community through silver stories.
- We have links with our local church where the community members come and deliver assemblies and plan activities for the children in school.
- We have links with local agricultural college.
- Parents support is always valued members of the community give up time to help us with ongoing school projects.
- We have held a community run in support of raising money for the school.
- Early Help 4 Mental health service offers training to our staff. This includes Normal Magic, anxiety and bereavement. This enables our staff to be skilled in developing resilience in our students and themselves.
- Promotion of physical and mental health by our School Nurses;
- Community police help us to create a safe environment;
- Our Educational Psychologists and Behaviour Support Team support young people

## **Nationally**

We are actively embracing the 'Time to Change' campaign to bring an end to the stigma and discrimination faced by people who experience mental health problems.

## Principle 3: Curriculum Teaching and Learning

We know that school-based programmes of social and emotional learning have the potential to help young people acquire the skills they need to make good academic progress as well as benefit pupil health and wellbeing. (*Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional health and Wellbeing*). With this in mind we have sought to enhance knowledge and skills around mental health across the curriculum as well as through targeted subjects such as PSHE.

### These are examples of how it looks within our school:

- Ten a Day: All staff have had training on Normal Magic which was run by the EH4MH team. All staff are therefore delivering the Ten a Day to the children in their class. It has been fully embedded throughout the school and has become part of everything we do.
- Thrive: We use the Thrive approach across the whole school, which helps us understand the needs being signalled by our children's behavior if they have been emotionally thrown off track, and gives us targeted strategies and activities to help the child's emotional wellbeing and to help them be able to re-engage within the school ([www.thriveapproach.com](http://www.thriveapproach.com)).
- Personal Social Health & Education resources: We use PSHE resources to develop underpinning skills and attributes applicable to all aspects of life, for our student population, particularly in terms of their resilience. This has proven benefits to children and young people's health, both mental and physical ([www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk))
- Exercise: Wake and Shake: First thing every morning the children are ready to dance with a 10 minute wake and shake in the hall or on the school playground.
- Assemblies: Staff led assemblies to promote mental health topics such as an assembly run by NSPCC and to promote Mental Health Week.

### Community

Where ever possible we incorporate the resources of community services to enhance our curriculum's delivery of mental health promotion.

- We are proud of our partnership with EH4MH, a local health service, and their support in developing our school's mental health awareness.
- We have had CAP UK run their Safe Strong Free programme throughout the school as well as Cyber safety and we have also had workshops run by HeadsUp who promote Mental Health and Wellbeing throughout Primary School.

- We offer good transition activities for Year 6 children with good links with local secondary schools. Year 6's also have a Puberty talk with our school nurse and a visit to the Donkey Sanctuary for Life Skills.
- School Nurses join our curriculum to deliver training on healthy relationships.
- Local Bereavement organisations such as Balloons have resources for use in school.
- Cyber safety information sharing is delivered by Safer Internet UK

## **Nationally**

After a recent student survey we responded to the positive feedback from students asking for helpful resources for managing stress and introduced students to initiatives such as Headspace, calm and breath apps, go noodle. Although not directly embedded in curriculum content, each class is given time to take a break and recharge their emotional batteries, this has had a very beneficial impact on student engagement in lessons.

## **Principle 4: Student voice**



Involving students in decisions that impact on them can benefit their emotional health and wellbeing by helping them to feel part of the school and wider community and to have some control over their lives (Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing). We are committed to providing structures that allow students to play an active role in developing a mentally healthy school.

**These are examples of how it looks within our school:**

- School Council: We have an active group of children who meet with a school Council lead teacher. This gives children & young people the opportunity to comment on school processes and activities. This gives an opportunity for all young people's voices to be represented, including those quiet and vulnerable voices that may otherwise go unheard.
- Pastoral staff: Make a strong contribution to senior leaderships' understanding of student need by being an advocate for students.
- Mental Health Ambassadors: Our young people Mental Health Ambassadors promote mental health amongst the children, by modelling and advocating a good approach to mental health, giving a voice to other students and effecting culture change.
- Mentoring: We offer in school mentoring for children who feel the need to talk with someone
- Buddy System: We provide a Buddy System for the Children who start with us in Reception. These Buddies are from Year 6 and support and mentor the younger children to ensure they are happy and confident with their start in school.
- Worry Boxes and bright ideas boxes are instilled in every classroom and the children are encouraged to add to them as and when they feel necessary.
- Eco-groups: recycling and environmental groups meet regularly to discuss how to improve environmental issues around school such as cutting down on paper usage, saving electricity.
- PSHA: Within PSHE, staff creates an environment that encourages all students to share their views and experiences and these are valued and feed into school improvement.
- My Plans: The children who have interventions outside of the classroom are given the opportunity to give their voice regarding their targets and the progress they are making.
- Meet and Greet: We offer a meet and greet for identified children who struggle with coming in to school.
- Interviews: Children are part of an interview panel for new teachers.

## **Community**

We encourage our students to participate in other focussed or general groups relevant to their needs, such as:

- Balloons or other local Bereavement organisation group,
- DV support through 'Free to Be Me'
- Engaging with a therapy dog which visits our school weekly.

## **Nationally**

We access information from Young Minds ([www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)) for young people's views relating to their mental health, support and what they have found helpful. This is co-ordinated and kept up to date by our Mental Health Ambassador Team.

## **Principle 5: Identifying Need and Monitoring Impact**

In line with our ethos of celebrating diversity and the successes of the individual we are keen to identify need in order to provide the appropriate supportive environment for students to thrive. We aim to identify children and young people with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent them developing.

### **School Approach**

- We have consulted and worked with the EH4MH team who were able to support staff to provide some targeted information and resources to help children find positive ways of managing their emotions.
- We work alongside families using Team Around the Child and Family approach, so there is a united approach from home to school which is bespoke to the individual family.
- As well as extra transition support for pupils, we also provide support for parents who may be anxious about their children transitioning to a new school.
- All staff are given regular training on how to identify signs that a student may be experiencing a mental health difficulty. We have a referral system for external agency support and support parents in online referrals.
- We openly encourage children to let us staff know when they have concerns, we provide a variety of ways for children to seek help; worry boxes in every classroom, checked daily by the teacher and by our school mentor if needed, staff meetings on weekly to discuss wellbeing and safeguarding of individuals.
- We use CPOMS which identifies needs and monitors children throughout the school.
- Weekly safeguarding meetings are held to discuss children in need, these children are monitored closely throughout the week and they are also 'check in on' by the mentor.

### **Community**

As a school we work closely in partnership with our community colleagues to ensure we are actively identifying student mental health needs and monitoring the effectiveness of our actions and support. As part of our commitment to supporting students we have a mental health champion and school mentor.

We have used Boxhall (an online assessment tool) to help identify need and monitor progress from our wellbeing groups.

### **National**

Being part of the SHEU survey network helps the school have a better understanding of pupil's behaviour and perceptions school environment.

The Pastoral Team and Mental Health Champion use 'Measuring and Monitoring Children and Young People's Mental Wellbeing: A toolkit for schools and colleges' (Public Health England and Evidence Based Practice Unit) for information on appropriate tools to measure impact of interventions

## **Principle 6: Working with families**

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. We recognise the important role the family plays in influencing the emotional health and wellbeing of students in the school.

We also recognise that working in partnership may sometimes mean providing support and resources to those families that are struggling with meeting life's challenges.

These are some of the examples of how this looks in our school;

- Parent support worker who visits school weekly.
- Referral process for parents needing Early Help/ FIT support or referral to children's centres for children under 8.
- The Ten a Day choices for mental health parent workshops, provided by EH4MH.
- Evidence shows that being part of a community and feeling a sense of belonging is good for our mental health. We provide information and signposting about support services for mental health on our notice boards or in School Matters.
- Stay and Play for parents to come into class with the younger children
- Parent's Creative sessions where parents are invited to come in and work with their child on a project.

### **Community and National**

We provide information to parents and help sign post them to appropriate support and advice through the information on our website which is regularly updated as well as offering advice sessions with our Parent Support Advisor.

There are several online resources and information from national charities and organisations regarding mental health and well-being. Details are provided on the dedicated parent page of our school website.

We provide After School Club and Breakfast club.

## **Principle 7: Staff Development & Well Being**

Well-being in schools starts with the staff; they are the front line of this work...’ (ncb Framework for promoting well-being and responding to mental health in schools)

At the Devon School we place the wellbeing and development of staff as a high priority, believing all school staff place a vital role in developing and supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of the students.

Principle 7 is split into two sections; the first is how staff are provided with the knowledge and understanding of student’s wellbeing and the second looks at how the school supports the development of staff’s wellbeing.

### **These are examples of how it looks in our school;**

#### **Staff Training:**

- In the last year all teachers have received training in mental health delivered by; EH4MH, Babcock Psychology Team. This is greatly helping the school develop a much deeper understanding of mental health which is helping us break down stigma and bring about whole school culture and change.

#### **Staff Wellbeing:**

- We have consulted with staff about measures we can take to improve their mental health.
- We have provided a refurbished staffroom with better facilities for staff
- We ensure that our staff appraisals are adhered to, providing staff with CPD when possible.
- We make time to talk to staff and children which encourages the importance of being able to talk about what is going well and any struggles.
- Using and modelling the 10 a day positive choices for mental health as a whole school approach for both staff and students.
- Staff can access support for wellbeing through their union.
- Staff board in the staff room to provide information or sign post staff towards relevant support.

## **Principle 8: Targeted Support**

The school recognises that many behavioural and emotional problems can be supported within the school, with advice from external professionals, and that some students may need more intensive support at times. The Devon School has a range of potential interventions to support individual's needs, as well as links with external agencies.

**These are examples of how it looks within our school:**

Our SENDCO team work hard to identify early signs of difficulties in children and provide the children with the right support or interventions for them. Within our school we are able to provide children with the following support interventions:

- One to one mentoring
- Lego therapy
- Wellbeing groups
- Yoga and mindfulness within classrooms (GoNoodle)
- Comic strips and social stories for identified children
- Thrive based approach across the school and for targeted children
- Calm space (The Nook) allowing children to calm down regulate their emotions
- Sensory Room (The Nook) wich all young children can access as needed such as using sensory strategies from Occupational Therapy for specific children.
- We have space which we are hoping to turn into a sensory garden/ outside calm spaces in our new school grounds.
- Meet and greet for identified students.
- Fun Fit and High Five to develop fine and gross motor skills
- Behaviour Care Plans for identified children
- Year 6 Mentors for the reception Children.
- Links with external agencies such as CAMHS, Educational Psychologist and early Help.

## **Principle 9: Communication**

In the Devon School we identify that clear and robust systems of communication both within the school and reaching out into the school community, are key components to providing a mentally healthy school.

**These are examples of how it looks within our school:**

In line with our school ethos, we are always thinking of diverse ways of promoting good communication, in enabling and encouraging students and staff to feel more comfortable to communicate feelings and seek help when they need it. We use a wide variety of approaches such as non-verbal systems such as worry boxes and the worry monster for younger children, internet communication via emails, our website and School Matters

We communicate within the staff group through staff meetings and emails. We communicate to our students through whole school / Key Stage assemblies and within classes.

We inform all parents of the schools obligations and responsibilities to safeguard children during their information session when their child first starts school. Staff are aware of school processes for flagging up which students are particularly vulnerable through weekly safeguarding meetings ensuring the right support is given in school and sought outside of school where relevant, this process is reinforced at staff meetings.

**Community:**

The school has School Matters which provides weekly information to parents.

We communicate to our parents through our website, newsletters, emails, parent teacher evenings, information evenings & the school facebook page.

All staff have accessed EH4MH training, and are encouraged to access Consultation & Supervision, this encourages ways to talk about mental health and how young people are feeling, which can be used over the breadth of young people's experiences.

**National**

We use resources from national organisations visually in the school, via display boards, website and newsletters.

We promote 'Take 10 Together at School' – tips for staff on how to start the conversation, by Mental Health First Aid ([www.mhfaengland.org/img/Take\\_10\\_Together\\_at\\_School](http://www.mhfaengland.org/img/Take_10_Together_at_School))

We promote Childline – help line and online resources ([www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk))

We promote the NSPCC campaign Pantasauras/ Let's Talk Pants ([www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/))



Heads Together - promoting the benefits for mental health of talking about difficult things ([www.headstogether.org.uk](http://www.headstogether.org.uk))

Time to Change – movement to end mental health discrimination ([www.time-to-change.org.uk](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk))

## **The Devon School's Mental Health policy was guided by Public Health England's key documents:**

***"Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper" (2017)***

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision-a-green-paper>

***"Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school approach." (2015)***

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/414908/Final\\_EHWP\\_draft\\_20\\_03\\_15.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414908/Final_EHWP_draft_20_03_15.pdf)

***"Future in Mind" (2015)***

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/blog/martin-mcshane-14/>

## **In Addition the Policy has been informed by;**

***"National Children's Bureau" A Whole School Framework for Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health. School Leaders Resource***

<https://www.ncb.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/NCB%20School%20Well%20Being%20Framework%20Leaders%20Resources%20FINAL.pdf>

**Heads Together, Mentally Healthy Schools; A Whole-School Approach**

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/>

**IPPR The Progressive Policy Think Tank, Craig Thorley 2016**

<https://www.ippr.org/news-and-media/press-releases/further-proof-of-the-crisis-in-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health>